

Meeting not open to the public



District Council

East Devon District Council
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Agenda for New Homes Bonus Panel Monday, 24 November 2014, 10.00am

To: Members of New Homes Bonus Panel

Venue: Room 1, Knowle, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL

Contact: [Chris Lane](#), 01395 517544 (or group number 01395 517546): Issued 14 November 2014

- 1 Minutes for 21 October 2014 (page 2-3)
- 2 Apologies
- 3 [Declarations of interest](#)
- 4 **Growing Together – application from Sidmouth Town Council** (pages 4-15)
- 5 **The future of the Cranbrook Community Forum in the Cranbrook Fund** (one of the successful projects granted Parishes Together Fund money in 2013/2014). (pages 16)
- 6 **Request for agreement in principle to a Parishes Together Fund project from Ottery St Mary Town Council** (pages 17)
- 7 **Six month Review** (pages 18-36)

[Decision making and equalities](#)

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Notes of a Meeting of the New Homes Bonus Panel held at the Knowle, Sidmouth on Tuesday 21 October 2014

Present: Councillors:
Ray Bloxham (Chairman)
Douglas Hull
Andrew Moulding
Graham Troman

Officers: Jamie Buckley, Community Engagement and Funding Officer
Ali Eastland, Locality Development Officer, DCC
Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies Councillors
Trevor Cope
Stephanie Jones

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.45 am.

*8 Minutes

The notes of the previous meeting of the New Homes Bonus Panel held on 22 July 2014 were confirmed as a true record.

*9 Declarations of interest

Panel Member	Minute number	Type of interest	Nature of interest
Ray Bloxham	*10	Personal	Wife was involved with CHIC.

10 Cranbrook Community Fund for Cranbrook Community Forum - £4,000

(Minute 50 of 17 March 2014 refers)

Members noted that at its March meeting the Panel had granted £4,000 to Broadclyst Parish Council to create a 'Cranbrook Community Fund'. The Cranbrook Community Fund decision making body had been members of the Broadclyst Parish Council accompanied by members of the Cranbrook Community Forum. Members were advised that following the Cranbrook Community Forum Annual General Meeting there were currently no officers within the Cranbrook Community Forum to take part in the decision making process. The Panel was also very concerned about the apparent unresolved breakdown of communication between Cranbrook Community Forum and Broadclyst Parish Council, latterly with members of the Forum not properly engaged in the decision making process`.

As a result it was agreed that as an interim arrangement the Cranbrook Community Forum should be removed from the decision making process of the fund. If new officers were recruited and elected to the Forum the Panel would review the Forum's involvement in the Fund.

- 10 Cranbrook Community Fund for Cranbrook Community Forum -
£4,000 (Cont)

RECOMMENDED: that the Cranbrook Community Forum be informed that because of its lack of appointed officers and the current breakdown of the relationship between the Forum and Broadclyst Parish Council, as an interim arrangement the process to make decisions on applications for funding be changed to be solely made by the Finance Committee or other appropriate committee of Broadclyst Parish Council. If new officers were recruited and elected to the Forum the Panel would review their future involvement in the Fund.

- 11 Health & Transport Scheme
(Minute 50 of 17 March 2014 refers)

Members noted that £5,000 had been granted to Broadclyst Parish Council at the Panel meeting on 17 March 2014 to support disadvantaged, vulnerable and isolated parishioners, mainly including residents of Cranbrook, right across the parishes of Broadclyst, Whimple, Rockbeare, Clyst Honiton & Clyst Lawrence by rebating the cost of approved travel methods when accessing healthcare facilities at Pinhoe/Broadclyst via Clyst Caring plus the RD&E hospital via a local taxi firm or any other community transport scheme.

A request had been made that financial assistance be given to provide transport for a two year old from Cranbrook to Broadclyst for pre-school on two days a week from the scheme. Members noted that the funding was for costs of approved travel methods when accessing healthcare facilities in an interim period until permanent medical provision was provided in Cranbrook. Panel members considered that the case presented to them was not within the remit of the grant, so should not be funded. It was considered that there were other ways to meet the need presented.

RECOMMENDED: that, with the information at hand funding to pay for taxi costs to deliver the child concerned to pre-school was not within the remit of the grant, so should not be funded. The Panel did recognise the need of the family though but felt there were more appropriate means of investigating this need. Ali Eastland from DCC would put the healthworker in contact with Kerry Thorne from Early Years Childcare to see what could be done.

- *12 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Panel would be held on Monday 24 November 2014 at 10am in Room 1.

**East Devon District Council and Devon County Council Parishes Together Fund
Application Form 2014/2015**

Devon County Council and East Devon District Council have allocated a sum of money to be given in grants. This equates to £1.10 per elector in the District. The Parishes Together Fund is to be used by towns and parishes working together and involving their communities to try to solve local issues.

Please submit joint applications between Parish/ Town Councils.

Please read the guidance notes thoroughly before completing the application form.

IMPORTANT- If your application is incomplete by the deadline, it will not be assessed and will be returned to you. Please ensure that all sections are complete and any supporting documentation has been attached before submitting your application.

Section A- Your contact details

Q1 Name(s) of Town and Parish Council(s) involved in submitting this application:

Sidmouth Town Council

**Q2 Main contacts name, Town or Parish Council they represent, and address
(including postcode):**

Christopher Holland
Town Clerk – Sidmouth Town Council
Sidmouth Town Council
Woolcombe House
Woolcombe Lane
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 9BB

Q3 Main contacts phone number:

01395 512424

01395 512424

Q4 Main contacts e-mail (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

town.clerk@sidmouth.gov.uk

Section B- About your project

Q5 What is your project?

Senior Moments Gardening Café

This application is to fund a pilot project that uses gardening (in Social & Therapeutic Horticulture <http://www.thrive.org.uk>) to support the well being of Older People and their Carers. The working title of the project is Senior Moments Gardening Cafe. The project is an Outreach Service which sets up 'table top' gardening in Care Homes.

The project is designed from the outset to be socially and financially sustainable

- Senior Moments Gardening Cafe based on hard practical experience in that it builds on a similar project located at the Unitarian Chapel and working with Sidmouth Memory Cafe in Sidmouth during 2013. See website.

- It explicitly includes volunteerism and provides staff training

- It works to recognised professional standards (and is subject to profession review by Thrive in May 2015)

- Every effort will be made to engage with other charities and NHS Community Commissioning / Devon Healthwatch in order to make the project sustainable.

Further related information

Website : <http://www.growingtogetherdevon.co.uk>

Google 'Pete Scott Devon' & the Growing Together website will come up with details relating to myself myself and our photographs of our programs). Growing Together (Community Gardening) CIC is a successful and sustainable social enterprise, which has published accounts and three Directors. Growing Together runs gardening programs for vulnerable groups (currently, Older People with Early Memory Loss and Children with SEDB [that information is confidential as I work in local schools]). I have a Post Grad degree and this year studied Social & Therapeutic Horticulture at

post grad level (<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/course-structure/2013/faculty-of-health-and-life-sciences/cpd/social-and-therapeutic-horticulture-diploma> at Coventry University / Pershore College)

Q6 Why do you want to carry out this project, why is it wanted and what difference will it make?

Senior Moments Gardening Café builds on the success of our pilot project with Sidmouth memory Café. The project will give enjoyment and a sense of community to clients and their Carers. It will help bring about improved physical and psychological well-being for clients and Carers. The broad key benefits of gardening for Older People are outlined in Q.7. However our focus is in helping Older People to become more active and engaged specifically in order to reduce ‘falls’:

‘Research has shown that only 20% of men and 17% of women aged 65-74 get the recommended levels of physical exercise, and for people over 75 this falls to 9% for men and 6% for women. Partly as a result of this, every day in the UK, almost 10,000 people aged over 65 will fall down. The personal costs are staggering, with falls resulting in injury, broken bones, fear of falling and social isolation’.

Q7 How do you know this is needed? Who and how have you consulted?

Information regarding the demographics of Sidmouth (and East Devon) are in the public domain. Of a population of 15000 people, and estimated 60% are over 65 years old. It is further estimated that over 700 people in the Sid Valley have early onset memory loss. Consultation regarding support for Older People has been with :

- Age UK.
- Sidmouth Memory Café (see press clipping of our project)
- Sidmouth Helpline
- Dr Louise Knight, Blackmoor Health Centre, Sidmouth (responsible for Older People)
- Thrive (Google : Thrive Gardening)
- Coventry University Dept of Life Science

The specific nature of the difficulties that older people can sometimes face is recognized by the Local Authority http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/older_people

Older People in East Devon

"We are well aware of the high percentage of our residents who are over 60 and it is in their interests that we focus our attention on objectives such as a safe, clean and green environment, excellent service for our customers and supporting a thriving economy. Older people experience the same issues, needs and concerns as the rest of East Devon's 'adult residents'. However, as we age the likelihood of ill health, disability, poor mobility, and being unable to drive, or bereavement, may affect us or a partner. Despite our low crime rates and friendly communities, feelings of vulnerability and isolation may increase."

Against this four key benefits of social gardening programs have been identified as;

(<http://www.thrive.org.uk> [Jan 2013]);

1. Better physical health
2. Improved psychological health
3. Improved Social interaction
4. Access to the natural environment

There is very wide concern regarding the physical and psychological effects of isolation in old age (<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/is-this-the-loneliest-generation-8449305.html>). On the other hand however there is in fact there is a wide and growing body of research which points to the physical, social and psychological benefits which gardening can bring to senior citizens. Growing Together is well placed to meet this need by recent training and by practical experience.

Q8 When do you intend to start work on this project and how long is work likely to take?

Jan 2015 to Oct 2016

Section D- Project costs and match funding

Q9 What is the total cost of your project, and how have you arrived at that cost e.g. please detail and include any quotes you have received for the project?

Please see attached spreadsheet with itemised project costs.

	Cost per program	Number of programs	Total per Parish
Exmouth	£1292		£1292
Sidmouth	£1292	two	£2584
Total Project Cost			£3876

Q10 Funding

Total grant you are requesting from the Parishes Together Fund (please state name of each Town or Parish Council and how much they are each applying for from their own fund below)

Other match funding (please specify below and state whether confirmed) - nil

Total cost of project - £3876

Shortfall (including how you are going to meet the shortfall) - there is no shortfall

Section E- Checklist

Please check you have completed all of the information above.

You may also wish to include:

- Quotes for project costs (see attached)
- Details of offers/ grants from any other funder/ organisation (not applicable)
- Photographs, specifications and drawings (not applicable)
- Extracts from your Parish Plan(s) (not applicable)
- Evidence of consultation e.g. letters of support (not applicable)

Before signing, please read

I confirm that:

- I am authorised by the organisations involved to sign on their behalf.
- Funding will not directly benefit any individual or private business and will only be used for the purposes specified within the application.
- Funding for projects of over £4,000 will only be paid upon receipt of valid invoices/ receipts. Any unspent monies for projects of under £4,000 will be returned to EDDC promptly.
- That we will provide East Devon District Council with a statement of how the funding has benefitted the community

Q11 Signature of applicant:

Q12 Date:

Please complete and return this application form to:

**Jamie Buckley, Engagement and Funding Officer, East Devon District Council,
Knowle, Station Road,
Sidmouth, EX10 8HL
E-mail: jbuckley@eastdevon.gov.uk
Phone: 01395 517569**

Growing Together Application

Further queries answered

- How will it be sustainable if it is shown to work?

This project has recruited the help of Devon Healthwatch, EDVSE & Thrive to assist in gathering metrics in order to prove the value of the service in **monetary terms** (the social and health benefits are already widely recognised). See attached PDF of similar project in London funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. More locally, this form of funding has been obtained in Totnes (The Lamb Project). Our intention is that this pilot project will lead on to us becoming a commissioned service (NHS / Social Care). The same evidence will put us in a very strong position to apply to community funding sources such as the Big Lottery. Once 'proved' we may also be in a position to ask for at least part funding from Care homes. Similar projects (e.g in Seaton) have been funded by local charities such as the Norman Family Trust. Over the next few months Growing Together is expanding the number of Trustees it has. One reason for doing this is that if Senior Moments Gardening Cafe starts to struggle as a Not For Profit enterprise, we may consider converting it to a charity. This would allow us to bid for a much wider range of grants.

- Why can the care homes not pay as it will benefit their residents? Is the idea to show them the benefit and then ask them to pay in future years or are these care homes that are not able to afford it themselves?

This project is primarily for the benefit of clients. Not to increase business value of Care homes. Our feeling from the survey work that we did was that Care homes are interested - but not at the point at which they would contribute to the project financially. As mentioned above, once they have experience of what we do (which includes offering Staff / Volunteer Training) that may change. However at this point we consider grant funding they only viable means of driving the project forward. We find analogy with our experience working in local schools. We started in 2011 as volunteers. In 2012 we used a small grant from the Sid Vale Association to install a working garden and worked at a discounted rate. During 2013 & 2014 that project has been running without grant funding and is paid for by the school.

- How will the project actually take place? How many sessions of gardening will £1,292 buy? What will the residents of care homes do in these sessions? What will table top gardening entail?

Each Care-home - for example Rose Lodge in Exmouth - will be offered nine client sessions plus one optional free staff training session. Hopefully the enclosed (sorry we missed that!) spread sheet, will, when taken together with the press clippings and the photographs I have provided, will show what a typical session looks like. I am happy to come in and speak to Councillors or indeed answer any questions by telephone.

Getting elderly gardening could save NHS £11,000 a year per person

Simply enabling elderly people to tend their garden could save the taxpayer as much as £11,000 a year per person, a landmark pilot study has found.



Phyllis Plummer in her garden in south London Photo: Christopher Pledger

By John Bingham, Social Affairs Editor

8:30AM BST 26 May 2012

When Sarah Jackson, a horticulturalist, set up a small scheme finding volunteers to help older people who could no longer maintain their back garden on their own, she hoped it would also help keep them fit and active.

After three years she was able to point to a string of examples of people who had not only improved their lifestyle but also built new social networks helping prevent isolation and depression.

She was convinced that, as a result, they were making fewer visits to the doctor than they might otherwise have done and that it had even made them less likely to end up in hospital.

But now an official audit of the project - which involves just 46 older people in a single borough in south London - has concluded that it could have saved the taxpayer as much as £500,000 a year in just one area.

It now sits at the centre of a government strategy which, it is hoped, could save the taxpayer tens of millions of pounds a year and transform the quality of life of many older people.

Paul Burstow, the care minister, praised the “Garden Partners” project in Wandsworth and signalled that similar schemes could be set up across the country as part of an overhaul of the social care system due to be outlined next month.

He signalled last week that similar initiatives – not just involving gardening – would be a key plank of a long-awaited White Paper on care.

The project run by Age UK and funded by the local NHS trust - matches older people no longer able to keep up their garden with younger residents of the borough.

The volunteers all have an interest in growing plants or vegetables but have no green space of their own and many were on waiting lists for allotments.

They were matched with someone with similar tastes and interests in a deliberate move to help build long-term friendships and they were encouraged to share the garden, planning new projects together.

Some of the older people suffered from relatively minor forms of arthritis while others have conditions such as Parkinson’s.

An official audit of the scheme, due to be published next month, shows that four out of five of the older people said it had helped them maintain or even improve their physical activity and 83 per cent said it had made them more mobile.

The same proportion said it had helped reduce or maintain their levels of anxiety.

Drawing on research on the link between mobility levels and falls and hip fractures or anxiety and depression, Jane Harris and Stephanie Sexton, health and social care consultants, estimated how many GP visits, A&E visits and hospital admissions the improvement might have prevented.

Using standard estimates of the cost of NHS care, they then calculated the potential saving.

When only those who said they had seen a discernible improvement since joining the scheme are included, the estimated saving to the NHS is £113,748 a year.

And when those who said it had prevented existing conditions getting worse are also counted, the potential saving rises to £500,223 – almost £10,900 per person overall.

Phyllis Plummer, 80, a retired nurse, was paired with Jennie Organ, to help maintain her garden in

Tooting.

With a shared interest in conservation, they redesigned the garden together, dividing it between the former lawn – now a miniature wildflower meadow - and vegetable patch.

“I have had two knee replacements, I’m past getting down and I just wasn’t able to do the garden any more,” said Miss Plummer.

“Jennie and I are great friends and I would never have met her.

“I have an active life and plenty of friends but any person living on their own who doesn’t get out much would really benefit from it.”

They divide responsibilities: Miss Plummer pays for the flowers while her garden partner does the digging and maintains the veg patch. They share the produce.

“My father when he was alive used to grow vegetables years ago,” said Miss Plummer.

“At the moment Jennie has got some cabbages, cauliflower, peas, tomatoes and two types of potatoes in.

“We have grown quite a lot of different things, last year we had radishes, we’ve experimented.”

Miss Jackson, who co-ordinates the scheme, said: “The first thing they say is that it is wonderful to have the garden done, that they don’t have to worry about it any more and that it is nice to have company.

“But what we have found is that it is the relationship that grows between the two people that really takes them by surprise.

“That is what in the long term, with support and stability, improves their quality of life.

“One of the partners had multiple problems, she had cancer and a heart condition and was unsurprisingly feeling quite depressed.

“She had two volunteers and the three of them working together in the garden improved her quality of life no end.

“She said to me on more than one occasion: ‘This project saved my life’.”

Mr Burstow said: "It's great that young people want to help their older neighbours do their gardens.

"This is a great example of a local initiative that brings communities together and saves the taxpayer money."

How we moderate

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Project Costs for One Care Home Delivery

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Option Week 7	
Plant based Activity	Hanging Baskets	Planting raised beds with mixed flowers	Potting up plants & cuttings to be used in local school garden	Planting mixed height containers (planting for colour)	Potting on perennial - to be used in a range of gardens. Espy Primary School.	Making a house plant indoor garden.	Softwood Cutting to be used to produce plants and hedging & shrubs.	
Purpose	Enhance Care Home garden area. Or, to enhance Primary School entrance.	Enhance garden area for all residents.	To provide local school children with plants to use in their school garden	To enhance garden area. To provide exercise (watering). Training opportunity for Care Home Staff.	To enhance locality - Plants to be handed on to Primary School for use in grounds	To be retained by residents of handed on to the local Primary School	To be used to develop school wildlife / teaching area.	
Description of plants to be used	5 x 12 Hanging basket kits	Petunia Bolero	Chard (40)	Busy Lizzies (100)	Penstemon (24)	15 Spiderplants	Hebe, Fushia, Spirea etc	
Plants Costs	£120	£15	£8	£15	£30	£38	£0	£226
Source	http://www.homegardensplus.com/item-p-400198/complete-designer-mix-hanging-basket-plant-kit-24-plugs	http://www.gardenindirect.co.uk/petunia	http://seeds.suttons.co.uk/gardening/Chard-Plug-Plants	http://www.thompson-morgan.com/flowers/flower-plants/busy-lizzie-plants	http://www.hardyplantsonline.co.uk/online-shop/penstemons.html	http://www.gardens4you.co.uk/index.php?/House-Plants/Spider-Plants	local	
Description of materials to be used	Hanging Baskets	Planters	Growing Pots	Terracotta Pots	Growing Pots	Growing Pots	Growing Pots	
Project Materials Cost	£0	£250	£10	£50	£10	£10	£10	£340.00
Item	Tidy tray / shelf	Latex Gloves	Plug Plant Trainer	Seed Propogator	Watering cans	Folding Tables	Misc - Including compost, soil . hort sand, labels etc.	
Source	http://www.amazon.co.uk/JUST-GREEN-TIDY-TRAY-SHELF/dp/B00189XT3C	http://www.stuff-uk.net	http://www.podington.co.uk/compact-plug-plant-trainer.html	http://www.greenhousepeople.co.uk/products/166/self-watering-propagator/	http://www.amazon.co.uk	http://www.amazon.co.uk	Local	
Quantity	2	1	2	4	5	3	1	
Sub Total	£15	£6.00	£15	£10	£4	£65	£100	
Tools Total	£30.00	£6.00	£30.00	£40.00	£20.00	£195.00	£100.00	£421.00
Misc items	Disclosure where required for volunteers (each - estimated)	Consumables (gloves, handwipes etc)	Travel Costs - averaged out	Proportion of indemnity insurance	Gazebo (proportion)	Catering (estimate)		
Misc Total	£50.00	£25.00	£60.00	£80.00	£45.00	£45.00		£305.00
						Costs for one Care Home delivery (Six Sessions)		£1,292
6 Sessions (as above)	cost	£1292.00						
1 Session (Safety & compliance)	cost	£0.00						
2 sessions (using seeds, seedlings, pots & seed trays)	cost	£0.00	From existing resources					
Optional training session for staff (Care home to pay)	cost	£0.00						
10 Sessions		£1292.00						

Dear Jamie

The figures to date for 2 of our Parish Together Fund (PTF) projects are:

Project	PTF Allocation	Total spend to date	Balance to use by 31-03-15
Medical transport	£5,000	£187 (as at 29-09-14)	£4,813
Cranbrook Community Fund (CCF)	£4,000 + £1500 BPC	£3,531.50	£1,968.50

Uptake on the Medical transport support scheme has been lower than anticipated, however for those registered on the scheme it has been invaluable. The latest figure I have is £187 which was up to 29th September; will let you have the October figures shortly.

The projects which have received CCF support have been instrumental in the development of the community in the town. Residents involved in project delivery have had a steep but enjoyable learning curve and it is not unreasonable to expect several more applications to the CCF before the end of the financial year as the community expands and takes shape.

To this end I am writing to ask if it would be possible to revise the 'split' of monies already allocated for this year out of the PTF to enable Council to continue to support the emerging community through the CCF. Should the NHB Panel be in agreement to approve an internal funds-transfer, I would suggest the sum of £2000 be reallocated from the Medical Transport scheme to the CCF, leaving a remaining £2,500 approximately to support registered patients (even by reimbursing 100% of the cost rather than the current 50% would leave ample funding for those in need of the scheme), going forward with just under £4,000 to support future CCF applications.

Yours Sincerely

Angie Hurren
Broadclyst Parish Council Clerk

Parishes Together Fund meeting 24 November 2014

Ottery St Mary Town Council are working up a Parishes Together Fund project and wanted to get feedback from the NHBP as to whether they would agree in principle to support the project.

If the NHBP agree in principle then they would submit a completed application form. However, as this project is time dependent it may be that we would need to have a special extra meeting to decide the application.

Application for Parishes Together Funding – request for agreement in principle

Ottery St Mary Town Council intends to take over the freehold of the old Station Youth Centre at St Saviours which will be used to restart the Youth Club under The06 Project (which has been accepted by Devon County Council). The Youth Club is used by young people from all surrounding Parishes, including Talaton and Aylesbeare which are working with Ottery in “Parishes Together”. It is an old property which will need a lot of money spent on it. As well as the Youth Club the intention is for the Ottery Help Scheme to have Offices there. The Help Scheme has been supported by Parishes Together funds previously as a very worthwhile cause and serves all surrounding Parishes as well as that of Ottery St Mary.

Devon County Council has indicated that it will contribute £10,000 towards the start-up costs providing matched funding is found. Ottery St Mary Town Council will provide £5,000 and the request is that £5,000 of Parishes Together funds (from Ottery St Mary, Talaton and Aylesbeare) be used.

Judith Reynolds
Ottery St Mary Town Clerk
11th November 2014

East Devon District Council

6 month update for the Parishes Together Fund 2013/ 2014

It's now at least 6 months on so we are contacting all the successful projects to see how you are getting on with your project, getting on with spending the money and to ask if you would like any further help from us.

Please could you send us an update, including things like:

- How far along the project is now
- How successful the project has been, what benefit it has been to the community
- The future of the work or project (if relevant)
- If carrying out the project has had all the parishes involved working together
- How much of the Parishes Together Fund money has been spent
- Attach pictures if you have any
- Any barriers to completing your project such as match funding

1. Tidying up a woodland area between two parishes to create a public open space

Shute Parish Council

£1,320

Sorry for not sending a reply earlier but at this present time work has not commenced as yet. We were advised to leave the matter until the autumn and now we are waiting for the contractor to start.

2. Watertap for allotments used jointly by several parishes

Bishops Clyst Parish Council

£595

The project has enabled tenants to improved water supply for their produce as well as encouraging more elderly residents to take on allotment plots as the tap is more accessible for tenants who rent plots at the far end of the ground.

Our allotment is made up of tenants from within the Parish boundaries as well as some from neighbouring Parishes so the project is encouraging and has made life easier for all tenants using the community allotment ground.

The whole amount was spent on the project

Here are just two comments received from tenants:

Tenant (Nicky Hewitt) commented "I have a water butt on my shed, but it has always run dry by the most water-hungry time of the summer. Because I have the allotment right at the end of the row, I always had the longest trek to the tap and the longest hosepipe, which still didn't reach right down the length of my plot. The new tap has made trips with a single watering can less back-breaking and meant I can now get the hose to every part of my plot. And, with easier access to water, I have diversified: I experimented with a small row of pink celery this year (a very water-

needy crop) and it has done well, so I am planning greater things for the next growing season!"

Tenant (Elaine Davis) commented: "The new tap is the best thing to have happened on the site, for me, since I took over my plot. It means that I too can reach all parts with the hose, but more importantly it is an improvement for all plot holders, not just those of us at the top of the site. Before we had this tap there was frequently a queue of folk waiting to water on dry summer evenings – we all know the best time to water so we want to do it at the same time as one another. Even with 2 people using the other tap at the same time the wait was sometimes considerable & tempers could get frayed....now it's just so much better, & fairer too. Each plot holder on the site should have access to the same facilities which is now achieved."

**3. Use of falconry to deter seagulls in coastal towns
Sidmouth Town Council
£17,600**

Please see attached report.

**4. Path at Candy's Field to allow people to access the recreation field more easily.
Lympstone Parish Council
£1,964**

The work on the footpath was completed earlier in the year and has been very well received by parents who use it to get to school and the village and by the school who use it to take children into the Field.

The Parish Council used its own funds to extend resurfacing down to the school gates as this area was also in poor condition.

I have attached photos of the work together with an additional sign that has been placed at each end of the path saying:

This footpath has been surfaced with funds
provided by Lympstone Parish Council
and with funds provided by
Devon County Council and
East Devon District Council
under the Parishes Together Fund

As mentioned in the application, this work is to the benefit of pupils who come from Lympstone and Exmouth.

Many thanks for your support for this project.

The next stage is to erect lighting on the footpath as we have had concerns raised about the need for this so that people feel safe in using this route during the hours of darkness.





**5. Treatment of knotweed on land between two parishes
Broadhembury Parish Council
£1,000**

The project itself is still in process. Broadhembury and Payhembury parishioners and councillors have worked together three times to date.

The knotweed is not yet eradicated, but we are winning and we have prevented the weed from entering the water course. It is dying back, but will have to be revisited next season.

I don't believe we have any photographs - I will make enquiries. I am afraid we were all geared up for outdoor work.

**6. Budgeting and financial training from East Devon CAB for residents of
Ottery St Mary and district
Ottery St Mary Town Council
£200**

We have not spent any of the money yet. Because the course we had on offer was part of our Advice Services Transition grant form BIG I decided that we should wait until we had launched the Advice East Devon partnership website which was delayed by 3 months due to the loss of the member of staff who was heading up this part of the project.

The idea was to then contact ALL the Parish Councils about it with a poster and an offer of the courses we bid in for. Since we bid in with our course design it has changed a bit, not least because of the Chancellor's original statement changing Pension legislation and then last weekend he and the Prime Minister told the world that the CAB service will be working with the Pension Service to deliver advice in this area across the UK – another thing that we think will make our course attractive to parish communities. Andrea is tweaking the course a bit just to include this service

and to update people on the changes to pensions – albeit that a number of the attendees may already have got their pensions in operation.

The posters are expected any day from the printers and then we will write to all the councils **but send a slightly different one** to the 4 that joined in the Parishes Together Fund, pointing out that they have a bought and paid for course ready and waiting for them, they just have to tell us when and where. We expect some take up before the end of this calendar year and I will get back to you with the details – who, where and when.

I fully appreciate that this may not be acceptable but the delay was out of our hands and when the member of staff left we were unable, despite a Devon wide advertising campaign, to replace him.

7. Mobile phone for Ottery St Mary and district foodbank so they have a dedicated line

Ottery St Mary Town Council
£25

The phone has been purchased and is in use.

8. Purchase of computer equipment for Ottery St Mary and district computer club

Ottery St Mary Town Council
£2,993

To get the Club up and running we placed an advert in the local press advertising the fact that we were having a drop-in morning in the local Council meeting room. We had more than thirty people come to this session and several other people had telephoned expressing an interest but were unable to attend the drop-in. At the drop-in we had laptops and tablets to ascertain what people wanted to learn on. The break down was approximately two-thirds for laptops and one-third for tablets.

The lessons started, Martin Dace trainer, devised a programme of five sessions to be held one morning a week from 10.00 – 12.00. These sessions have been very well received. We try and have eight people per session as this is the number that two people can easily help. We have asked those who have attended the courses whether or not they were beneficial and the overwhelming comment was we give you at least 11 out of ten. We have three disabled people who have joined the scheme. When we had lower numbers because of holidays the people on the course offered to make up the cost for the hire of the room. Since we have run the first few courses we also do “query” sessions so that people who have been on the five sessions come along and ask us to help them if they have a problem, like attaching a file to emails, banking, or whatever.

We are still running the courses and still receiving calls from people wanting to attend. Also we put an advert in the local press and have two new teachers which will help to spread the load.

Also students from Kings School came and helped with the session on social media which was enjoyed by all.

We do intend to carry on teaching people computers as long as there is a need. At the moment the desire to learn does not seem to be diminishing. Tipton St John Computer group is hoping to combine with the Ottery group as they teach more advanced computing skills and as our beginners still want to progress further and this means that we increase our sessions to at least two a week, one in Ottery and one in Tipton.

Currently the total expenditure is £1,165 pounds out of the £2,768 awarded by Parishes Together.

9. Ottery St Mary and District Help Scheme Ottery St Mary Town Council £5,557.30

The “project” links into the successful recruitment of local people to work as volunteers in the community to help others who may be vulnerable due to illness, frailty, advanced age or loneliness. To successfully work with others, it is the aim of Ottery Help Scheme that volunteers should be trained to do this work, whether it be driving them to medical appointments, cutting toe nails, working with those who are bereaved, in need of a friend or those who are in the early stages of dementia. The reality is that many of our clients do not use just one of our services, but perhaps two or three and we see the same faces at the Memory Café as we do transporting them to hospital or cutting their toe nails.

We have just completed a very good six-week training course in bereavement. This was for six of our bereavement volunteers, some new, and some who have been volunteering in this field for some time. All found it very illuminating, increased their awareness about theoretical models of grief, and self awareness about their own attitudes and limitations, as well proposing ideas for taking care of their own needs in the process.

Other training that has taken place has linked into other groups’ training sessions such as the very good Dementia Friends training run by Ottery St Mary Parish Church in June. Around eight members of staff attended this training which increased awareness about dementia and how to better integrate people suffering with the illness within the community.

Eight volunteer drivers attended a “Patient Handling” course run by Hospiscare on 22.10.14 and feedback I have had was that it was excellent and gave drivers a much better idea of how to handle physical contact with clients as they manoeuvre in and out of the car, especially if they use a wheelchair or frame. (Please see amusing anecdote below)

We are still to procure good First Aid training. Unfortunately the Red Cross is currently being re-structured and the training sessions are no longer available as quoted in our bid earlier this year. We are however in communication with Devon and Cornwall 4 x 4 who have offered 10 places on their course due to take place on

23.11.14 for just a nominal fee. I am currently collecting together 10 delegates to take part in this opportunity

A repeat of the bereavement training has been put in place for February and March 2015. This will be for those that were unable to take part this autumn and will be extended out to any volunteer who would like to learn more about grief and bereavement as it affects their roles.

From the training it was identified that a peer-support group for those working in the bereavement field would be useful as a way of offloading emotional impact from working with people suffering grief. These will be set-up quarterly from 2015, facilitated by a staff member (at least initially), and will also offer opportunities for professional growth and development by having an occasional guest speaker or topic to be discussed.

A new volunteer who has recently retired and has spent her career teaching children with special needs is currently considering running a communication skills workshop for all volunteers. I have yet to talk in depth with her about what we would require but it should cover basic listening skills, an awareness about communicating with those with dementia and other special needs.

Excerpts from evaluation forms from the Bereavement Training Sessions; -

- This session was amazing for me in that it triggered grief that I thought I had dealt with fully. It helped to diffuse my situation
- The presentation and content of this session promoted a lot of very useful conversation
- Freddie the Leaf was a beautiful and sensitive way of introducing life/death. This would be a very gentle way or approach to young people having to deal with death of a friend or family member.
- This course has been really helpful. Jill has been a great leader and I am pleased to have attended the course and feel I can cope with a situation so much better now
- I gained lots of useful information and feedback/comments which has given me confidence in what I am doing

Email received after Patient Handling course 22.10.14 (thingummy = Handibar)

The training was brilliant, really well done and we all learned a lot. Someone from Ottery had their thingummy with them and demonstrated it. The Physio leading had never seen one and nor had any of the other groups and the Hospiscare driver in charge has now been told to go and source some. They were all very jealous of us here in Ottery, so well done.

10. Purchase of gazebos for community events
Exmouth Town Council
£2,438.40

This project has been very successful in so far as many local charities have benefitted from the availability of our 3x3m gazebos. The scheme mostly benefits not for profit organisations which are based in Exmouth and in our neighbouring parishes. Specifically, small local charities who do not have sufficient funds to buy (or justify buying) a gazebo in order to have a stall at the many civic events now have the opportunity to promote their services and generate funds. The project involved collaboration with Budleigh Salterton. The entire allocation has been spent. The attached pictures from Exmouth's Christmas Cracker show the gazebos in use.





11. Works to a footpath linking two parishes
Upton Pyne Parish Council
£704

Our joint project with Brampford Speke has not yet been completed, (but will be shortly!!), joint meetings with BS parish council and footpath wardens have finalised the areas of path that are in most need of refurbishment and contractors have been engaged, we are in the process of obtaining the materials to carry out the work as we have found that we can purchase them cheaper than the contractor!

12. Purchase of books for a reading scheme at the school
Rockbeare Parish Council
£2,500

The Rockbeare/Whimple money was for the primary school in Rockbeare which has pupils from both parishes.

It has all been spent on a reading scheme which is graded for the pupils and has a much wider range of subjects than previous schemes. It is therefore more interesting. I do not know how many books form the scheme but they were laid out on tables in the hall when I visited the school last term. There were clearly dozens of books there.

I am told by one of the staff that the scheme has been received enthusiastically by the pupils. It is a bit early to say if it has lead to improved reading as it has only been used since the start of this term, but the signs are good.

13. Mobile speed sign to be shared between three parishes
Woodbury Parish Council
£1,947

I am struggling at the mo. I am in the throws of engaging the Police safety officer, and with this help and some locations for the sign proffered from the wards we will approach highways. This is not proving easy and I have some family illness making it hard to devote the amount of time needed.

14. Bus shelters on a bus route between Farringdon and Sidmouth
Farringdon Parish Council
£1,650

We are extremely keen to get the Bus Shelter project implemented but have had delays in quotes for concrete pads and shelters due to traffic management costs etc. We have now agreed to put any shelters into metal feet rather than fix them all to the ground and hopefully this will eliminate the need for two concrete pads either side of the A3052 at Farringdon Cross.

I have today been busy contacting firms regarding a revised quote for just one concrete pad at the bus stop travelling in the Sidmouth direction. This is right next to the lay bye so should eliminate the need for costly traffic management .

We are on track to get the pads implemented as soon as possible and are well aware the money must be used by the March deadline.

As soon as the shelters are implemented we hope to have as much publicity as possible as to what we have achieved and will celebrate the contribution of both EDDC's Parishes Together Fund idea and the help Sidmouth Town Council have given us. We will notify you when we are in this position.

Sorry we are not further ahead but we are on course!!

15. Health and wellbeing transport bus
Budleigh Salterton Town Council
£21,805

The Budleigh Hospital Hub is coming along really well. The order for the minibus has been made and when it's ready I will be able to release the funds to Exmouth & District Community Transport Group - that's the group that is coordinating the purchase etc. As soon as I know the date, I will let you know. It is my understanding that the bus will be ready 20 weeks after the order date, so a little while to go!

16. Lengthsman scheme, additional time of a local contractor
Uplyme Parish Council
£7,799.20

The short answer is that despite me having drawn up a draft contract for the lengthsman service in August, we have still not had agreement from Sidmouth Town

Council who are the main beneficiaries of the money. Cllr Turner is chasing this up again.

The Council had hoped that someone would have been recruited and working by now, but this is sadly not the case.

As soon as I have some more info, I will of course pass it on to you.

Working together - we have had some success in contact between the parishes (mostly inter-clerk email, plus a meeting arranged by Jim Knight in September to discuss possible projects for next year), but I have to say it has mostly been Uplyme doing the running. I hope the situation will improve as soon as the scheme is put into action.

**17. Parish noticeboards to advertise events from both parishes
Awliscombe Parish Council
£434.50**

I have been waiting for quotes for the noticeboard which seems to have taken some time for people to get back to me. We have now come to an agreement with a company and as far as I am aware it is being made as I write this. Cllr Colin Wright is overseeing the project and I will contact him to find out timescales regarding payment and when it will be finished.

**18. Axe Valley community transport, purchase of a new bus
Axminster Town Council
£25,769.40**

I can, however, report that all the funding (from 2012-2013 and 2013-2014) which was allocated for the purchase of a second bus for Axe Valley Ring and Ride has now been disbursed and the new bus purchased. The launch took place, here at Axminster Guildhall, early in October. The project took a long time to come to fruition because of the general problems in getting grant funding from other awarding bodies.

The bus looked very smart for the launch, which was attended by users and representatives of the contributing parishes. (I am trying to get hold of a photograph. The press did promise to send me one but it has not materialised yet)

The purchase of the second bus ensures that the regular service is much more secure as there will be a "back up" if that vehicle is off the road for any reason. When not being used as a stand-in for the regular service bus, the second bus is used for special outings (shopping trips further afield and visits to places of interest or even just trips out and about to enjoy the countryside). The benefits for the local community of this bus should extend over several years.

Because the bus has only just gone into service it is not possible at this stage to provide statistics showing its use. However, all the contributing parishes make annual grants to Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride to help cover its regular running costs and residents in the villages, such as Kilmington and Membury, do

make use of the services offered. Just as a general comment I would say that one sees people in wheel chairs in Axminster far more regularly now than used to be the case, say fifteen years ago, and that this is attributable in part to the improved access to buildings for the disabled and the provision for carers to travel on specialised transport such as the Ring and Ride bus to access town centre shops and services.

The nature of the project involved initial co-operation between the parishes in identifying the need and agreeing to support it, but once that was done it was a case of waiting until a suitable vehicle became available, which has now been achieved.

I have managed to get a photograph of the bus. Not the one, showing the sponsorship from D.C.C., E.D.D.C. etc. (does not make a good human interest photograph) but I can promise you that it was on the door of the vehicle in which the human interest is standing in or in front of and will be seen by all as the bus travels around the area.



**19. Training and equipment for voluntary lengthsman
Luppitt Parish Council
£3722.60**

We are just getting underway, it was always an autumn project, couldn't do much while the hedges were overgrown, then we will be waiting for dry spells!

**20. Cranbrook Community Fund to give out to help people starting up clubs or events in Cranbrook
Broadclyst Parish Council
£4,000**

When setting its 2014/15 budget, Broadclyst Parish Council foresaw the need for a separate community grant scheme which would run in parallel with its own community grant scheme to support the emerging community of Cranbrook and allocated £1,500 to be made available for start-up grants for community projects and groups.

Working in conjunction with EDDC Officers & members of the Cranbrook Community Forum an award was made to supplement this scheme with a further £4,000 giving a total 'pot' of £5,500. The scheme is administrated by Broadclyst Parish Council and projects supported to date are: Cranbrook community market, Cranbrook football club, Cranbrook Scouts and the annual Pumpkin Parade, with an application in the pipeline from Cranbrook Brownies/Guides unit.

Broadclyst Parish Council has seized this opportunity to support the emerging community in a practical way as well as simply handing out grants. Officers encourage groups to write proper funding bids (an art in itself!) and have worked with Corena Ward to ensure these groups are properly formed and that members understand the requirements involved with running a not-for-profit community group. Help has been given to understand various legal structures, draft and adopt constitutions, keeping accurate records, ensuring monies are held and accounted for in an appropriate manner and drafting a business plan with a view to groups becoming self-supporting. Matched funding opportunities have also been encouraged and by working with Leisure East Devon (LED) an amount of matched funding under the Active Communities award scheme was secured for the Football team.

All events/groups at Cranbrook which have benefitted from an award are open to all, and are regularly attended by residents from neighbouring parishes. This has helped break down 'them and us' barriers and has enabled new friendships to be formed between local villages and new residents at Cranbrook, widening the community beyond its administrative boundaries.

21. A kitchen refit for Younghayes Community Centre kitchen in Cranbrook as the current kitchen is not to catering standards
Broadclyst Parish Council
£12,000

The Younghayes Centre was built to a shell specification through Section 106 contributions and the developers installed a basic kitchen to enable basic use in the first instance. However it soon became apparent in order to ensure the long term sustainability of the facility which it is hoped will become a local hub / centre for community use and hire, a professional standard kitchen would be required to comply with hygiene requirements.

After establishing a working party comprising Broadclyst Parish Council Officers, members of the Cranbrook community group CHIC and EDDC Officers & Council Member the project has progressed significantly. The group has worked closely with a local company to undertake the refit which is scheduled to take place in November 2014. A small amount of additional funding was required to make the required fabric and wiring alterations; this was funded by EDDC.

The kitchen will benefit from a newly-released commercial oven which is being installed FOC as a demonstration model on the agreement that the company may have use of the kitchen up to 12 times per year for a 5 year period for demonstration purposes. There is an option to purchase the oven after years, alternatively the managers of the kitchen at that point would be free to consider if they wish to enter into a further demonstration agreement for a new model.

By carrying out this project the Younghayes Centre will be able to host a wide range of community and commercial events which require on-site catering facilities, its location and proximity to the M5, Exeter International Airport and railway making it an attractive option for companies and community groups seeking a venue for regular or one-off events.

22. A health transport scheme for Cranbrook that will pay for the costs of getting to and from doctors and hospital appointments until a doctors is provided in Cranbrook

Broadclyst Parish Council

£5,000

Rural transport has long been an issue with people living in areas off the beaten track needing to run their own transport or rely on neighbours and friends for lifts. However in these early years of Cranbrook a situation has arisen where funding trigger points require the first 500+ houses to be occupied before local amenities can be provided. During the planning stages of the town, it was envisaged that until such time occupancy figures at Cranbrook reached a level which would support a variety of businesses, early residents of the town would use existing facilities in neighbouring villages.

This is certainly true of healthcare, and from the outset Pinhoe & Broadclyst surgery accepted registrations from patients at Cranbrook. Pinhoe surgery itself is based in Pinhoe village near the railway station, with a branch surgery located in the heart of Broadclyst village. Although as the crow flies the branch surgery is under 2 miles, the road network which links Cranbrook with Broadclyst is infamous as a dangerous road, evidenced by DCC providing free school transport to pupils who live along its length despite being well within the customary 3 mile radius of the schools. It is therefore highly undesirable to have patients walking along a road which is little more than a country lane with no pavement/footpath to attend medical appointments.

It was soon identified that due to the democratic make-up of Cranbrook a sector of its community was struggling with the cost of attending medical appointments , and so a Medical Transport subsidy scheme was set up using Parish Together monies through which qualifying (low income) patients are reimbursed 50% of their travel costs on production of a receipt. The scheme is administrated by Corena Ward, Community Development Worker, on behalf of Broadclyst Parish Council.

This scheme is being used by residents in rural Broadclyst parish as well as Cranbrook, and is open to qualifying parishioners right throughout the Growth Point area. Usage figures have, through the summer, been lower than anticipated, however it has made a huge difference for those who have already been supported.

It is envisaged that as winter approaches and the seasonal illnesses kick-in, more patients will be applying to the scheme. It has also highlighted other potential areas which will need subsidising in the longer term to address mental health issues and enable addiction support. Once medical provision is available in Cranbrook it is likely that the original need for this scheme will be met, however Council and its partners will be using the opportunity to look at beneficiaries from outside Cranbrook and those patients which will still require specific medical services only available outside Cranbrook, identifying ongoing needs within the community and to consider different options of continuing to support these vulnerable parishioners in the future.

23. Honiton Community Cinema so people in and around Honiton don't have to go all the way to Exeter
Honiton Town Council
£9,980.60

This was to be match funded as it wouldn't pay for the whole project. The Beehive management group have raised most of the match funding and hope to place an order for the screen and equipment very soon.

Still chasing a response:

24. Mobile CCTV for use at events and weekends
Exmouth Town Council
£10,200

25. The Project- supporting young peoples mental health in the Axe Valley area
Axminster Town Council
£9,016.50

26. Putting local pictures on the interior of bus shelters to help smarten up the town for residents and visitors
Exmouth Town Council
£5,715.03

27. Play area improvements for a play area that could be used by several parishes
Clyst Honiton Parish Council
£4,130.50

Dear Jamie,

Please find below extracts from two recent Town Council meetings with the relevant resolutions regarding the Seagull Management Programme. Also attached is the report from Jonathan Marshall giving his feedback to the Town Council.

As you can see from the minutes the intention is to run a similar programme next year which will start much earlier in January 2015, probably run for a shorter time period, include the use of lasers where possible and be run in conjunction with Seaton Town Council.

Do let me know if there is any other information you need from me regarding this project.

Regards,

Christopher Holland

Town Clerk, Sidmouth Town Council

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 6 October 2014 at 6.30pm

84 Seagull Management Programme

Jonathan Marshall attended the meeting to present his report with regard to the Gull Control measures carried out throughout the 2014 breeding season.

RESOLVED: That Jonathan Marshall be thanked for his Gull Control report.

PART 'B'

94 2015/16 Budget Discussions

Members were asked to consider the financial implication on the forthcoming budget setting process of the reports received from:

94.2 Seagull Management Programme

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk to investigate further the quoted cost of control measures including the use of lasers for gull control.

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Pre-Budget meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 20 October 2014 at 6.30pm

PART 'B'

98 BUDGETS/ESTIMATES

Members were asked to consider recommendations to make prior to the Budget/Estimate meeting in January. A confidential schedule was issued to Members for their consideration

RESOLVED:

4. That £450 be included in the budget for Seagull Management to make a total of £5,000 when added to the 2014/15 budget. The Seagull Management program should also include the use of lasers in addition to falcons and will be run in conjunction with Seaton Town Council.



Progress report for Gull control measures throughout the 2014 breeding season (March -July)

We commenced regular visits to Seaton, Sidmouth and Exmouth town centres in March of 2014. During these visits we flew a variety of birds of prey which was designed to deter the local Herring gull population from building a colony on the roofs of the towns. It was quite obvious that the birds had already started to prepare for the breeding season ahead as their courtship starts in early January. During this time the gulls choose a potential nest site and protect from other pairs of birds which are looking for a safe place to raise their young. Despite this, the presence of birds of prey in their intended breeding territory caused considerable disruption to the gulls' normal behaviour. The gulls would alarm call and circle high in the sky above the town. This behaviour is designed to alert all the other members of the colony that there is a potential threat in the area. After approx 10 -15 minutes the gulls would move on from the buildings and often go either out to sea or fly to the high cliffs where they felt safe. In the initial stages the mere sight of a bird of prey would cause panic among the gulls and pigeons. However, over time the gulls became increasingly braver and would take longer to move on. It was obvious that certain birds of prey had a greater effect than others. The Harris Hawk would alert the gulls to the danger but would not cause the same amount of panic as the Hybrid falcons. A recording of the gulls own alarm call was played over a car roof mounted PA system and would move the birds off the roofs. Although this was very effective it did not actually move gulls from the area. It would take a flight from the Hybrid Falcons to cause the gulls to vacate the buildings.

As the breeding season progressed the gulls became increasingly more aggressive towards the falcons and the falconer. There were several occasions where the falcons were attacked by the gulls. This did not worry or injure the falcons as they are easily able to out-fly the gulls. However the falconer was injured on a few occasions by the gulls.

The feedback that we were getting from residents and business owners in the towns suggested that the numbers of nests on the roofs had been reduced from the areas that we were patrolling. However, we did have other residents telling us that the birds had chosen to make nests outside of our normal patrol routes. For example residents reported noticing more nests inland than there had been in previous breeding seasons.

I closely monitored several buildings on information given to me by established residents and these are the finding:

Balfour Manor – In 2013 there were 12 active nests on the roofs. These nest produced on average 2 chicks each. This gives us an increase in population of approximately 24 birds. In 2014 there were no nests in the buildings hence no chicks were produced from that building.

Exmouth Pavilion- In 2013 there were 9 active nests on the roofs. These nests produced approximately 18 birds. In 2014 there were no nests.

Seaton Town Hall. In 2013 there were 7 nests on the roof. These nest produced approx 14 chicks. In 2014 there were 3 nests. These produced 6 chicks.

This pattern was repeated on most of the buildings which we visited. However not all of the buildings were the same.

By far the most difficult thing to overcome was trying to persuade the visitors to all 3 of these towns to not feed the gulls. We continually asked people to take food waste home with them or to place it in the dustbins which the councils had provided. This is by far the main contributing factor to controlling gull

numbers and gull behaviour. We spent a huge proportion of the time we were carrying out our service talking to people and trying to educate them. Often this time and considerable effort was met with enthusiasm and encouragement. However occasionally it was met with aggression and intimidation from certain members of the community who seemed to be hell bent on actively feeding the gulls on a very regular basis. It did not matter how many times they were politely asked to refrain from feeding the gulls, they continued to do it in an almost obsessive manner. This was very frustrating and seemed to be undoing all the good work and effort we had been doing.

We did experience a great many people who would visit the seafront on Monday, Wednesday and Friday to watch the birds of prey fly. It became so popular that we decided to present the service in the form of a display where visitors could watch, learn and some would even get to hold some of the birds. This was a great way to get our message of being responsible about food waste across to the public. Obviously this had a positive effect on local business and was a great public relations exercise for the council.

In August we handed out feedback forms to residents, business owners and members of the public. We wanted to be able to monitor the work we carried out in an unbiased and accurate way. Most of the feedback forms have now been collected and are available to be looked at and monitored.

It is very difficult to be able to accurately ascertain the effects of the service over 1 season as we do not have any data to compare it with from previous years. However, I am very confident that the vast majority of the populations of all three towns found the service to be of great value for 3 reasons:

1. A significant reduction in nuisance gull numbers and therefore droppings and mess.
2. A valuable communication tool to remind visitors to the town to be more responsible for their litter and food waste.
3. A very popular tourist attraction and publicity exercise for the towns of Seaton, Sidmouth and Exmouth.

I am of the opinion that being able to communicate with local residents and visitors to the town is very important. It is the most effective way of being able to change the pattern of behaviour among the gulls. For any service to have a significant effect on gull numbers every person has to play their part in a concerted effort to tackle this problem. We all have a duty of responsibility and shared commitment to our community to ensure that our towns are clean and therefore less likely to experience health issues from food waste, bacteria and vermin.

Future improvements

For the gull control measures using birds of prey to have a significant effect we need to start patrolling the towns at the beginning January as was suggested at our initial meeting at the Seagull summit which was held in 2013. Due to an issue with funding we did not commence patrols until March 2014. This meant that we had already given the gulls a head start. They had already started to pair up and we in the process of choosing suitable nesting sites and defending them from other pairs of birds. This meant that we were starting from a position of below neutral. We need to give ourselves every possible advantage for this service to really work. We need to remember that birds don't wait for meetings. They will be constantly looking for an opportunity to create a colony from January onward. It is vitally important that we are ready if we are to make a difference. We need to be fastidious with regard to our litter bins. We need to have more public notice posters and reminders about dropping litter and asking people not to feed the gulls. We also need to address the people in the community who are actively feeding gulls and pigeons on a regular basis.

Raptorforce is more than willing to speak to schools, community groups and resident associations for no extra cost to the council in an effort to get the message across. A possible regular poster campaign in or local newspapers would keep this issue in the public consciousness

Raptorforce has already invested in a flying camera drone for the purpose of monitoring buildings and allowing us to be able to access information on the gulls without the need for scaffolding or hiring a cherry picker. This is safer, quicker, less expensive and causes less disturbance to the public. It also allows the roofs to be monitored and filmed so that video files can be instantly emailed to the relevant organisations.

We are also looking into investing in a laser which can be used at any time of the day or night which is extremely effective in moving colonies of birds. It is totally harmless and silent and can be used without disturbing any person. This will prove to be another extremely useful tool to have at in our arsenal.

We need to be clear that this project is not something that is going to change the problems we have with gull in or towns over night. It will take several seasons to have a serious impact on gull numbers. It needs continual attention and a willingness from our residents to co operate and backing from community leaders.