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JAY RAYNER

(Why it's important to
eat with your hands'



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Details inside

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IN MEMORY OF ZENA...

Many of you will recall that my darling partner Zena died from bowel cancer in June of last year. Firstly, I would like to thank those of you who made contact with me when I wrote in these pages about her loss: the depth and sincerity of your messages was so touching to me at such a difficult time.

Secondly, I have now decided to honour Zena's memory – and hopefully do something practical to help other people as a result of her death – by organising two special fund-raising events next month. I am running a half marathon and organising a dinner to raise funds for the hospice where she died and for Bowel Cancer LIK

If you'd like to support the effort then full details can be found here - https://tinyurl.com/hw2lj40



Andy's partner Zena O'Rourke died aged 53 in June of last year after suffering from bowel cancer

Editor's comment

AS I WRITE THESE WORDS a vital tool in the Editor's armoury sits staring back at me across the desk. I don't refer to the pen, the notebook or the laptop but that age old staple of this profession – the spike.

That most simple of instruments remains as beguiling to me now as it was the time I walked into my first newsroom some 30 years ago. And, joyfully, it has pretty much remained unchanged over all that time. Advances in technology and communication may come and go but there, sitting on any self-respecting journalist's desk, is the simple spike.

There remains something gloriously thrilling about shoving paper down on it, being extremely careful not to continue with the downward action too much and have your hand impaled too.

Indeed, a while back the 'elf 'n' safety brigade took agin the humble spike and started muttering darkly about removing them from desks. Naturally this was because 'someone', for the first time in the history of journalism, might be pushed onto one.

There was talk about placing a cork on top of the spike to make it safer. Notwithstanding the delicious thought that this idea might just provide justification for uncorking a bottle of claret at one's desk, this seemed pretty stupid to me.

So, there it remains, untouched by the ages. The recipient of printed out pages, assorted correspondence, torn out notes and even the odd receipt, it has even entered the vernacular as a verb... one's efforts being 'spiked' the ultimate slap in the face from Editor to writer.



In a world where tradition seems to take a daily kicking from those who insist the modern way is better, perhaps it takes a wistful gaze at a humble piece of office equipment to occasionally remind ourselves that a more sedate, considered, analogue approach to life is not always such a bad thing.

Until next time...and enjoy the magazine.

Andy

Andy Cooper, Editor, Devon Life 07785 629293, andy.cooper@archant.co.uk You can follow Andy on Twitter

≫@DevonLifeEd

MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS



CHRISSY HARRIS

Continuing her regular 'Let's Go To' series for Devon Life, Chrissy visits Totnes and discovers a town which is buzzing with creativity, passion and a just a touch of mysticism too! Read on Pgs 48-50



WILL EDWARDS

The landlord of the Church House Inn at Rattery says the village is a special place and in his feature for us this month he takes us on a tour of the people and places who contribute to community life. Read on Pgs 52-53.



FRAN MCELHONE

Exeter's verdant spaces are burgeoning, thanks in no small part to an army of volunteers led by a determined Conservation Officer profiled by Fran for Devon Life this month. Read on Pgs 62-63



SIMONE STANBROOK-BYRNE

Our resident walks expert Simone finds herself in Mid Devon this month, exploring a tiny parish as she 'Bounds Around The Burn'.

Read on Pgs 90-92



CATHERINE COURTENAY

Food & Drink Editor Catherine sits down with Michelin-starred chef Simon Hulstone to discuss his journey to the top and what inspires him at his top restaurant. Read on Pgs 110-111



TOM COX

Columnist Tom finds himself out on a walk on Dartmoor and staring into the isolated flooded crater that is the legendary Crazywell Pool, hoping against hope not to become Piers Morgan.

Read on P153

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March 2017 | Volume 21 | Issue 9 | Established 1966





= COVER STORY

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AVAILABLE WITH YOUR MARCH ISSUE

The spring 2017 issue of our South and South West A+ Education Guide is now available. You can see a digital version online at devonlife.co.uk or by scanning this QR code with a smartphone or tablet. If you would like a copy sent to you or would like to know how to get involved in the autumn 2017 issue of the magazine please contact Amanda Mckeown at amanda.mckeown@ archant.co.uk or call her on01803 860929.



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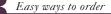
DEVONLIFE.co.uk

For all our contact details and a look ahead to our April issue please turn to page 273

Our cover image shows the River Dart at Totnes. Chris Cole/Alamy

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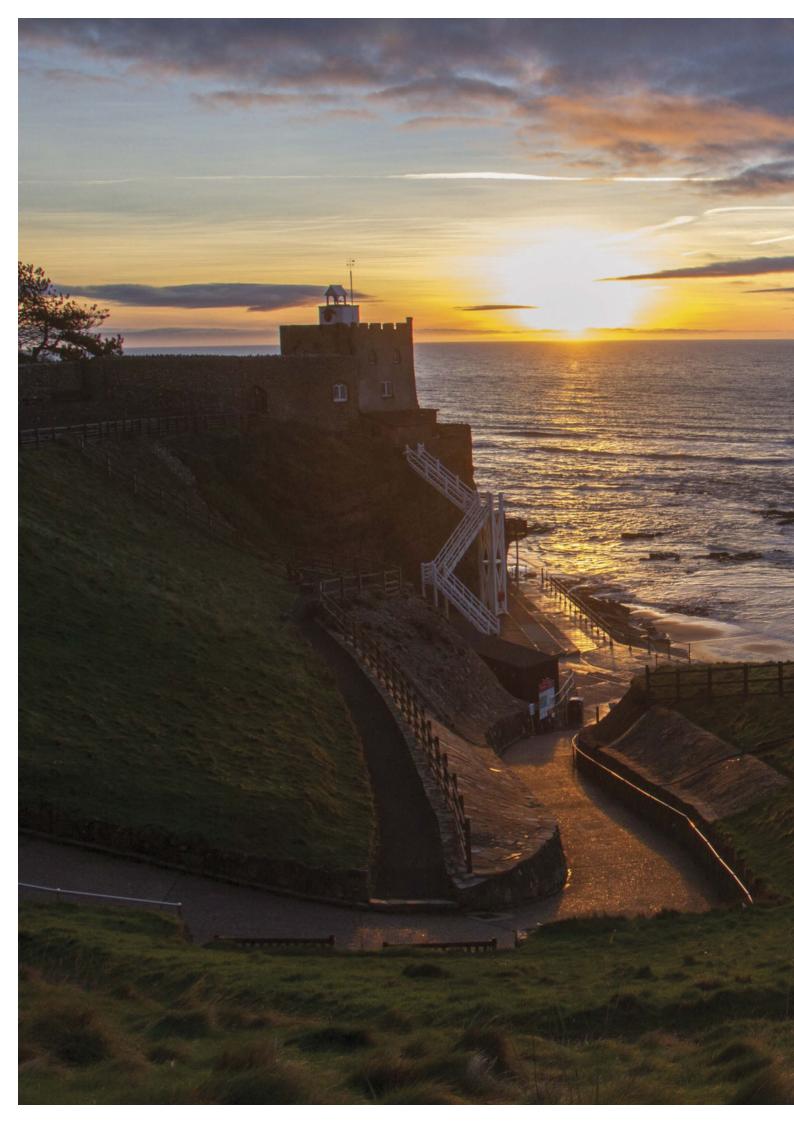
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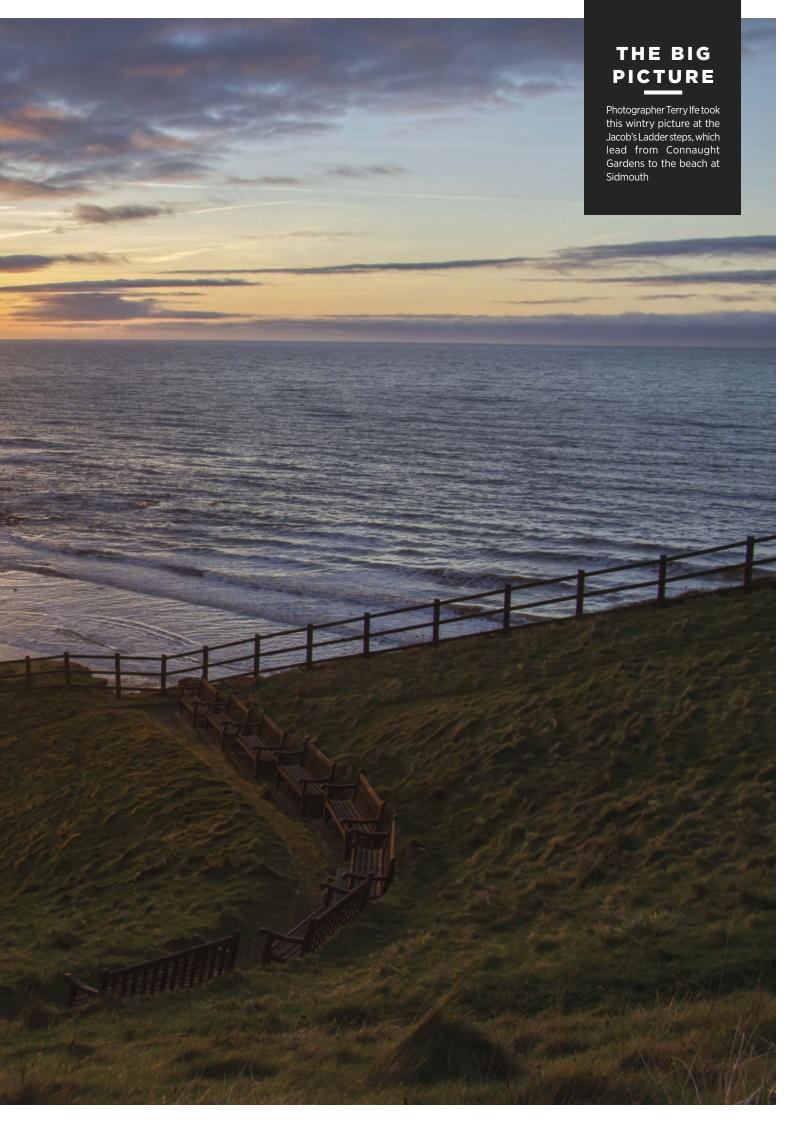
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INSIDER'S GUIDE

News and happenings from around the county with **Owen Jones**





Heralds of spring

Daffodils are the focus for £10,000 history project

A Heritage Lottery Fund grant of nearly £10,000 has been awarded to the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to record and raise awareness of the special historic daffodil varieties growing in the landscape.

Corinna Woodall, AONB Manager, says: "The daffodils represent the strong heritage and horticultural legacy of the market gardening industry, hugely important to the sense of place of the Tamar Valley. We are really looking forward to working with a number of different organisations and members of the community over the coming

months to learn about these spring flowers – survivors of the halcyon days of flower growing in the Valley – and to ensure they remain a feature in our landscape for generations to come."

Lesley Strong, Project Officer for the Tamar Valley AONB says: "For me, there's no better sight in spring than the hedgebanks and woodlands exploding into a riot of colour, as the daffodils bloom. This groundbreaking project, Heralds of Spring, will look at the historic collection of daffodils within the landscape, focussing initially on the Bere peninsula area."



work experience THANKS SPIKE

An inspirational Royal Navy sailor has been presented with an award for supporting work experience students at Plymouth Naval Base.

Warrant Officer Spike Way received the Naval Base Commander's Commendation for the excellence of his work with students from Devon which has a high number committing themselves to jobs in the Navy.

The base runs a twice-annual generic work experience week for school children from across Devon.



charity slim WILDLIFE SUPPORT

An Exeter man aims to lose pounds so that his favourite charity can gain a few £s.

David Ireland, 42, started 2017 with a New Year's resolution: to shed up to three stone.

Now he's hoping that his quest to 'lighten up' will help raise money for the conservation work of the Devon Wildlife Trust.

People can donate towards David's 'Shed Ibs and Raise £s' fundraiser, by visiting uk.virginmoney giving.com/DavidIreland7



BRITAIN'S five-times Olympian and 2014 European 10,000-metre champion Jo Pavey has voiced her support for a new women-only marathon in Devon, which is being held for the first time on 28 May.

Jo met the organisers of Women Can, Jo Earlam, Pauline Beare and Peg Wisemen at a media event at Tipton playing field to show her support for the marathon, which starts and finishes at the playing field in the East Devon village of Tipton St. John.

Local runners, Jo, Pauline and Peg organised the marathon to mark two landmark events which happened 50 years ago.

It was in 1967 that Katherine Switzer famously defied the 'men only' rules of Boston Marathon, carrying on to finish despite organisers' attempts to physically drag her off the course - a defiant moment in women's

athletics. The same year also saw the opening of the Tipton St. John playing field, often the start line for Jo Pavey's training runs.

Jo Pavey comments: "I am thrilled to be supporting this event celebrating Women Can.

"It's been 50 years since Katherine ran in the Boston Marathon, 50 years since this glorious playing field has been established and 30 years since women's marathon was introduced to the Olympics!"

One of the aims of Women Can is to create a legacy of improved access to running and coaching for girls and women in sport locally, nationally and internationally, through future charity link-ups.

This is now a reality thanks to main sponsors Exeter-based business communications firm IP Office Ltd. To find out more and enter the marathon, visit womencan.co.uk



ZUMBA FUN

A charity Zumba event at Plymouth Life Centre on 5 March, organised by Soroptimist International, will celebrate International Women's Day.



FESTIVAL CELEBRATES FOOD AND GARDENING

Plot to plate is the theme of a food and garden festival at Rattery being organised by Devon Women's Institute ladies.

The 11 March event at Rattery Village Hall will be a gathering of gardening and culinary professionals with demonstrations and events taking place all day from 10am – 4pm. There will also be a full programme of talks and demonstrations. See dartbayfoodgardenfestival.wordpress.com



URNS ON SHOW

Archaeological treasures from Plymouth Museum's collections are on show in 'Finding Prehistory', at Dartmoor National Park's award-winning visitor centre in Princetown.



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Steve Knightley and Phil Beer from Show of Hands

PAIR AIM TO FILL ROYAL ALBERT HALL

HOW many Devon performers can say they have sold out the Royal Albert Hall five times?

That's likely to be the proud boast of folk duo Steve Knightley and Phil Beer - also known as Show of Hands - when they return to the venue this Easter.

Leading folk duos from both sides of the Atlantic will be among special guests for the pair's 25th anniversary show.

Singer songwriter Knightley and multi instrumentalist Beer have forged one of the most successful ever partnerships in acoustic roots music and have already scored four sell-outs at the iconic London venue.

Now they will to head back to the capital to take on the gamble of hiring and selling out the historic 5,000-seater hall for a fifth time.

They will be accompanied by their long term special guest, bass player and vocalist Miranda Sykes. Miranda will also appear in her duo with top mandolin player Rex Preston.

Also in the line-up will be Devon's Lost Sound Chorus who last year appeared with Show of Hands at Exeter Cathedral in a concert marking the centenary of the first day of Battle of the Somme.

Long-time collaborator, composer and keyboards player Matt Clifford, who famously worked with The Rolling Stones, will also be on the Albert Hall stage as will Devon teacher Chris Hoban, who has penned some of Show of Hands' more recent songs including *Katrina*, *Hallows' Eve* and *The Old Lych Way*. Learn more at showofhands.co.uk



St Loye's Foundation has changed its name to Step One

Charity changes name to become Step One

An Exeter-based charity that has helped thousands of people through its employment, mental health and supported living services has a new name

St Loye's Foundation and Community Care Trust (CCT) have merged to create a 150-strong team that has helped 2,386 people move forward positively with their lives in the past year.

With the merger now firmly established, the joint organisation has rebranded with a new name - Step One.

People can access Step One's services through a referral by their local authority, Job Centre Plus, mental health care co-ordinator or GP. For more information visit steponecharity.co.uk.



Exeter Philharmonic Choir

A night of high drama

Concert-goers are in for a night of high drama at Exeter Cathedral on 18March when Exeter Philharmonic Choir joins forces with Exeter Philharmonic Orchestra to perform Giuseppe Verdi's Requiem. Tickets are available from exephil.org.uk, Exeter Visitor Information & Tickets in Dix's Field, or by calling 01392 499211.

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A local conservation charity has announced that it hopes to open Devon's first 'Nature School'.

Devon Wildlife Trust wants to open the Nature School as a combined nursery and primary school aimed at children aged 3 to 11 years using the free school model widely adopted elsewhere.

The Nature School would be a 'mainstream' school, open to all, following the National Curriculum, but one which the charity says would put outdoor learning and the natural environment at the heart of a high quality education for local children.

Okehampton has been put forward as the proposed location for the school. The town has been identified by Devon County Council as an area where there is an urgent need for more primary school places to be provided.

If the Trust's proposals are successful the Nature School would occupy new premises to be built on the north-east outskirts of the town close to Crediton Road.

Devon Wildlife Trust is now talking to local authorities, people and schools in the West Devon market town to gauge their support for the proposal.

The Trust's Chief Executive Harry Barton said: "We are seeking support from members of the community across Okehampton, in particular from parents whose children would be eligible to attend primary school in 2018 or 2019 and who live in the Okehampton area or nearby."

The Trust will be at the Ockment Centre, North Street, Okehampton between 2pm and 7pm on Friday 24 February to discuss the proposals and answer questions.



hospice support CHARITY MUSIC

Braunton songwriter Steph Lott, 32, features on *Survive*, a new EP from Charlotte Elizabeth released by CEI Music in February in aid of cancer support charity The Douglas Macmillan Hospice.

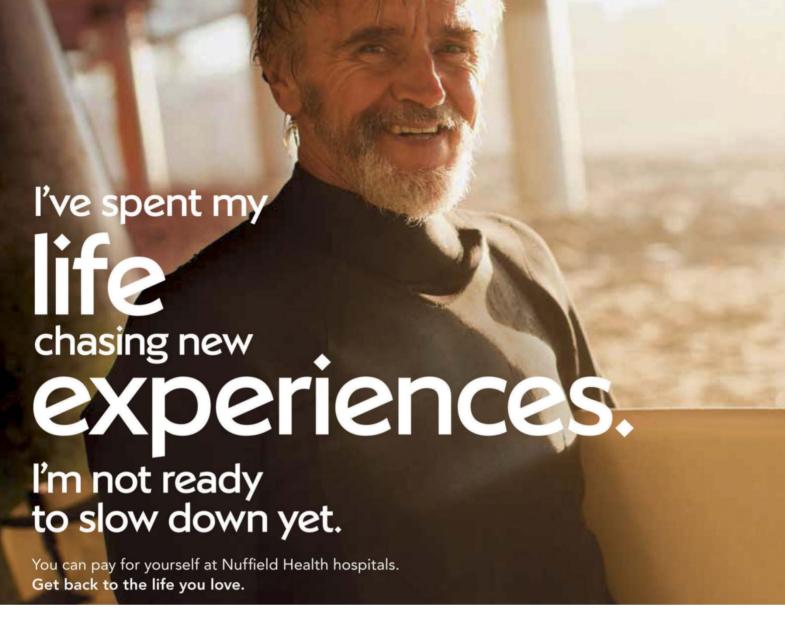
The EP was released on 3 February. Steph and Charlotte enjoyed working together so much they are already collaborating on further writing.



community award
CLIVE HONOURED

A man who has worked tirelessly for the past four years to raise tens of thousands of pounds to restore a dilapidated community hall has been recognised with a national honour.

Clive Horton-Stephens, of Cheriton Fitzpaine, Crediton, has been given a British Citizen Award for his services to the community, driving the restoration of Cheriton Fitzpaine Village Hall.



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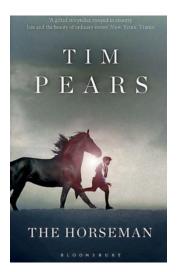
Annette Shaw's roundup of new books

AS a reviewer I analyse my feelings as I read and with this book there was a definite slowing down, like literary yoga. Tim Pears is reminiscent of Thomas Hardy. There's a hypnotic quality with beautiful imagery.

Tim writes in great detail and this constantly reinforces how difficult it was for agricultural workers to break free and to fulfil hopes and dreams.

"I had to get across the sheer drudgery and hardwork of country living throughout the seasons. Even with some advances in mechanisation, it was an existence of back-breaking labour."

The year is 1911, the reader is immersed in the story of Leo Sercombe, son of a carter (ploughman) in a North Devon valley. Amidst the magic of nature, family rituals revolve around survival and Tim writes graphically.



The Horseman

With everyone pitching in there is no waste from a well reared and subsequently slaughtered animal.

Leo has an intuitive understanding of horses. The Master's daughter, Miss Charlotte, shares his passion and an unlikely friendship blossoms - this is the basis of a story that will form a trilogy as Tim explains: "As we come to understand the fragility of life on an estate, the origin myth is gently exposed. Leo's future, working on the Master's stud farm, is blasted into a thousand pieces. The opportunity is taken from him but his life will be enlarged." To say more would be a spoiler...

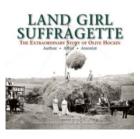
Tim grew up in Trusham, a village on the edge of Dartmoor. He has taught creative writing for Oxford University and Ruskin College, among others. Published by Bloomsbury. Hardback £16.99



BERTHE VA EN VACANCES Gwen Brooks

It's always a pleasure to meet up with Gwen in Dartmouth and hear about her children's books.

With a name borrowed from Flaubert's Madame Bovary, Berthe is a groovy green witch, not yet discovered leg waxing, and she's off to the seaside with her cat. Being handy for the Plymouth to Roscoff ferry, I've chosen an adventure to help prepare for summer holidays that adds to the basics of beach vocabulary (age 6+). Gwen has a degree in French and Educational Psychology. Published by Long Wittenham Publishing. Paperback £4.50



LAND GIRL SUFFRAGETTE Simon Butler

Olive Hockin lived from 1881 to 1936. In a relatively short life, she was an author, artist and arsonist

She's hardly known, yet her paintings are accomplished and mystical - Olive embraced Theosophism. Simon is absolutely right in saying we should be better acquainted with the woman who campaigned with the Suffragettes, trained at the Slade School of Art, worked as a farm labourer on Dartmoor and was implicated in a bomb plot against Lloyd George.

Published by Halstar.

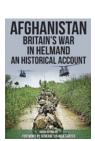
Hardback £19,99



COCKTAILS, ROCK TALES AND BETRAYALS Julie Archer

This is a cold shower warning! As a former journalist, Julie has done a very good job with creating believable characters and yes, she can write sex scenes in context.

Launched at the Flavel Arts
Centre in Dartmouth, this is
Julie's debut novel. It's a
fictional, steamy insight into
the world of rock band Blood
Stone Riot and their friends/
associates. I read this between
Christmas and New Year. It
brightened up twixmas no
end! Chick-lit where the men
also have voices.
Published by Jewel and
Black Publications
and on Kindle.
Paperback £7.99



AFGHANISTAN. BRITAIN'S WAR IN HELMAND David Reynolds

Like many people I watch the news, but I never felt I had a complete understanding of the war in Afghanistan.

Devon author and retired Lieutenant Colonel David Reynolds has produced an excellent, informative book that covers the role of UK Armed Forces deployed to Afghanistan from 2001 to withdrawal in 2014.

Expanding on the background to the conflict he writes: "It is an historical account which highlights the reasons why UK forces were sent into Afghanistan...." Well worth reading. Published by DRA Publishing.

Softback £25

Devon portrait



DR STEPHEN HALEY

Dr Stephen Haley is the senior laboratory manager at Exeter University. After a 20 year career in media, television and music his love of the countryside - and rivers in particular - led him to begin an environmental and academic research career. He is particularly interested in sustainable environmental water management. He completed his PhD in Physical Geography in 2010. Dr Haley also has an MSc in Environmental Water Management, a First Class Honours BSc in Environmental Science, and a FdSc in Rural Environmental Management.

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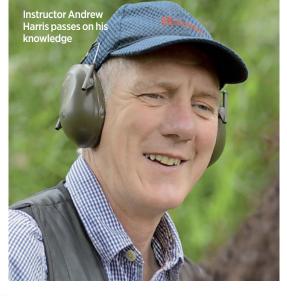


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Annie Get Your Gun!

Devon Lady Guns is a group of female sharpshooters with their sights set on attracting new members and encouraging more women to take up the pastime.

Sharon Goble got fired up to meet them



CURIOSITY DROVE ME to accept an invitation to attend a meeting of Devon Lady Guns. I wasn't sure quite what to expect from a group of women shooters. Would they be no nonsense 'don't-mess-with-me' kind of gals?

As I headed towards our rendezvous near Tiverton, then waited for a 4x4 to take me down a steep track into a valley echoing with the sound of gun shots, I mentally prepared to meet the West Country's equivalent of Annie Oakley or Calamity Jane. Of course, my imagination had got the better of me. They turned out to be a perfectly ordinary bunch of women of different ages and from different walks of life, who simply enjoy meeting up for a popular country pursuit and a spot of socialising.

'I love a hobby that's outside. I love the slightly competitive element and I love to get better at something'

I needn't have worried about a dead rabbit or pheasant being laid at my feet either. This was a clay pigeon shoot, and the only perturbing thing was how deafening the gun fire was up close. A pair of ear plugs did the trick.

The first person I met was founder member Annette Cole, who also works for the British Association of Shooting and Conservation, which the group is affiliated to: "There were a lot of women who had guns because their husbands had bought them, funnily enough. They'd tried shooting as a couple, but that hadn't worked. Never get your husband to



teach you to shoot! We also had a lot of ladies who were 'beating' but had never taken up the offer of a place on a shoot at the end of the season. So we thought, let's get together and try to get some of these ladies shooting. It grew from there."

Caroline Howe chairs Devon Lady Guns and organises the group's social diary: "A lot of us have dogs, so that's quite a bond. I love a hobby that's outside. I love the slightly competitive element and I love to get better at something. I like to have a group of friends to enjoy it with me, and just laugh a lot! More of us now have guns but you don't have to own one to join in."

Annette explains: "You don't need a licence to be able to shoot. You need a licence to own a shotgun. Applying can be quite a long process, several months, but it's straightforward. You apply to the police, which involves filling out a form with your medical details and providing a secure, lockable gun cabinet. Your gun storage is inspected and you have to reapply every five years."

Apart from clays, the group does driven pheasant shoots in the season, as well as simulated pheasant shooting, where the clays come over at random. A good way of training your eye on a multitude of moving targets, I'm told. I'll take their word for it.

It's clear, though, that the social side of things is just as important to members as the main event. The day I joined them there were freshly baked cakes and nibbles to enjoy at the end of the clay shoot. Sometimes they go for a coffee afterwards or, in the evenings, for a curry at the pub. Cream teas, beach parties, dog training, horse riding and archery are some of the other activities they've enjoyed together as a group right across Devon.

Caroline has been shooting for 15 years now. She became hooked after taking her pointers along to a shoot for training.



The female sharpshooters have their sights set on attracting new members

Anette agrees that it's addictive: "I'm not a hugely competitive person but I get quite competitive against myself!"

Annette has another motivation too. "My job for the British Association of Shooting and Conservation is to get more people to eat game. Quite often when I'm doing demos and tasters at food festivals, people ask where the meat comes from and how we get it. Then they get really interested: 'Oh, you're a woman and you shoot?' People understand the conservation side of shooting more now and that we eat nearly all of what we hunt. Nothing is wasted." ◆ facebook.com/DevonLadyGuns basc.org.uk



SHOOTING STATS

170,000 people participate in shooting in the South West.

There are 1.5 million gun days in the South West annually.

Shooting supports 10,000 paid FTE jobs in the South West.

1.8 million hectares are influenced by shooting in the South West.

The average number of friends made through shooting is 20.

.....

Out of season hotel occupancy increases by 30% in shooting areas.

95% of shooters say the activity is important to their personal well-being.

The top three reasons people take up shooting are: enjoyment, relaxation and time outdoors. (Source: BASC)







The female sharpshooters have their sights set on attracting new members

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The retired fishing boat Anthony Stevenson has been given a new lease of life

30



BARNEY Dearsly has always felt a strong connection to the water. He grew up beside the Exe estuary in Lympstone and as a teenager quickly developed into a highly-accomplished yachtsman.

By the time he was 17 he'd moved on from messing about on the estuary to representing Great Britain in two-man catamarans, travelling as far as New Caledonia in the South Pacific to take part in world championships.

His other passion from an early age kept him rooted to home. Foraging on the estuary shore for interestingly shaped driftwood and all the other flotsam and jetsam that gets left behind by the tides was an equally compelling, but very different, way of connecting to his locale. These days, Barney still sails competitively at the weekend, but it's the beach finds that have become the central focus of his life through his business, Weathered By Water.

Barney explains: "There's always that sense of wonder with found objects – how they've been shaped and their history."

His fascination with beachcombing can be traced back to childhood walks with his family: "My parents used to have a little game on beaches with different coloured

BARNEY'S TOP BEACHCOMBING SPOTS

River Exe: great for finding all manner of industrial bits of metal and hardwood driftwood.

The River Thames by the City, London: such a heavily used river over such a long time, there are lots of wonderful things to find. Just a couple of steps and you'll find clay pipes, old glass bottles and lots of pieces of oak.

Lyme Regis: great for fossil-hunting and driftwood.

Weston: great for driftwood and all manner of objects still turning up off past ship wrecks.

Gravesend: an old Victorian dump. Amazing finds from glass beads to old bottles.

bits of sea glass. Due to weathering, and longshore drift and erosion, a bit of glass from an old beer bottle will end up completely smooth. Emeralds would be worth a penny, a rupee would be worth 3p and sapphires would be worth 5p. And they had to be dead smooth. If they had a sharp edge Dad would discard them. You'd end up with enough money to buy an ice-cream, maybe."

Gazing down at mud, sand and shingle in the hope of finding something magical became a bit of an obsession. A natural maker, Barney was soon turning his finds, already transfigured by salt water and UV bleaching, into bookshelves, mirrors and other objects. Giant cotton reels found washed up on the coast at Beer were turned into attractive lamps, a 250-year-old trunk of elm became a driftwood picture frame. It wasn't long before these creations started to sell to friends and at local art fairs.

It was while working at a major picture framers in London, that Barney discovered mudlarking on the Thames foreshore. "I had a friend in the metalwork department who worked with found metal and we just decided one day to go down to the Thames •

scouring for metal, wood, found objects. We kept finding amazing pieces so we just kept going down. We'd cycle all the way back through central London with them - drawing a few interesting looks along the way!"

One of his favourite pieces from this period is a sculpture containing hundreds of clay tobacco pipes, which look, he says, "alive or flowing, kind of organic". It's this vitalising effect of nature on man-made things, he says, that makes objects shaped by time and the elements so beautiful and compelling.

The wealth of material he gathered in London reignited his passion for foraging and inspired Barney to turn his old hobby into a serious business when he returned to the West Country in 2011. He honed his carpentry skills further by training at Rowden Atelier woodworking school under renowned furniture maker David Savage.

As well as the unadorned found objects, simply (though inventively) repurposed, Weathered By Water now sells highly-finished items such as glass-topped coffee-tables displaying sea bricks from the Exmoor coast. They combine the warm, rugged qualities of these finds with first-rate craftsmanship to produce very stylish and characterful pieces of furniture that are finding an ever-growing audience.

Back on his home turf, Barney is still often found roaming his favourite stretches of Devon's coasts and rivers searching for new materials, but much of his time over the last year has been spent within the industrial confines of a fabricating yard at Exeter



quay. It's here he's just completed his most ambitious and striking creation to date, the ultimate bit of marine debris: a fourmetre high 'boat pod' fashioned from the upturned bow section of a wooden trawler.

The Anthony Stevenson was a retired fishing vessel built in 1945 that worked out of Newlyn harbour in Cornwall. Having come to the end of its working life it was passed onto Julie and Brian Pogson at Exeter Maritime Services to be decommissioned. But rather than go through the usual decommissioning process that would see it end up in landfill, they wondered if these beautifully built, historic vessels could be repurposed in some way. Having been shown Barney's work they invited him down to Gabriel's Wharf and asked if he might have a use for them. He jumped at the chance.

"When I went down there I was just blown away by the scale, the textures and the



A sculpture made from clay pipes found on the shore of the Thames

colours of these boats. Pieces I could never dream of getting off a beach were sat there, smack bang in the yard, ready for me to use. I couldn't believe the opportunity."

He saw the possibility, he says, "to make a statement piece, something that will last another sixty years. To work with these materials is amazing."

Transforming this wreck into a delightful living space has been hard graft. Two tonnes of concrete ballast had to be removed from the interior which was then shotblasted clean. The exterior was covered in fibreglass to make it watertight, painted, and now proudly bears its reinstated Penzance port name and number, PZ331. An engineered oak floor has been laid and electrics wired.

A bespoke wood-burning stove sits at the back of the pod, ingeniously welded from an old mast step that was lying about in the yard, and, after being re-sprayed, has been finished off with a similarly "re-loved" brass port-hole cover. A large circular doorway made with aluminium trim can be zipped closed with sail canvas provided by a local sailmaker.

The result is a wonderfully cosy and uniquely atmospheric room shaped by the original massive, curved planks of larch and ribs of oak, and it can be adapted to a plethora of uses: a retreat, a children's den, an artist's studio, a writer's room, a personal library, somewhere to sleep out.

"It's a special place to relax, a hideaway. Protected from all the elements," says Barney. "It was built to withstand Atlantic swells; it's been fishing down in the Bay of Biscay and up in the North Sea. You can almost sense the journeys it's been on, the places it's been to."

Once he's found a home for the pod, Barney has plans for the many other derelict boats that lie piled up at the boatyard, with a view to creating even grander structures. Battered by the elements they may be, but with Barney's craftsmanship and imagination behind them, these old worthies of the sea look set for an interesting second life. • weatheredbywater.co.uk

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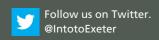
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MAID IN DEVON

Pat Keenor is a well-known Devon journalist who brings her wit and wisdom to our pages every month



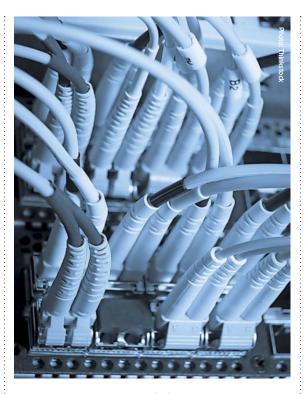
MY EYE was caught by the headline that told me superfast broadband was being delivered to a quarter of a million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset. About time too, I thought, as I logged on and waited for wheels to turn in the ether and connect me to the big wide world of hoax news and cat videos.

A few months later I was excited to see the BT Openreach vans in my village. At last, I thought, as I logged on to Facebook to see what the village people (my friends and neighbours, not those men in weird clothes who sing about the YMCA) were saying about the possibility of getting a reliable internet connection. One said he had already signed up and others were about to.

But... despite residents in the main street of the village having access to superfast broadband, the rest of us didn't. A search of the internet yielded this: "Your postcode is not covered by our current programme's 90% superfast target."

For the love of God, why not? Why was half the village connected but not the other half? I'm no expert but if you're in a village, how difficult can it be to make sure the whole area has superfast broadband? According to a neighbour, it's because our street "may not be served by cabinet 2 which is the only one superfast enabled". Right... I have no idea which "cabinet" serves me but it seems its doors are firmly locked and bolted for the time being.

I shouldn't grumble, though, my internet connection is fairly reliable and the speed is acceptable. It's improved since I first signed up to broadband with a different provider. In those days I was forever on the phone complaining about the lack of connection. I spent half my days scrabbling about on the floor, following instructions to unplug and plug in cables and switch off and switch on boxes. Occasionally they'd ask me to do something so technical I



A village divided by broadband

Our columnist bemoans the woeful internet provision in parts of Devon

'Why was half the village connected but not the other half? I'm no expert but if you're in a village, how difficult can it be to make sure the whole area has superfast broadband?'

swear only an IT expert with years of training would know what they were talking about.

"Has that fixed it?" they'd ask. No it hasn't and to make matters worse I can see years of dust behind this cupboard but, on the bright side, I've found an ear-ring I lost in 2012.

For about three months there

was no connection at all for days at a time. Then it would briefly come back on, usually late at night, with the better half and I making a desperate scramble for our laptops to pay bills or surf the net before it went off again.

After long phone calls to India and back with no resolution, we decided to change our service provider. I know BT get a lot of stick but since switching to them we have had no problem at all. I can at least pay bills, order goods and fill in a tax form (oh joy) without resorting to tearing my hair out.

My sister, on the other hand, living about four miles away from me is in some kind of internet black hole with speeds so slow it is impossible to download anything without the system crashing, or having to wait and wait and wait while that photograph of adorable grandchildren struggles ponderously through the system as if wading through treacle.

In fact, so slow is her internet connection that she comes to my house if she has anything substantial she wants to download. The other day her son was trying to install a Garmin app on his daughter's phone as she is a keen cyclist and wants to keep track of distances and speeds. Some of the data limped its way through and then it crashed.

He ended up at my house where the whole process was complete in about 20 minutes. Twenty minutes is quite a long time to download an app, I know, but it was considerably better than being at his mother's where after a quarter of an hour only 6% had crept down the line.

My sister says it's annoying that she has to pay the same as everyone else but for a vastly inferior service. And I have self-employed friends who battle to fill in on-line forms for various government agencies, praying for a fair sea and a following wind so that the site doesn't time out before they've finished.

It's something a country like ours really should get to grips with.





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Rob says he is delighted to be able to showcase the Jacuzzi $^{\otimes}$ hot tub range in Exeter.

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original aquamarine blue Jacuzzi® whirlpool pump from the 1960's sourced from America.

Rob says: "The name Jacuzzi® is synonymous with hot tubs because they are the original and regarded as the best. Their development work and patented technology means a Jacuzzi® hot tub really is a premium product."

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SOCIAL LIFE

Who's been out and about in Devon this month? **Alexandra Hurley** finds out

CONTACT alexandra.hurley@ archant.co.uk

@alexandhurley



The Princess Royal, Patron of Farms for City Children, pictured with Michael Morpurgo OBE, and Clare Morpurgo, MBE

A magical moment

Nethercott Farm in Devon, the first in the Farms for City Children charity, provides children with magical memories and wonderful experiences.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary, this past year has seen the charity host many celebrations, including a visit from HRH The Princess Royal, her fifth visit to the charity since becoming patron in 1991.

She was welcomed by founders Michael and Clare Morpurgo and met some of the children and teachers on residential that week from Lipson Vale Primary School in Plymouth.

To round off the afternoon a wonderful new bench was unveiled, an anniversary cake was cut and Princess Anne spoke of the importance of the charity and the unique experience children gain from it.

CLIC concert

Local La La Choirs officially presented a cheque to CLIC Sargent at the Exmouth branch of Santander after their annual CLIC for Christmas concert at Exeter Cathedral in December 2016 raised an impressive £12,000.

The money raised could fund a room for a whole year in one of CLIC Sargent's Home from Home, providing free self-catering accommodation near to specialist children's treatment centres, which are often many miles from a family's own home.

Joining La La Choirs at the concert were two guest choirs from the Park Community School in Barnstaple and Devonport High School for Girls in Plymouth, who were joint winners of the Devon Schools Choir competition run by La La Choirs each year.

The planning for CLIC for Christmas 2017 is already under way and information has been sent to all secondary schools in Devon. For more details, visit lalachoirs.co.uk.



Devonport High School for Girls at CLIC for Christmas 2016

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Saunton Sands Hotel chefs and Petroc catering students

Learning from the chefs

Petroc catering students joined Saunton Sands Hotel chefs to cook a fundraising meal in the new Taw Restaurant and raised £1,220 for Children's Hospice South West.

Students cooked a delicious four-course meal in the North Devon training kitchens, under the watchful eye of the chefs – including development chef Dez Turland and head chef Jamie Coleman. The menu was created by Saunton Sands Hotel chefs and showcased local and seasonal ingredients, including beetroot, scallops and beef.

Included in the £1,220 fundraised for the charity was a £200 donation from Mr Brend of the Brend Hotel Group, which owns Saunton Sands Hotel.

A foodie favourite

Mitch Tonks and Mat Prowse, founders and owners of Rockfish, hosted a VIP opening night at their newest Rockfish in Exmouth on the waterfront.

The evening was relaxed with the Prosecco flowing, and guests had a chance to explore the new restaurant, chat to Mitch and Mat and enjoy a menu of great local grilled and fried fish. Darrin Hosegrove from Ashburton Cookery School, Peter Richardson (Comic Strip Presents) and Michael Caines mingled with guests that included locals, the landlords, Exeter Chiefs and investors in the business.



Mat Prowse, Steve Edwards, Michael Caines and Mitch Tonks



Jackie Michelmore, Chris Fryers, Lauren Williamson and Reg House



James Johnson, Sarah Hobbs and Diana Hobbs



Gareth Watton, Ocean BMW, with Cindy Willcocks, Jeremiah's Journey, blowing out the birthday cake to celebrate the Cream Tea Club's 1st Birthday!



Jam provided by JB Preserves, cream and milk by Trewithen Dairy and tea from Plymouth Tea

Cream Tea Club

The most recent Cream Tea Club event, launched by Ben and Clare Stirling of Made with Maturity, web design and marketing specialists, was held at Buckland Tout-Saints Hotel and welcomed Trewithen Dairy, Plymouth Tea and JB Preserves as sponsors.

Guests enjoyed a fun and interactive session ran by Lorna Dallas, from Babcock International and Women in Stem, exploring what it means to be an engineer at Devonport Royal Dockyard and viewed cars on display from Ocean BMW.

The Cream Tea Club welcomes anyone with an interest in business, owns a business or is in business to join them. Visit creamteaclub.co.uk for more information.

W O O D F O R D

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Set within the grounds of a working farm and surrounded by a mix of agricultural buildings, our brief was to create a sympathetic kitchen and dining extension to this thatched grade II* listed farmhouse; including new oak framed garages, courtyard landscaping and wine cellar.

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Mount Kelly Swim Squad with 'ASA - Learn to Swim' groups from Whitchurch Primary School and Horrabridge Primary School

Royal opening

Mount Kelly welcomed HRH The Princess Royal to the school to open the Olympic Legacy 50 metre Swimming Pool. Mount Kelly has a long tradition of excellence in swimming, and boasts 72 international swimmers, 17 Olympians and six Paralympians amongst alumni, and has one Olympian currently at the school.

The opening ceremony was attended by many swimmers who were pupils at Mount Kelly such as Sharron Davies MBE, Andy Jameson, Rio 2016 Paralympic Medallists Claire Cashmore MBE and Mikey Jones MBE.

HRH The Princess Royal, who arrived by helicopter, enjoyed a visit to the new swimming pool, which included a swimming display by local primary school children and members of the Mount Kelly swim squad. Before leaving, Her Royal Highness unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion.

South West art

The Gallery at Plymouth College of Art presents artist Oliver Sutherland's 'And Then...' solo exhibition as part of it's South West Showcase.

The exhibition, which explores possibilities for agency in digital production and the anxieties that spawn from submerging a body within technology, runs until 15 February. The Gallery at Plymouth College of Art's South West Showcase aims to uncover and celebrate the talent of contemporary artists such as Oliver who are working and living in the South West, and to present a long-term commitment from Plymouth College of Art to profiling and supporting the practices of artists in the region. This year Oliver and Stuart Robinson have each been invited to create a solo show in The Gallery between January and March 2017.



Leah Harris, Exhibitions Coordinator, Zoe Li, Exhibitions Manager and Hannah Rose, Exhibitions Manager at Plymouth College of Art



Artist Oliver Sutherland



John and Jenny Sampson-Hick with copper jelly moulds



Philip Postlethwaite. Michael Gordon-Lee, Pamela Gordon-Lee and Gina Gearing



Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Peter Holland with Jacky Holland

Private Preview

More than 200 people attended the Private Viewing Evening of the Fine Art Sale at Bearnes Hampton & Littlewood, St Edmunds Court, Okehampton Street, Exeter.

Guests were given the opportunity to view over 1,200 lots on offer in the forthcoming sale including silver, jewellery, paintings, ceramics, works of art and furniture. A drinks reception was followed by canapés from Proof of the Pudding and a short talk by Andrew Thomas, Senior Valuer at Bearnes Hampton & Littlewood, who gave an insight into some of the interesting pieces in the auction.



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our clients on a bespoke basis, seeking the best and most tax efficient returns on their capital at all times.

Where we are

We are located in Southernhay, in the centre of Exeter's financial district. Relationships start with a conversation, so please get in touch. There is no obligation and our Investment Managers would be happy to outline what could be achieved if you were to become a client. We believe that our firm is attractive to our clients because we are small enough to be agile and responsive, but at the same time, offer more resource, depth and robust systems compared with smaller firms.

Market commentary

The second half of 2016 was a generally positive one for investors, which came as a relief after the travails of the previous six months, and something of a surprise given the political background. Everyone was slowly getting used to the idea of the UK no longer being a part of the European Union when the year's second major political upset occurred as Donald Trump prevailed in the US presidential election. Yet again, not only were opinion pollsters confounded by the result, but also market strategists. An expected fall in equity markets failed to materialise, with investors instead focusing on the promise of fiscal stimulus to promote growth. The world's largest and most influential equity market in the United States hit new all-time highs, and the UK's FTSE 100 Index also broke new ground, returning over 15% for the year. For UK investors returns were flattered by the fall in the pound, but that is not something we would want to rely on to enhance future returns.

Heading into 2017 we see risks and opportunities to be evenly balanced. On the one hand there is the reflationary political influence which will continue to be supported by relatively loose monetary policy; on the other there is the political risk of populism and anti-globalisation which might manifest itself again in more unexpected election results in the heart of the eurozone. A rising US interest rate environment also creates uncertainty, and China remains high on the doom-mongers' list of possible accidents. We would be surprised if the threat from at least one of these concerns did not cause markets to wobble at some point, and we will be ready to take advantage of such weakness if we feel that worries are overdone.

Our role is to guide investors and their portfolios to a suitable balance of risk and reward. Constructing an investment portfolio using an optimal combination of bonds, equity, property, cash and alternative investments, you can control your desired level of risk while having the potential to produce real returns ahead of inflation. In light of the low interest rate environment, although not without risk, it's an option that certainly needs to be explored for anyone with excess capital.

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LUCY SIEGLE'S DESIGN FOR LIFE

Instagram @theseagul

Television presenter, journalist and Devon resident **Lucy Siegle** writes each month for Devon Life



WHATEVER gets you through. That's the maxim I apply to winter. I'm not a big fan of the dreary season. It's no accident that the only thing I can play on the piano is The Beatles' *Here Comes The Sun*. I give an annual performance (family only, you'll be pleased to hear) when I sniff spring in the air.

Anyways, the thing that's got me through this year is a trusty hot water bottle wrapped in a luxurious fur cover.

Faux fur, of course. The only humans who have any business wearing real fur, are indigenous fur trappers and Inuit wearing polar bear trousers passed down from forefathers. And even that becomes borderline when the fake version has advanced into a technically impressive fibre that requires no animal slaughter.

Fortunately fake or faux fur is also having a moment in the sun fashionwise. It dominates winter fashion pages and interiors magazines with an ever growing colour palette that includes dusky pinks and pistachio tones.

So imagine how delighted I was to discover the provenance of my luxury hot water bottle cover and many of this season's must-have throws and gillets? Helen Moore of Tiverton. Helen, a textile and fashion artist, set up her eponymous business in 1982 and it's now a thriving hub of faux fur excellence.

I dropped in recently and looked around the sewing room. That morning they were making pompoms, gillets and trims for scarves for a rapacious international market, including the Japanese fashionistas.



Faux par excellence...

The sewing machines were at full tilt. "What are you listening to?" I asked, nodding at the iPod of the Plymouth College of Art graduate who now heads up the sewing room. "I started with Metallica but it was a bit heavy for a Monday morning so I changed to The Killers," she said.

Having spent years traversing the planet meeting the people that make our clothes and seeing the factories they're made in, I can tell you that it's not often in fashion and textiles that you find such an outstanding company paying their talented staff the Living Wage and making such great products. It was all the sweeter to find this one, literally under my nose. •

'It's not often in fashion and textiles that you find such an outstanding company paying their talented staff the Living Wage and making such great products'

COWS ON SKITTLES

The '90s sci-fi stalwart, *The X-Files* rarely covered farming. But did Mulder and Scully miss a trick? Recently Wisconsin inhabitants awoke to find the main thoroughfare knee-deep in red Skittles sweets.

They were understandably stumped. Was this some sort of alien

retribution or conversely, an alien gift? Being of a pragmatic nature, locals quickly found a use for the mystery confectionery, using it as grit for the icy roads. Several weeks later it transpired the sweets had literally fallen off the back of a lorry as it skidded on the ice (oh, the irony)

and shed its load. The lorry's destination? Local cattle farms. Apparently in these parts reject Skittles are secretly used as cattle feed. I think that's more spooky than a mystery dumping of Skittles. In any case, stand by for the bovine obesity crisis.

VEGAN SCORES

I made my way to Stroud recently to support the mighty Forest Green Rovers. The UK's only vegan football ground provides a lesson in sustainability. There are solar panels on the stand and the pitch is organic grass, and definitely no meat pies.

This prompted opposition chants from Braintree of 'where's your sausage rolls?' throughout the first half. I couldn't help noticing that they quietened down in the second half. Whether this was because they'd spent half-time stuffing their faces with delicious vegan burgers and been converted or because they conceded a goal is not recorded.

Perhaps this will be covered in Jilly Cooper's next novel. The famous writer was also in attendance as rumour has it that her next action-packed (the polite description) work will be set among footballers. As research she watches Forest Green Rovers games assiduously.

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If the grey, cold and wet winter months get you down then visit Rangemoors in Winkleigh or Hearth & Cook in Exeter. We have one of the finest collections of stoves and range cookers in the South West just waiting to turn your home into a cosy refuge against the most grueling winter.

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HEATING, COOKING & LIVING





Let's go to Totnes

Creativity, passion and a touch of mysticism are part of the fabric of Totnes, a place famous for its alternative vibe. To see what we mean, head for the town's best-kept secret, the Timehouse Muzeum, writes

Chrissy Harris





AFTER A QUICK TRIP to the butcher's and the newsagent, I find myself sitting on a cloud, listening to tribal drumming, wondering about the state of the planet.

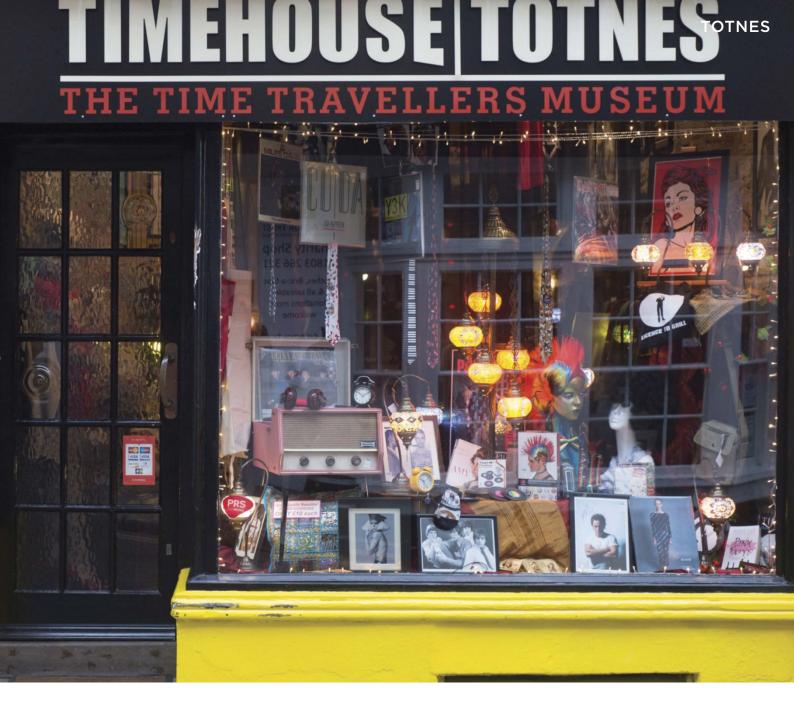
Only in Totnes could you step off the main high street and be transported into another dimension.

To the unsuspecting passer-by, Timehouse Muzeum looks like just another shop but step through to the back and a whole world of sights, smells and sounds opens up.

One moment, you're on a ship's deck, the next in the middle of Morocco before you venture upstairs to an area devoted to The Beatles and into another room made to look and feel like a giant cloud. And that's just the start.

This museum-come-art-installation with more than 20 interactive spaces is the work of artist and designer Julie Lafferty and is designed to take visitors on a journey through time. It's a remarkable place - and one of Devon's top attractions.





Yes, Timehouse Muzeum is ahead of Paignton Zoo and Exeter Cathedral on Trip Advisor's top things to do in the county.

"I think we were even ahead of the Tate in London at one point and three places behind the V&A," says Julie. "We're a number one attraction and yet no one really knows we're here.

"People tend to find out about us through Chinese whispers. They come here and then tell all their friends.

"It's hard because we don't want to sell it too much because we like the secrecy but we'd love more people – especially local people – to come and see it. We want to keep it a well-known secret."

Last year, Julie and husband Martin Ryan were worried they would have to close because although Timehouse was popular on a global scale, with visitors from Germany, Japan and the US, not enough locals were coming through the door.

The couple bought the Grade II-listed

FROM THE STREETS:

"The Steam Packet is brilliant. You can have anything from a coffee to bar snacks and a superb a la carte menu - the food is excellent!" Colin Bower

"When we have guests, it is a definite to take them to Grey's Tea Room for a proper tea and clotted cream/scones. Also the White Hart pub and restaurant up at nearby Dartington is wonderful and we have taken guests up there so we could also share a walk thought the gardens. Anne Kelly

"I like to visit Totnes Rare Breeds Farm as I have two children, aged one and four. It's perfect for them if you want a short day out." Samantha Branch 18th Century building, a former NHS community mental health treatment centre, in 2012 and have sunk their life savings into creating the unique attraction.

Julie - who spent years working in film

'We're a number one attraction and yet no one really knows we're here'

and television, both in the UK and Australia – created Timehouse from scratch.

She hopes her efforts will eventually pay off and more people will come to enjoy her very special work of art.

"It was gruelling but worth it," says Julie, explaining how she spent an exhausting 12 months painting every wall, every floor and •

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The Timehouse Muzeum hosts a dazzling collection of memorabilia, sourced from all over the world

filling every room with a dazzling collection of memorabilia, sourced from all over the world.

Vintage Barbie dolls, war artefacts, a ship's figurehead, clocks, a circus game, toys and cameras - you could be in here for hours and still not see everything.

It's all hands-on too, there are no 'do not touch' signs here.

"It's meant to look like a collection and each piece is designed to work for each space," says Julie, who sources her pieces (some of which are film props) from across the globe, as well as locally.

"I often get asked where I source stuff from but after working in films, you learn how to find things.

"We wanted it to have that Narnia feel – a sense that people were entering another world."

Many visitors seem to have been captured by the magic of Timehouse. One happy customer even told Julie that the hour or so she spent here had 'changed her life'.

"I hope everybody feels a connection," says Julie. "I've tried to promote as many aspects of the human story as possible and the impact that, as a species, we are having on our home."

You can't afford to walk past this place. ◆
See narniatotnes.co.uk

FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TOTNES:

It likes a laugh: Amid some opposition, there is a bit of a local in-joke that Totnes has a connection with Narnia, the mythical land created by C S Lewis. At one point, the sign at the town's entrance was customised to read: Totnes: Twinned with Narnia. It has also been "twinned" with Area 51.

A tidal town: The wide area known as The Plains was, like everywhere flat around Totnes, tidal marsh. Many of the buildings were once warehouses. Totnes is said to be the second oldest borough in England, after Malmesbury in Wiltshire.

It has its own currency: The Totnes Pound is a complementary currency, intended to support the local economy. The initiative is part of the Transition Towns concept.

......

A rich heritage: The town is reputed to have more listed buildings per head of the population than anywhere else in Britain, with examples of properties dating back to Norman, Medieval and Tudor times. There are 66 houses in Totnes dating to before 1700.

Community spirit: they're close knit here. A number of projects have been set up to help residents work together, particularly when it comes to growing food. Many communal spaces are used to grow herbs and vegetables. There are raised beds dotted all over the town.

COMING UP IN TOTNES:

2 March until end of April: join an exciting outdoor arts project at the Sharpham Trust. Artist Peter Lanyon is looking for up to eight volunteers (aged 16+) to help him build a large green oak bench over the course of seven days in March and April. Volunteers will work outside on the beautiful Sharpham Estate with traditional woodworking tools. See sharphamtrust.org

9 to 12 March: The third Transition

Town Totnes Film Festival takes place this year, based at the town's Civic Hall. Themes include community, environment and resilience. transitionfilmfestival.org.uk

18 March: Catch members of the Totnes Early Music Society performing at St Mary's Church at 7.30pm.

25 March: Take part in Chicks charity's Delicious Dart Trail, a food

festival on the move. The event starts at Totnes Pavilion Leisure Centre and, participants run to the coastal town of Dartmouth, sampling a wide variety of the finest local produce along the way. See deliciousdarttrail. co.uk

The award-winning Totnes Good Food market takes place on the third Sunday of every month, between 10am and 3pm. totnesgoodfood.co.uk



Totnes has a rich heritage and is said to be England's second oldest borough

50

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At the heart of our community

WILL EDWARDS, landlord of The Church House Inn in Rattery, takes us on a tour of the village and its pub where he now works and calls home

THIS PUB is steeped in history – nearly 1,000 years of it – and is also allegedly haunted by a rather shy but friendly ghost! The name 'Church House Inn' dates back to the 1400s when the Church decreed to clean up the churches by moving retail and social activities outside.

In the 12th century the main longhouse would have been the dwelling occupied by the stonemasons who were building a stone church on the site of the previously wooden structure next door and ale would definitely have been produced here. The building is mentioned in the Domesday Book and can be traced as far back as 1028AD, making it one of the oldest pub sites in Devon, if not England.

It began to be 'modernised' in the 1600s but it was not until 1947 that the Church sold the inn and only in the last 25 years have there been indoor toilets. Now, as the new custodians since June 2015, Dad and I have been playing our part in carefully restoring and enhancing various parts

of this Grade II listed pub, in the process unearthing some hidden treasures like the original flagstones in the bar.

The solid arched oak frame we installed as the centrepiece in the new restaurant draws on the building's ecclesiastical heritage and is identical to those that would have been found in original 14th century church houses.

Working closely with English Heritage, local architect Emma Heaver from Torbryan oversaw this project with Carpenter Oak of East Cornworthy carving the frame. The outside patio area around the large glass fronted oak doors has been decked with Indian sandstone and finished with teak furniture. We've also installed a new woodfired oven for long relaxed summer evenings.

Throughout this year we plan to make more of the well preserved circular staircase that leads up from the main part of the pub to what we hope will become a private upstairs dining room with the original roof beams exposed to create a striking feature for our guests. •



MEET THE LOCALS >

Name: Peter Smerdon

Profession: Farmer, Smallcombe Farm How long have you lived in Rattery? "All my life, nearly 62 years!'

What makes the village special to you?

"Rattery has always had a great community spirit, borne out by the fact that 20 years ago we built our own new village hall. The Church House Inn has always been at the centre of Rattery village life, we are really pleased to welcome Will and Sarah as new proprietors and we love the way they have already breathed new life into a well loved pub."

Name: Lister Bass

Profession: Campsite Owner - Ashbourne Woods 'The Home of Wild Camping'

How long have you lived in Rattery? "20

What makes the village special to you?

"It's a really good place to bring the children up, the pub is smashing and you have good access to everything whilst living in the countryside surrounded by history and great people."

Name: Deborah Daymond **Profession:** Dairy Farmer, Allercombe Farm

How long have you lived in Rattery?

What makes the village special to you?

"It's a peaceful village in a beautiful setting and we are very fortunate to have a large well equipped Village Hall which hosts a wide variety of events such as dances, film shows, arts and crafts, etc. We also have a lovely pub which under its new ownership has regained its place as the heart of the village. A place to meet young and old and all our characters."



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CHURCH HOUSE INN



Will Edwards, landlord of The Church House Inn in Rattery

MEET THE LANDLORD

Devon born and bred, Will is the seventh generation of landlords in the Edwards family. A foodie at heart, he spent his honeymoon night at Gidleigh Park in the summer of 2016 and when not serving customers he enjoys shooting and fishing in and around Dartmoor and the South Hams.

Before running The Church House Inn Will was the manager for eight years of the hotel in which he grew up – The Tides Reach in Salcombe. Prior to this he learnt his trade during five consecutive ski seasons as a chalet chef in the French Alps. Now he is intent on establishing The Church House Inn as one of Devon's best village pubs.

In what proved to be a great 2016 the historic pub was also named Best Pub Restaurant at the annual Food & Drink Devon Awards and won Best Newcomer of the Year at the Devon Life Food & Drink Awards. Keen to keep local traditions alive, the pub raises money for the annual village fireworks, hosts the Rattery Carol Singers and has recently introduced monthly music nights for local bands to play at.

The pub supports the annual Rattery show in August - next year will be its 70th anniversary. It combines a Sports Day and Garden Show, and as well as art and photography competitions there is also welly wanging, a dog race, vegetable competition and the beer tent.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF RATTERY

The Church House Inn sits at the heart of this ancient parish and has a population of less the 2,500. The rich vein of history has continued through many of the family names like Coaker and Smerdon that still survive today and of course in the 13th century Church of St Mary that stands proudly at its centre.

The origins of the village's name are most likely Saxon and a variation of "Red Tree" - it is listed in the Domesday Book as Ratreu and is twinned with Brains-surles-Marches in north western France.

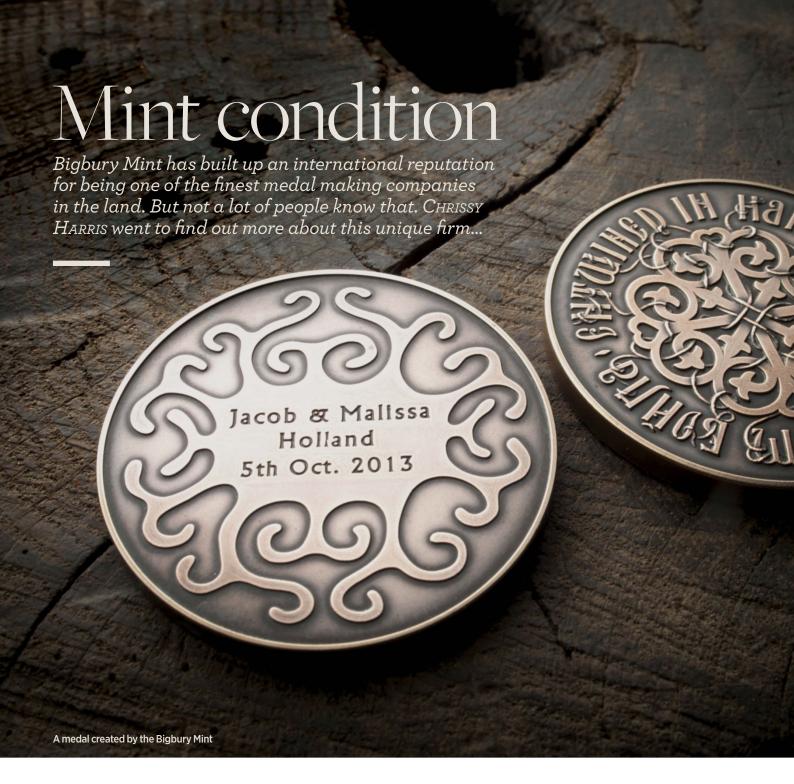
Historically Rattery formed part of the 24-mile 'Stanborough Hundred' – a civic and legal system developed by Alfred the Great to raise taxes that would help defend the country against the Danes.

Two ancient routes meet here, one of which, the Mariner's Way is a 70-mile ancient track running from the old tobacco ports of Bideford and Barnstaple.



The 13th century Church of St Mary stands proudly at the centre of Rattery

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MUCH like a medal in a drawer, Bigbury Mint is tucked away when it deserves to be on show for all to see.

The work going on here in this small, unassuming industrial unit in deepest Ermington, South Devon, is nothing short of magical.

Having been awarded very few medals in my time (none, in fact) I was unprepared for how pleasing and special a small piece of metal could be.

After spending a morning at Bigbury Mint I'm desperate to be decorated. Services to washing up, perhaps? Or Chief Finder of Lost Toys? Whatever it takes to get my hands on these tiny pieces of treasure.

"They are special, when you think about it," says Bigbury Mint's owner and medal

engraver Matthew Holland. "In the end, you're creating something that's going to last for thousands of years and there's something quite powerful about that."

In its 35-year history, Bigbury Mint has made medals for everyone from the Royal Academy of Dance, Channel 4 television, European Orchid Growers, Sandhurst Military Academy and more.

Many designs are painstakingly handcarved onto a model (by Matthew), which is then reduced by a special machine to create a mould or 'die'.

These dies are then used to make an individual medal during a lengthy process that involves a small team of highly skilled people, a lot of polishing and, of course, the odd tea break.

PUNCHES:

In the downstairs workshop are boxes and boxes full of steel punches, each with minute shapes, letters and drawings carved onto the end.

The company has a collection of about 3,000 of these amazing tools, some donated by metalwork firms up and down the country.

"Each punch took some bloke a couple of days to make and it'll last for thousands of years. It's so sustainable."

Matthew has started hosting jewellery-making workshops to allow people to use the punches in their designs.

54 devonlife.co.uk



THE MEDAL-MAKING PROCESS:

Matthew helps a client come up with a design. A model is made of each side of the medal, larger than actual size. This can be carved by hand – especially portraits – or cut by a computer controlled engraving machine.

"I find it easier to carve than draw," says Matthew, who will turn his hand to any design. "With drawing, you have to shade to get the relief but it's there when you carve."

A 'reducing machine' uses the carved model to produce a piece of steel with the medal design on. This is called a die. This is then hand polished until it's ready for work.

A medal-shaped blank piece of metal is put between two dies





Checking the quality

People think that

you just press a

button and a medal

comes out the other

end but there's a

and pressed in a hydraulic press at 130 to 500 tonnes, depending on diameter.

The medal will need to be pressed a few more times.

The medal is then polished, by hand and machine before ribbons are attached.

One medal can take one day or longer to produce.

The company also makes copies of British Military medals for veterans or families who have perhaps lost these precious heirlooms.

"Most people have their grandad's medals somewhere in a drawer," says Matthew. "We can clean them up, replace the ribbons and even put them in a frame to hang on the wall."

During one such team cuppa, finisher Diane Benson, ribboner Marie Wilcott, workshop assistant Jon Crane and medal maker Tony Brown are all sat round the long wooden bench in the unit's bright and cheerful workshop,

"We've all been here for years," says Diana. "Everybody pitches in and helps everybody else. We're always busy."

Things are particularly hectic during the build up to Remembrance Day.

Since 2004, Bigbury Mint has held a Ministry of Defence licence to make copies of British military medals to sell to service veterans or their families,

so the phone is constantly ringing with customers asking to have their accolades either made or existing ones polished and ready on time.

Seamstress Tash Pope is
busy taking calls. "I get a huge
amount of job satisfaction from the fact that
you are helping to create something that
someone has so much pride in and has so
many memories," she says, explaining how
she mounts and sews the military medals
in the correct order (called court mounted),
makes sure the ribbons are right and polishes
the metal until everything shines like new.

lot more to it'

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in the correct order (called court mounted),
makes sure the ribbons are right and polishes
the metal until everything shines like new.

"I always take a moment to sit back and enjoy them, once they're done," she says. "I recently had to do a court mount of ten medals. That was one of the best jobs I've had."

Much of the work here is done by hand, using years of expertise and tools from a simpler time, as well as the latest technology.

Matthew shows me his workbench and I marvel at the well-worn small chisels used to etch a medal design onto a model.

For a moment, Matthew is overcome with emotion as he explains how his engraver father, David, who helped to set up Bigbury Mint back in 1980, said that rather than give his son the tools for the job, they would make them together.

"Some of these are dad's and some are mine. He showed me how to make them and shape them up," says Matthew, 53, who still uses these tools to create all sorts of engravings - everything from portraits to buildings.

"People think that you just press a button and a medal comes out the other end but there's a lot more to it," he says. "What I really

love is sitting here at my bench and carving. You just get that lovely craft feel. It's not the same looking at a computer screen. That's not to say that I won't do that. I'm determined to keep changing and move with progress - you have to."

New technology and 3D printers will no doubt help this business develop but that's not what makes it unique.

It's the traditional skills passed down generations and the fact that Bigbury Mint is so happy to stay put.

"I often feel that Bigbury Mint would be much better known if it was based in London," says Matthew. "But the point is, I want to live here, near the sea and moor.

"We feel we have got a lot of resources and skills. And it's not just this company. There are so many firms in Devon that are really so good at what they do but they don't get the credit and recognition they deserve."

Hear, hear. Maybe there should be a few more medals dished out. For more information, see bigburymint.com



Engraver Matthew Holland

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2 hours in NEWTON ABBOT

DAYTIME-



DISCOVER HANNAH'S

Hannah's boasts various children's activities and its own farm. The diverse site includes shops, yoga classes and an art gallery. When you're finished with all that, the Bistro sells the best cake in Newton.

discoversealehayne.org

IBOUNCE

The iBounce offers experiences for a variety of age groups and abilities, including sessions for children with special needs. You can show up and bounce, or take part in fitness classes and dodge ball tournaments.

i-bounce.co.uk

DECOY COUNTRY PARK

Perfect for dog walking, with a playground to keep the children entertained and a wealthy wildlife. Decoy Lake offers water sports for the competitively inclined – and a coffee kiosk for those who are not

teignbridge.gov.uk/decoy

NIGHT TIME

THE JOLLY FARMER

A great venue for a night out, The Jolly Farmer hosts regular music nights, from acoustic open mics to bands of every genre. Have a dance or sit back for a chat with friends in this pub's award winning multi-level beer garden. venture-inns.com/jolly-farmer

RICCA'S

A meal in this bustling Italian restaurant makes for a wonderful evening. The menu is varied and delicious -nothing beats fresh pasta. Make sure to leave room for dessert because the chocolate melt is fantastic.



THE TAPHOUSE AND BOTTLE SHOP

In the Tucker's Maltings building, this new micropub is all about the beer: bare bone surroundings, no food or music, just 140 varieties of bottled beer to delight beer and cask ale enthusiasts.

themaltingstaphouse.co.uk

EATING



TEAN'S THAI KITCHEN

Tean's Thai kitchen boasts an extensive dinner and lunch menu that easily caters to varied tastes and dietary requirements.

Experienced staff are more then happy to guide the uninitiated through the set of choices.

teansthaikitchen.co.uk

THE COUNTRY TABLE CAFE

Boasting the largest gluten-free and vegetarian menus in the town, this cafe offers an array of home-cooked lunches, including delicious jacket potatoes, toasties, quiches and pies. thecountrytablecafe.co.uk

THE PIZZA CAFE

A lively café with the best pizza around, plus an assortment of other options. Whether it's for a date night or a party, a pizza or an enchilada, The Pizza Café never disappoints. Make sure you book - tables fill up fast. thepizzacafe.co.uk

SHOPTIME

AUSTINS

A family-run business since 1924, Austins is a Newton Abbot high street stalwart spanning five shops. Austins has dedicated stores for womenswear, menswear, homewares, toys, haberdashery and more. austins-uk.com



VINTAGE NOW INTERIORS

Your first stop for beautiful, vintage style homewares from ornaments and candles to furniture and Annie Sloan paint. It's impossible to enter this shop and not want to buy it all! vintagenowinteriors.com

NEWTON ABBOT MARKET

There is something for everyone: books, fashion, delicious street food and cute home accessories. The market runs from 9am-4pm every Wednesday and Saturday.. teignbridge.gov.uk/newtonabbotmarket

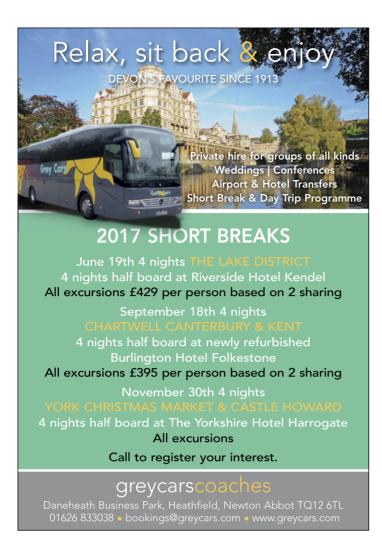
READER SUGGESTIONS

Susan Kay: The Pine Room in Austins department store has scones that are to die for. They are all baked in-house to a secret recipe.

Mark Thuell of The Pizza Cafe: As well as great shopping, there are loads of leisure activities including fantastic parks, the racecourse and a bit of messing about on the river. **Lydia Tewkesbury:** Newton Abbot Leisure Centre is great. It has a gym, a swimming pool and a variety of classes from aquasize to yoga.

NEXT MONTH we'll be looking at the South Hams.

Send your suggestions of places we should mention to Alexandra Hurley at alexandra.hurley@archant.co.uk

















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BILL OPTICIANS

NEWTON ABBOT

IN MAY 1972 Peter and Lesley Bill purchased a small optical practice in Bank Street, Newton Abbot from retiring optometrist Mr Stewart. The practice had been in Newton Abbot since the 1930s but even in 1972 it was a little old fashioned. Peter and Lesley were newly qualified and so had a modern approach to eye care and were one of the first opticians in Devon to supply contact lenses. They forged close links with the eye department at Torbay Hospital and with their emphasis on quality care they built up a loyal following of customers and together they carried out in excess of 100,000 eye examinations.

By 1999 the practice was so busy that it was at bursting point. They were joined by their sons James and Charles, who are also qualified opticians, and moved to new premises in Wolborough Street where you will still find the practice today. On opening this new practice was way ahead of its time with a bright elegant show room with designer spectacles being displayed on individual self-illuminating shelves. Today of course we are used to smart looking shops and branded goods but in 1999 practices like this were few and far between and the Bills had to travel to London just to replenish their exciting stock.

Today the practice is still pushing the boundaries of what can be achieved by a modern opticians. You will still find the huge selection of beautiful spectacle frames, some of which can be personally tailored to your own needs, but there is so much more. The practice houses some of the most advanced equipment available in the world of optics to ensure that the health of your eyes can be looked after like never before. There are opticians who specialize in fitting

multifocal contact lenses whilst other professionals help dyslexic children with their reading difficulties. They even have a partner who is a consultant eye doctor so should you have an ocular problem that needs medical treatment this can also be organised in house.

Over the past few years the business has undergone a period of expansion. There are now five Bill Opticians practices across the county all of which offer the same standard of exceptional care. There is a fantastic sunglass boutique known as Shades of Time in the centre of Exeter which displays nearly 1000 of the world's most exciting sunglasses.

Their latest project is called The Medical Eye Clinic and is on the outskirts of Exeter. The clinic is a joint venture with Mr Roland Ling, a consultant ophthalmologist at The Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, and they have created the most exceptional centre of excellence for all types of eye treatment. Essentially an eye hospital, The Medical Eye Clinic has doctors and opticians all working together in a centre that houses one of the most advanced surgical eye theatres in the UK.

Although it only opened in July 2015 The Medical Eye Clinic has already completed 1200 cataract operations. Their results are significantly higher than the national guidelines set down by The Royal College of Ophthalmologists. It would be good to compare these figures with other local clinics but it seems very difficult to find anyone else who publishes their results at all!

Whilst James and Charles have a certain drive to keep pushing the boundaries of modern eye care, it all began in Newton Abbot. Their first practice is very special to them and most days they can be found there looking after the needs of their patients just as their parents did over forty years ago!

Bill Opticians, 13 Wolborough St, Newton Abbot TQ12 1JR



IN SIX YEARS, 3,640 trees and 22 orchards have been planted, and dozens of wildflower meadows sown, in the green nooks punctuating Exeter's urban sprawl.

At the helm of this Devon Wildlife Trust project, is Terrestrial Conservation Officer, Emily Stallworthy.

"I've been asked a few times if what I do has anything to do with Star Trek or space!" she tells me. "I have to explain that my title just means that I work more on land-based projects!"

The 35-year-old has overseen the Trust's Big Tree Plant initiative, part of Exeter Wild City, in partnership with Exeter City Council, and in collaboration with community groups and local schools, which has the objective of making Exeter more green.

"Whereas conservation used to be about protecting specific species, the Trusts work nationally to protect a mosaic of habitats and therefore the connectivity of species," explains Emily. "In turn this creates a healthy landscape for people to live and work.

"In an urban area such as Exeter, it's about working alongside development and with community groups to produce green spaces. Exeter is fabulous as it has a river running through it, which attracts otters and kingfishers which you

WILDFLOWER MEADOWS

Emily explains that the difference between a patch of overgrown unkempt grass and a wildflower meadow is the type of grass and the diversity of species that grow there: dominant species of grass that make up the average patch of lawn or grass verge, aren't conducive to diversity or pollinating species. To create a wildflower meadow, first the ground needs to be rotovated, or scarified which may reawaken other species lying dormant deeper underground. Then, the ground can be reseeded with 100 per cent wildflower mix which may include annuals like poppies, cornflowers and chamomile, as well as perennials. A variety of different colours will in turn attract a variety of insects, all of whom have their favourite colours!

The importance of insects

We take them for granted, but insects are vital for our survival: around 80 per cent of our food is dependent on pollinators which include hoverflies, butterflies, and bees. But our bees aren't doing so well because of lack of food, exacerbated by an increased use of pesticides. Emily says that since the end of the Second World War, we've lost 97 per cent of our wildflower meadows due to changing farming practices, with vast amounts of land being used for a handful of crop types, such as rape seed for cooking oil. "But bees, like us, need their five a day to survive," says Emily, "so the diversity of a wildflower meadow is crucial."

can see right by the underpass at Exe Bridges. The Exe Estuary is nearby, there are valley parks and there is a natural green ridge running around the city which is almost like a natural boundary. But this means there's pressure within the city to grow, and we're trying to make sure that the green spaces we've got are as good as they can be for wildlife and communities."

Thanks to an army of volunteers across the city, trees have been planted at churchyards, community run council land, university sites and within school grounds. Community enthusiasm and involvement has made it happen, so part of Emily's modus operandi has been to build links with local communities who have taken ownership over the future nurturing of the trees.

"Green spaces provide a habitat for animals to live, and a corridor for them to travel through an urban environment," explains Emily.
"Orchards are also a lovely legacy for a community, but are important for our health and engineering; trees provide excellent water storage, absorbing water so aiding flood prevention. And on banks, they assist with preventing soil erosion. Economically, properties with views of trees are worth more than those without!

"But more trees are coming down than going up, so this is a concern and a strategy needs to be put in place to address the issue."

Emily affirms that the project was dependent upon two aspects: "We needed to secure permission to plant on the land from whoever owned it, and then ensure there were people committed to looking after them in the future," continues Emily, who explains

that she will provide groups with a management plans and support to continue the work.

One of her best days, she says, was spent with some of the dementia patients at Franklyn Hospital who helped to plant some trees, alongside some volunteers from the business community. "One of the nurses told me how much happier they all were afterwards than usual, and how they were reminiscing about gardening when they were younger," Emily says.

Another of her favourite memories of the project was an occasion where volunteer planters at St David's Churchyard included several homeless people.

One of the largest sites includes an area of council-owned land at Devonshire Place in St James where around 30 trees were planted by members of the Devonshire Place Residents Association, which formed to protect the land from development, and which has been doing a sterling job ever since. The trees brought the land a new lease of life, while exemplifying community spirit.

Emily has also worked hard to get wildflower meadows sown across the city. Her efforts have paid off: a solitary meadow was sown in 2012. Thirty were sown in nine-months in 2016.

"The best part has been the community involvement and seeing people getting excited about making a difference and then taking ownership over what they've helped create," Emily adds.

"The project is all about inspiring people to do something for wildlife, and this starts with your local environment, because otherwise, if we don't protect it, who will?"





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It's easy to appreciate the beauty of our county and all the creatures that call it home. We all love nature. But it's when we turn that love into action that we can see positive change.

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Budding musicians now have the chance to use a high-tech, purpose-built recording studio right here in Devon. Chrissy Harris went to meet the music-loving couple behind this exciting project

LINDSEY AND STEVE TROUGHTON have all the home comforts they need: a beautiful house, garden, a console and hear-back system and a TC Electronic M3000 Digital Reverb.

The Anexe Studio, attached to the couple's Exeter house, is a mind-blowing place, full of state-of-the-art recording equipment designed to help our local talent rise and shine.

Microphones, a drum kit, endless cables and plug-ins are on hand to help talented types – whatever their preferred style – record and mix their tracks.

They're in safe hands, too. Both Lindsey, 36, and Steve, 38, trained as audio engineers in New York and are passionate musicians.

Steve is a trumpeter, bass player and vocalist and Lindsey has been in bands since she was 12 and has even duetted with Robert Plant. "We're so excited," says Lindsey. "Not many studios have this sort of space. This is purpose built, so everything's here. When people come in, they just say: 'wow!"

Steve adds: "Usually, studios are stuck out on industrial areas or are part of another older building." He points out the soundproof booths and high ceilings which make for perfect acoustics: "They're often designed a bit like the Starship Enterprise, quite stark and clinical. We didn't want that."

This place is anything but clinical. Even if, like me, you know nothing about singing, chords or mixing tracks, just being in here is great.

There are photographs of musical icons hanging on the walls outside and upstairs has a chill out area, which has been decked

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THE ANEXE STUDIO



out with super-cool furniture gathered from years spent living in London and New York.

There's even a guitar-shaped sink in the bathroom.

"It's got that homely feel," says Lindsey, adding that she has spent years 'hanging around in corridors' when she was working in recording studios.

"We wanted it to be a place where people can relax. Although it's a professional studio, it's a home studio."

Lindsey and Steve moved from New York to Exeter in 2013 and promptly set about

'We've been rocking out until 3am some days and it's fine. People tell me they never hear us'

building their own Grand Designs-style home in Exeter's leafy Pennsylvania suburb.

"It was a big plunge. But we loved the location because it's so peaceful," says Lindsey. So how did plans for a rebuild and recording studio go down with the neighbours?

"Ha!" says Lindsey, before adding that the couple had to go to a meeting to explain their plans to slightly concerned local residents.

"Once we'd explained it, everyone was lovely. It's so friendly around here.

"We've been rocking out until 3am some days and it's fine. People tell me they never hear us."

That's all thanks to the ultra-modern soundproofing the studio enjoys, making it ideal for artists and neighbours alike.

There can be all manner of instruments and vocals going on inside but the local postman will be none the wiser.

It helps to add to the discreet nature of the studio, something that's important to the couple.

"We know there are a lot of famous people that live in this part of the world," says Lindsey.

"We'd love them to think: oh, I'll give Lindsey and Steve a call."

The Anexe Studio is also open to up and coming young bands "of a reasonable standard" who want to come and mix their tracks, making the most of the equipment and the expertise.

Steve and Lindsey can offer their sound engineering skills, as well as their musical knowledge.

"I'm really looking forward to working with younger vocalists and helping to nurture them,' says Lindsey.

Steve has plenty of big ambitions too. "It would be great to have our own record label one day," he says. "I'd like to before I'm 50, sometime in the next ten years or so."

Who knows, maybe the next big thing on the music scene will start life in Exeter – after all, it worked for Coldplay.◆
See theanexestudio.com

The Anexe Studio is full of state-of-the-art recording equipment designed to help our local talent rise and shine

Right: Steve and Lindsey Troughton: "We wanted it to be a place where people can relax. Although it's a professional studio, it's a home studio."



DEVON LIFE March 2017 67



The BMW 5 Series is the German giants' longest serving, best-selling model and is the backbone of BMW's range

For 40 years this executive saloon has battled out at the top its class, mixing it up with the likes of the Jaguar XF, Mercedes E-Class and Audi A6. Now with a new platform, a range of new engines and the addition of a hybrid edition, the seventh generation 5 Series is lighter, faster and more efficient than its predecessors and is aiming to cement its place at the top of the tree.

Whilst the design of the new 5 series may be more evolution rather than revolution, unsurprising in such a conservative sector, that doesn't mean the vehicle isn't as handsome as ever. Similarly proportioned to the outgoing model but stylishly tweaked with neat details such as the black 'ribbon' across the front that harks back to the full-width grilles of very early 5's.

Revolution however comes with the performance of a sophisticated high-tensile steel, aluminium and magnesium chassis upgrade that makes the new 5 series, code-named G30.

nearly as agile as its smaller sibling the 3-series. Every exterior panel is now aluminium and part of a package of savings that has shaved up to 100kg compared to the preceding 5-series, despite a lot of extra equipment.

With a basic specification that comes with more equipment than any rival model's entry-point it's unsurprising that the new 5 Series has been well documented and well-reviewed in the motoring press. Auto Express gave the new model a full five stars and called it a 'Technical Tour de force' whilst Car Magazine told us to 'Tell the E-class to get its coat' en route to another five star review. Topping both of those however was its success at the recent What Car? 'Car of the Year 2017' awards where it took Luxury car of the year and overall car of the year, proof surely that if you are in the market for a spacious, sophisticated and stylish saloon then the BMW 5 Series should be top if your consideration list.

THE NEW BMW 5 SERIES, FROM £36,270 AND AVAILABLE TO ORDER NOW

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Official fuel economy figures for the new BMW 5 Series range: Urban 60.1-29.7mpg (4.7-9.5l/100km). Extra Urban 74.3-47.8mpg (3.8-5.9l/100km). Combined 68.8-39.2mpg (4.1-7.2l/100km). CO_2 emissions: 108-164g/km.

Figures are obtained in a standardised test cycle. They are intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not be representative of what a user achieves under usual driving conditions.



Perfect harmony

Fran McElhone meets up with Devon vintage vocal trio The Liberty Sisters

YOU'RE bound to know a few of the songs in their repertoire, and if you don't, they'll have you on your feet doing a boogie woogie (or tapping your feet at least), within minutes anyway.

Vintage vocal trio, The Liberty Sisters, is Clare Fairburn, Vikki Hewitt, and Helena Gater – or as they prefer to be known, Rose, Ruby and Dolly.

I meet up with them at their weekly, evening rehearsal at Clare's Clyst St Mary home. Outfits, including floaty floral tea dresses, glamorous floor length winter gowns, and military uniforms reminiscent of a bygone age, are hung up and there are all sorts of pretty accessories and gadgets lying around. Turns out, tonight is more of a costume pow wow.

WHO IS BUTTERCUP?

The Liberty Sisters are often seen with a bright yellow 1953 GMC pickup truck called Buttercup – imported from California by Clare's husband Harry a few years ago.

"It should have been called Honey because when she arrived we found honeycomb in all of her cavities!" reveals Clare. "We looked online at the address where she came from and saw that she had been stored in someone's back yard in the middle of nowhere for several years, and used as a beehive."

"We're here to talk about seamed hosiery this evening," Clare tells me. "And I wanted to show the girls this," she adds waving something that looks half hairbrush half hair roller around. "This was a great gadget I found," she says, starting to wind her hair around it. "It makes no hassle victory rolls! Our top priority is making sure our singing is perfect, but we want to make sure we look nice and authentic, on a level with having fun," she adds.

The ladies found each other through their mutual love of music, singing and close harmony.

Their sound is melodious, beautiful and wistful. Their singing invokes happiness. And they're a rarity too; the group is thought to be the only close

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harmony vintage group south of Bristol.

"Close harmony has its roots in Gospel," says Clare, the tenor of the group, who met Helena and the original Ruby, Vicky Parkes, at St Thomas and Sidmouth gospel choirs, and who together formed the group last spring.

"I've known Vikki for a while so when the first Vicky said she was moving away, I knew she'd be perfect. We all absolutely love harmony singing."

Close harmony is characteristic of the 1930s and 1940s and therefore reminiscent of Second World War Britain. Their name, they tell me, represents the fight for freedom witnessed in the 1940s.

"Harmony singing means you connect with your fellow singers on a different level," says Vikki, the alto, who lives in Exmouth. "It's like a sandwich that makes a lovely complete sound. The aim is to make it sound easy even when it's not."

"The first time a song works and it clicks, it's an emotional moment," adds Clare.

"Music started to jump in the 30s and 40s," continues Vikki. "It was very cheerful music. And all the songs have a story. Not like today, don't get me started on that! And they have such humour. There are so many really wonderful songs, and even if people haven't heard them, they can connect."

The girls have many well known songs in their repertoire including *Lullaby on Broadway*, *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree*, as well as some emotive classics, *The White Cliffs of Dover*, *We'll Meet Again* and *Goodnight Sweetheart*.

"For us, one of the big driving forces is seeing people enjoy themselves and being part of the party," says Clare. "We find people are quick to get up and dance. When you look out and see them smiling, it's so uplifting."

"You see couples coming out of their shells, and people who were sitting at the back get up and dance," Vikki says.

"The performance side of it is wonderful too," adds Helena, the mezzo soprano. "It allows you to take on a whole different persona."

The girls choreograph their routines themselves and their songs are a mix of original and personal arrangements. Their plan is to increase the repertoire to 1950s, 60s and 70s tunes too.

Clare, 61, who has been a charity fundraising manager for the RNLI, grew up in a family that loves music. "My father never let us be without music," she says. "I've always sung, and if I'm not singing out loud, I'll be singing in my head! All my life I've wanted to do more harmony singing, it's what I love most."

'We find people are quick to get up and dance. When you look out and see them smiling, it's so uplifting'

Vikki is classically trained and spent her teenage years gigging in Exmouth, Exeter and Sidmouth. Not long after graduating from the Academy of Contemporary Music the 26-year-old was headhunted to become one of 70 Rock Choir leaders countrywide.

"I would harmonise to anything," she says. "It's something you just find yourself doing, you can't help it!"

Working mum-of-four Helena, 27, from Exeter, grew up in a musical family and has been singing on stage since she was five years old. She is also classical trained. "Harmony has always been my love," she says.

After forming last spring, in a short space of time the group was getting booked up, with private functions including weddings and public events. More recently they performed at a wake for a gentleman in his 90s.

"We asked his widow if they'd like us to wear our black velvet outfits," Clare tells me. "But she said, no, wear your uniforms, he would have liked that. When we started performing, it really warmed up the room. You could see people start to relax and it seemed to really lift their hearts, it was lovely to see."

You can see The Liberty Sisters at Darts Farm Classic Car Show in aid of the Estuary League of Friends on 4 June and at Dawlish Cycle and Heritage Day on 28 May. ◆ thelibertysisters.com



The girls choreograph their routines themselves































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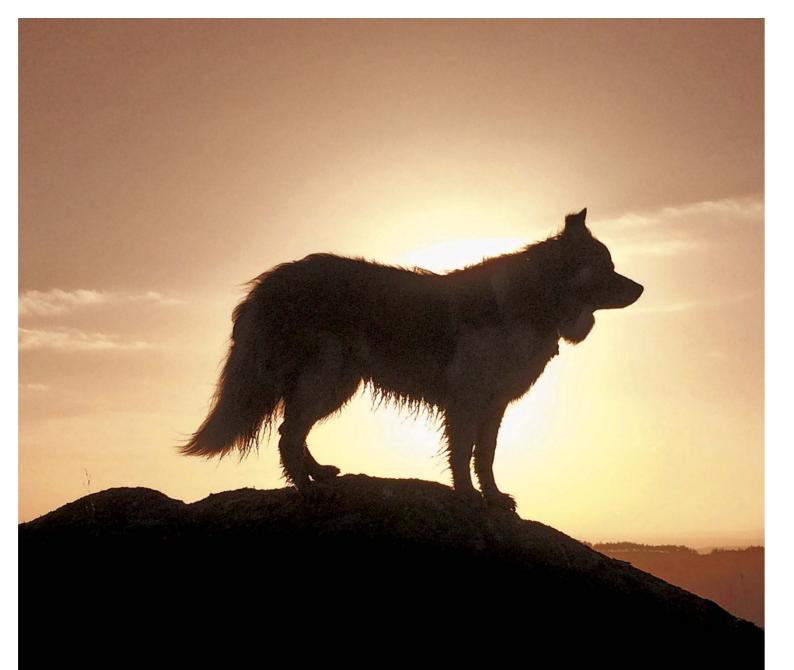
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Teachers

BELINDA JONES is sent to the Headmistress's office at The Maynard School in Exeter to learn about the dog who inspired Fluffy Friday...

oet

IT can be a lengthy process for a new headmistress to feel accepted and integrated at a new school but when former Exeter University student Sarah Dunn arrived at The Maynard school for girls last September she brought with her a secret weapon - a beguiling Collie 'with a touch of Sheltie' named Ty.

"I knew there was ice-breaking to be done when the girls would say the briefest hello and then scuttle past my door!" Sarah laughs. Her solution? "Bring in the dog!"

Ty worked a treat. "From the first Fluffy Friday they started coming in in droves – staff and pupils alike! I find animals really soften an environment and make an excellent talking point – most people have a pet at home that they like to chat about - then the next time you meet, the barrier is gone!"

Sarah has always had an affinity with animals and spent every Saturday morning throughout her schooling working at a local vets, planning on that as a career until she found her vocation as a teacher.

As with her previous Collie, Ty has been coming with Sarah to her schools (which included an all-boys and a co-ed in Plymouth) since she was a puppy in a playpen. She loves the interaction with the pupils and Sarah is thrilled with the social benefits, seeing shy girls come out of their shell in her presence and noting that "if someone is feeling vulnerable or a little upset that day, a cuddle with a fluffy dog is an instant cure."

'Ty loves kayaks so much if there's one set out in the garden in the middle of winter she'll go and sit on it, waiting for it to be launched!'

I must say I felt a rush of affection when Ty looked up at me with her 'Cleopatra' eyes and I buried my hands in her deep, double-coated fur. Then I learned that the school assembly has featured visits from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and Guide Dogs for the Blind and I wished I could repeat the two years I spent here as a pupil.

Especially when Sarah adds: "The girls



Ty loves to go kayaking



Ty also works on a Dartmoor farm

here are naturally motivated to work hard but it's such pressurized, social media-obsessed world my aim is to create a warm, familylike environment where they can try new things and relax into being themselves."

Speaking of relaxing, Ty has gone from gazing adoringly up at her mistress to snoozing beside her. There's a good reason why she's sleepy come Friday afternoon – Monday to Thursday she has another life as a working dog on their neighbour's farm on Dartmoor.

"Ty looks impressive herding the sheep but I have a theory that she's obsessed with the boy Collie called Jip and is actually just chasing him around the fields!" she smiles. "To be honest she's better at herding Ten Tors or Duke of Edinburgh's Award children in training, though it's hilarious watching the dilemma when the teams - her flock - split up after lunch and go separate ways!"

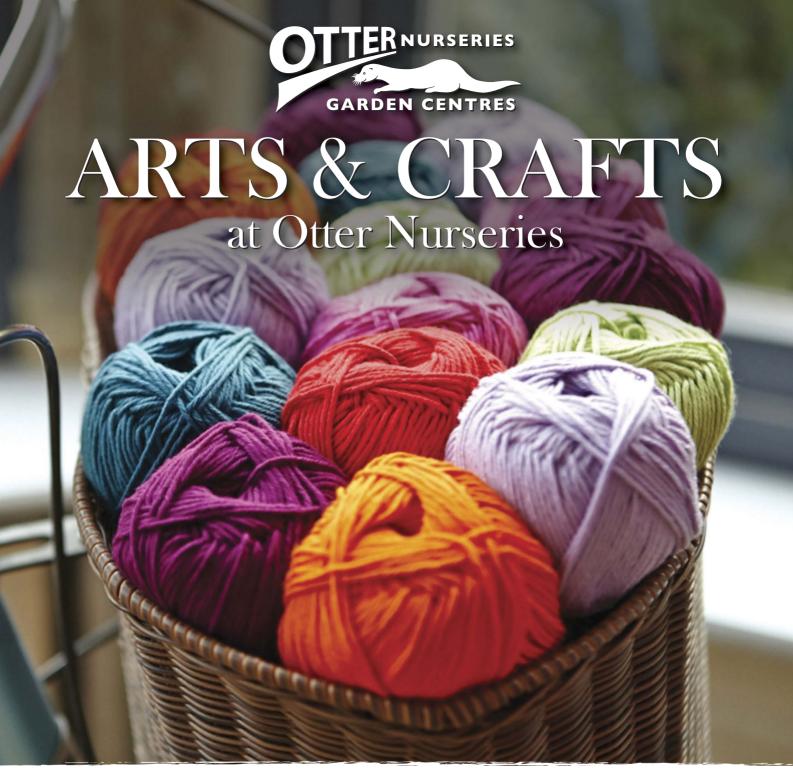
Sarah describes Ty as the classic companion dog, always eager to join in any activity, be it camping, biking (complete with cycle trailer for intermittent rests to preserve Ty's joints) or, best of all, kayaking.

"Ty loves kayaks so much if there's one set out in the garden in the middle of winter she'll go and sit on it, waiting for it to be launched!"

Despite having grown up in the Bahamas, the cool weather is no deterrent for Sarah and she loves to be out on the moors, even when darkness falls early: "I'll get home from school and put the head torch on and take Ty out (with her flashing collar!) for an hour. It's a different type of beauty in the moonlight: the stars are out and you catch glimpses of owls and foxes..."

For a change of scene they enjoy campervan trips around France and Spain. In the long summer holidays, I presume?

"Oh no! I never go away in the summer, I'd miss Devon too much at that time - my favourite thing is to take a boat out to one of the secluded beaches," she enthuses. "I've travelled all over the world and every time I come back to Devon I think: 'Wow! You can't beat it." ◆



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He can see heroes... As he gears up for his annual Devon Garden Festival next month, presenter and writer Toby Buckland chooses some

of his garden heroes and highlights



DEVON has a rich horticultural heritage and fabulous gardens including Rosemoor, Knightshayes and Killerton which rightly deserve their high profile. However there are many less vaunted locations, nurseries that deserve to be better known and gardening heroes that quietly influence the way we grow and what we plant in our gardens.

Here is my pick of some of the horticultural faces and places that should be better known.

KATHERINE MILES, **WILLOW ARTIST**

Willow weaver and recent star of Channel 4's Sunday Brunch, Katherine Miles has an extraordinary ability to capture her subjects in willow, whether a woven stag, heron or pocketwatch toting White Rabbit from Alice in Wonderland.

Katherine's sculptures always bring dynamism to any landscape and are incredibly lifelike. Katherine runs courses through the year and can work to commission but get in quick, because she's very much in demand! artisan-willow. com or call 07762 387347

DARTINGTON HALL GARDENS

Its undulating landscape is sliced with horizontal planes into the grass giving it a contemporary but timeless feel, enhanced by sculptures and artwork by amongst others Henry Moore and Peter Randall-Page.

At this time of year the bulbs are coming up and the leaves just starting to unfurl. One of Devon's best known cultural centres and home of the Ways With Words Festival but unstuffy enough to be a favourite with my younger children who love to play hide and seek among the pillar-like tree trunks and clipped conifers.

THORNHAYES NURSERY

The place to find trees in Devon, this Cullompton nursery has been owned and run by Kevin Croucher and wife Pat since 1991. Kevin specialises in trees of all descriptions and boasts one of the widest selections in the UK including specialist varieties of ornamental trees, fruit and hedging.



Plants from Growers Organic

Having celebrated their 25th anniversary in 2016, Kevin claims 60,000 trees in the British landscape are the result of his design and propagating knife. Quite an achievement!

An international expert on trees, it's good to have Kevin on our doorstep here in Devon. Check out his website for winter fruit training courses, Thornhayes Nursery, thornhayesnursery.co.uk; 01884 266746

GROWERS ORGANICS

Producing high-quality organic vegetable, herb and flower plants and seeds from their South Devon Nursery, Growers Organics - run by passionate plantswoman Joa Grower - raise all their plants by hand and run the nursery on environmental and ethical principles backed by 25 years of garden experience – 18 of which have been in nurseries.

Their comprehensive range of veggies, seeds, herbs, fruit and sundries – all certified organic - can be bought by mail order or by taking a trip to the nursery which is open from March to September. growersorganics. com; 01752 881180

URBAN AND RURAL PLANTS

Based at Matford, near Exeter, this hidden away tree and

architectural plant nursery is one of Exeter's best kept secrets. Sourcing from around the globe and supplying to garden acolytes including Chelsea Flower Show designers, Sam and Lee have their finger on the garden fashion pulse but also know what will do well in your garden, whether it's a cloud-pruned privet or an exotic date palm.

Many of the plants sourced for Chelsea show gardens find their way onto sale in the nursery, so if you're after something really special... They also offer a landscape and design service. urbanandruralplants. co.uk; 01392 253266

NICKY SCOTT

I've known and worked with Nicky Scott for years on our garden festivals, where he gives demonstration of his composting craft. And what he doesn't know about making compost isn't worth knowing!

Director of Devon's Community Resource Network and Chair of Devon Growing Schools Nicky is a consultant helping businesses, schools, and community groups make the most of resources they might otherwise throw away. He is 'Dr Compost' and can be contacted at nicky@proper-job.org

ATLANTIC BOTANIC

Many of Devon's gardens are on the coast but many more sit on high ground and are exposed to winds, making growing conditions difficult.

For plants to survive they need to be tough and that's where Atlantic Botanic nursery comes in.

Started by Alan Godsmark and Kay Tudor who met at RHS Rosemoor, this three-acre nursery is based behind the sand dunes of Braunton Burrows.

Here they grow and sell an inspiring range of wind and salt-tolerant plants hailing from South Africa and New Zealand, including agapanthus, red hot poker, osteospermum, architectural phormium and exotic ginger lilies, canna and passionflower, as well as 'beachy' grasses which dance in the breeze.

atlanticbotanic.co.uk; 01271 816225

THE GARDEN HOUSE

The Garden House is a plant spotter's paradise with a wealth of unusual and rare plants. Covering ten acres, its appeal lies in the way it's divided into smaller gardens and scenes.

Features to look out for include the granite standing stones and serpentine walls. There's also a romantic walled garden, 16th century ruins and flowering meadows, cottage garden with drift planting and terraced lawns. Buckland Monachorum, Yelverton PL20 7LQ, 01822 854769, open every day except Monday 10.30-5pm, adults £7.20

HILLHOUSE NURSERY

Once the vicarage of Landscove near Ashburton and taken over in 1981 by Ray and Sacha Hubbard to become Hillhouse Nursery, selling a huge range of rare and tender perennials and climbers.

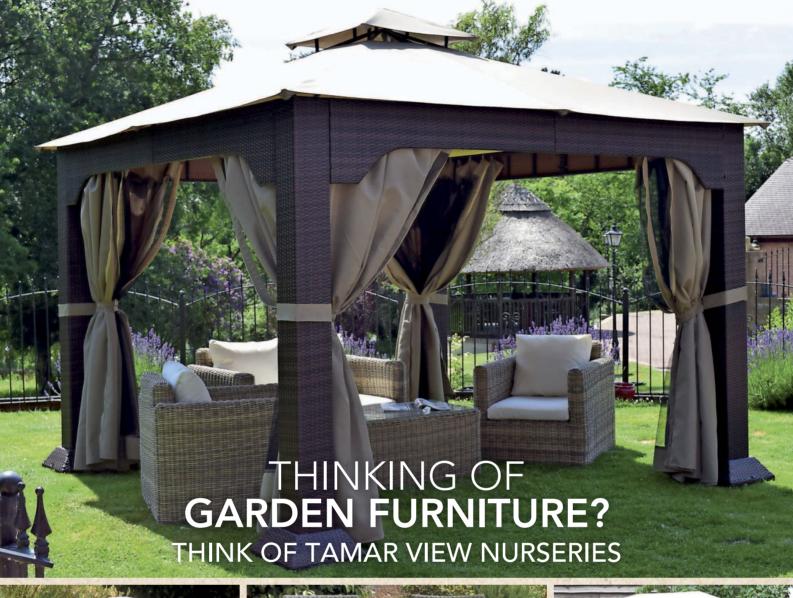
Ray pioneered the use of biological controls, using natural predators instead of chemicals to combat greenhouse pests. He is a remarkable grower too, with a long list of plants he has bred and named including Nemesia 'Bluebird' which has sold more than 13 million plants worldwide. Open 50 weeks a year except Christmas. hillhousenursery. com; 01803 762273 ◆

You can meet many of Toby's Devon Garden Heroes at Toby's Garden Festival at Powderham Castle on 28 and 29 April 2017. Tickets cost £10 and are available from the Powderham Castle Plant Centre or online tobygardenfest.co.uk

Ray and his son Matthew at Hilhouse Nursery



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GARDEN CUTTINGS

Toby Buckland delivers some sound practical and seasonal advice



A fresh start

HELLO! March is a month of fresh starts, a time of sowing and planting and knocking borders into shape for the summer ahead. Everything is surging upwards green and fresh from the soil and you can't help feeling your own sap rising in unison.

The spring equinox falls on 20 March and the hours of daylight stretch out faster now than at any other time. If that isn't enough to put a spring in your step the clocks 'spring forward' the following weekend so as well as plants benefiting from more hours of sunshine gardeners can enjoy balmy evenings spent outdoors! It's been a long time coming but spring is here at last!

WHAT TO DO NOW

Buy and plant rockery plants while there are lots to choose from and plants have a long season to establish. Start sowing tender veg seeds in the greenhouse ready for planting out in early May, including tomatoes and African marigolds to act as deterrents to whitefly.

Onion setts can be planted straight outdoors in rows with their noses just showing and early potatoes sprouted on a windowsill indoors for planting later this month.

Once the temperature is above seven degrees C you can sow a new lawn (much cheaper than buying turf) and repair bare patches with patch kits. Go for tougher rye grass mixes on lawns which get a lot of use.



Use mulch to keep down weeds



Start dahlias off from tubers ready for planting out after the frosts

Hardy perennials are on sale now in small 9cm pots representing good value and will bulk up quickly planted now. Any perennials in borders that have become too large or sparse at the centre can be dug up and divided into smaller portions. The young shoots won't take harm but keep the best, discarding any tired or dead bits and after re-planting mulch with a 5cm layer of compost or leaf mould to keep down weeds and hold in moisture.

If you haven't done so already trim the spent stems of perennials back to the fresh new growth at the crown and take the shears to box hedges and box topiary to keep them neat.

START OFF DAHLIAS IN POTS

If you love dahlias with their amazing flower shapes and sweetshop colours, start them off from tubers ready for planting out after the frosts. Plant into large two-litre pots with the stubs of last year's cut-down stalks above the compost. Keep just moist and somewhere bright and frost-free like a porch or greenhouse, then plant out in a sunny spot once leaves appear after frosts finish. Watch out for slugs and snails when plants are small, keep watered when dry and stake plants for support as they grow. Dahlias flower from July right into autumn producing plentiful flowers for the house and garden. •



Plant of the month DOG'S TOOTH VIOLET

Woodland-style shady borders come into their own this month with baby-blue pulmonaria, hellebores and unfurling hosta and ferns but the crowning glory is the dog's tooth violet, Erythronium dens-canis.

Like miniature martagon lilies, they're not the easiest bulbs to grow, preferring soils that neither sit wet or become bone-dry during summer (their dormant season). If that isn't challenging enough slugs and snails adore their lush spring leaves. This explains why they're something of a rarity but if you can cater to their fussiness, and keep molluscs at bay, boy, are they worth it! Their beauty is breathtaking.

WHAT'S ON

One of the great things about living in Devon's maritime climate is the opportunity to grow something out of the ordinary, like sky-scraping echium and canna lily. Join me on Tuesday 21 March at the Powderham Castle Plant Centre for a Gardeners' Coffee Morning where I will be talking on New, Rare and Unusual Plants, including some favourites which I grow in my own West Country garden. Tickets cost £8.50 and include light refreshments. Booking is essential please, on 01626 891133.

A GRAPE IDEA

Do you have a well-drained fertile soil, a south-facing slope or a sunny sheltered garden? If so you have the perfect site for growing vines and perhaps making enough for your own English wine!

While traditional wine grapes like Sauvignon and Pinot Grigot are best left to the Californians, white varieties like 'Seyval Blanc' and 'Buckland Sweetwater' (no relation) and red 'Regent' and 'Boskoop Glory' grow well in the West Country and produce plentiful crops of tasty grapes in warm years with a long, late summer.

DEVON LIFE March 2017







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DEVON LIFE March 2017

Growing a food revolution

Tim Maddams meets his friend and former River Cottage colleague Mark Diacono to hear all about his latest, ground-breaking project

I want it to be a place that

brings like minded people

together to change the world in

a simple, human way, centred

around but not restricted to food

production and cookery'

I HAVE BEEN missing a good friend of mine lately. He's the kind of mate you never normally worry about not hearing from for a while, you know you can just pick up where you left off; nevertheless I was concerned.

Lately, I have been seeing and hearing an awful lot about Mark Diacono and his latest pioneering foodie project. Well known from his Channel 4 days, he has a series of wonderful and annoyingly well-written award-winning books on gardening, cookery and the relationship between them both.

His project is taking shape in Weston on the edge of Honiton. Eager to catch up with the man himself about his plans, I pull into the Otter Farm site entrance on a blustery

winter morning and see a seriously impressive contemporary building project in the final throws of completion. As I sidle past the szechuan pepper orchard and up the steps to the teaching space, an impressive structure of glass and wood, Mark spots me and throws the door wide in greeting; tea is served, along with a home-grown egg and some well scraped toast (It happens to the best of us...) and we begin our catch up session. Mark looks like that strange mixture between elated and exhausted; it's been a very long year.

"We wanted to do something very special here at Otter Farm. We wanted to extend

the functionality of the site to make it do more, and funding that has been tough."

Tough indeed, as the sale of part of the land didn't scratch the surface of the build costs for the teaching space and so a crowdfunding campaign was launched.

"It was flipping hard graft getting the funding over the line. It's been a long road but it's been worth it." He looks at me and adds: "The community here locally have been awesome. From their support of the planning application all the way through, people seem

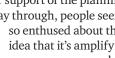
> so enthused about the idea that it's amplifying my own energy and will to make it all happen."

We hop from subject to subject and I try to get my head around all the

amazing plans for Otter Farm. "So, besides the vineyard, the climate change gardening, the nut orchard, the edible hedgerows and the yet-to-be-constructed walled teaching garden, what else is going to happen here?"

"I don't want this place to be all about me, though I will have an input on all the days we host here," he says. "I want it to be a place that brings like-minded people together to change the world in a simple, human way, centred around but not restricted to food production and cookery."

He has some impressive names lined up to lead courses and events. Rachel Rody, Rachel









Mark Diacono wants to do something very special at Otter Farm: "This is a place for food to change people."

FUTURE FOUNDATION

Part of the project's masterplan is an educational trust called The Otter Farm Foundation. You can pay a £20 annual fee to become a member of Otter Farm which gets you discounts on seeds and plants, or a full 'Friend' membership of £50 also gives you a discount of courses. In fact in most cases it pays you straight back for your investment. And the membership fee doesn't get swallowed up by Otter Farm; instead it goes into a separate fund that will only be used to fund school visits to Otter Farm and to reach out to schools by visiting them. Not only schools, but the wider community as well.





Mark Diacono pictured at Otter Farm



Harvest time at Otter Farm

Macormac, Naomi Devlin and many more will be hosting courses on everything from Italian peasant cookery to fermentation and gluten free cookery. Mark himself will be leading the way with the gardening courses.

That's not all though. The building that houses the cookery school will also host lectures, arts performances, discussion groups, sustainability forums, writing and photography workshops.

"You're going to have your hands full organising all this," I exclaim, but Mark doesn't seem fazed. "It needs doing; we need this." I can't help feel that this is a very big 'we' he's talking about here as in a national, if not global, 'we'.

It won't all be fancy pants cookery courses either, there will be very low cost back-to-basics courses, ones teaching people how to cook on a budget or from the out of date aisle at the supermarket and ones giving people the skills to cook for themselves,

with better quality, more ethically-sourced ingredients. "This is a place for food to change people," Mark continues. "It's no good lecturing people about sustainability or preaching to the converted all the time; we need to put our money where our mouth is and invest in people. We won't be offering these courses for nothing, but they will run at cost, so as to be as inclusive as possible."

It's quite a place and I'm enthused. I leave full of vim and vigour (and signed up to assist on a course or two). Mark is out an a limb here; this is a brave and unusual project, far more than your run of the mill cookery school or event space. I'm in love with the place, and Mark's passion for what he is doing. I hope very much that everything goes to plan and the positive change that places like this evoke will spring forth unhindered. Right on man! Otter Farm is here, it's something very special and it's well worth a visit. otterfarm.co.uk

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COUNTRY CASEBOOK

Tony Jackson looks at the history of an animal whose legend comes to the fore in March



THE Hatter shook his head mournfully. "Not I!" he replied. "We quarrelled last March – just before he went mad, you know" – (pointing with his teaspoon at the March Hare). - from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.

There is surely no other British mammal such as the hare which has accumulated such a baggage of long-standing folklore, not all of it benign, and such a plethora of regional names. In some eastern counties the hare was called a sally, a bowen, puss in the north of England and a jack hare in Devon, in others parts of the country a malkin or a laversock. The list is endless.

The brown hare has, of course, long been associated with madness and the month of March, due simply to the buck animal's propensity to erratic behaviour, notably "boxing" with a rival, during the courtship season in March. Indeed, the animal's supposed madness has been a longstanding country myth; even Shakespeare refers to "A hare-brained Hotspur, governed by a spleen." (Henry IV, Part 1).

For some inexplicable reason the brown hare seems to have been endowed with a surfeit of rural folklore and curious traditions. In the past, for instance, many country folk would refuse to eat a hare, believing that because the animal seems to have an excess of blood, making the flesh dark, then if a pregnant woman ate a hare she would have a miscarriage. Nor

For some

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would have a miscarriage. Nor should she so much as glance at the animal, for if she did her child would be born with a hare-lip, a deformity of the upper lip. There was, too, a belief that carrying a hare's foot in one's pocket would ward off rheumatism, a remedy firmly believed in by the diarist Samuel Pepys.

As is so often the case with long-standing myths and legends, pre-Roman pagan rites and fertility are so often



Jack of all names

associated with traditions which, in adulterated forms, have survived the generations.

Today, Easter is associated with the Easter Bunny, This is, however, only a fairly recent trend, for the hare was once the traditional Easter animal and at one time it was a tradition in Britain to hunt hares at Easter. Indeed, the festival took its name from Eostre, the Teutonic goddess of the dawn, whose sacred animal was a hare.

As fare on the table, the hare is beyond reproach. Jugged hare, embellished with half a pint of port, cloves, lemons, pepper and seasoning, provides outstanding winter fare.

The flesh is, admittedly, strong and gamey but, in my book, quite delicious.

It is, however, a good many years since I was able to sample a jugged hare prepared in the style of Mrs Beeton.

Today, hare numbers fluctuate and whilst in the recent past large numbers have been shot on hare drives in parts of the eastern and southern counties, to help reduce agricultural damage, the overall population is in severe decline. It has been estimated that during the latter part of the 19th century the hare population in Britain was about four million, but an 80 per cent and continuing reduction has seen the population dwindle, especially in the South West. Here, there are regions where hares are a rarity and in some places extinct.

The losses countrywide have been due largely to the destruction of traditional hay meadows, hedges and changing patterns of land use. Today, hares fare better in the eastern counties, where arable production predominates.

Despite the fact that the hare population overall is in severe decline, the animal does not have a shooting close season, though the Hares Preservation Act 1892 prohibits the sale of hares or leverets between 1 March and 31 July.

Even so, concern at the decline of this attractive animal resulted in a 1990s government Biodiversity Action Plan to double the overall population by 2010, a target which has failed and is unlikely to be achieved in the near future. •

Matt Austin

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MAN ON THE MOOR

A steadily rising age profile and lack of incentives and opportunities for young people to continue to live and work locally are causing increasing concern, writes Philip Dalling

WITHOUT major investment in infrastructure and job opportunities there can be little future for forthcoming generations on Exmoor, is the devastating conclusion of a new survey.

The difference between the new report and past studies is the fact that it has been compiled not by civil servants or politicians but by the very group whose lifestyle is most threatened by the dangers it highlights.

Young people across the length and breadth of the moor have taken the matter into their own hands, analysed statistics, identified problems and compiled a super-sized wish list of measures they believe could revive their own prospects and those of their successors.

The Exmoor Young Voices network has united farmers, labourers, shop workers, trainee professionals and students, and its campaign to help young people continue to live and work locally is supported by the Exmoor National Park Authority and other bodies.

Organiser Marion Silverlock explains: "For the past three years

Young voices in a plea to halt Exmoor decline

we have been advising ENPA what is needed for young people to be able to build their lives on Exmoor. We want to keep Exmoor special and minimise a drift towards an unbalanced population."

The group's research has highlighted the issues most responsible for causing young people to, with reluctance, move away from the National Park.

These include the fact that
Exmoor not only has more over
60s than the national average but
also a declining number of under16s. The average age of farmers
attending local markets is 60 plus.

Housing is also a major issue. All the

Young Voices members who helped compile the report live at home, unable to do otherwise. "Affordable housing is, in reality, neither affordable nor available for young single people," says Marion Silverlock.

For those with jobs, wages are low in relation to rents. Other factors contributing to potential decline include unemployment, exacerbated by poor road and rail links, often non-existent public transport, and inadequate digital communications.

Exmoor National Park chairman Andrea Davis backs the campaign. She says: "Young Voices has already been successful in raising the profile of young people on Exmoor and highlighting the issues and challenges that living here presents to them.

"Collectively young people have a strong voice to shape the future and we are fortunate on Exmoor that such an initiative has been established.

"ENPA, parish councils and other organisations are helping ensure that this voice continues to be heard, not only locally but nationally as well."

Rather than simply identify the problems and look for other bodies to identify potential solutions, Exmoor Young Voices have compiled their own wish list.

Suggestions include starter flats for young people, and the provision of student-style accommodation with low rents to bridge the gap between leaving school and becoming

Below: Exmoor National Park chairman Andrea Davis meets young people whose careers may have to be pursued, initially at least, away from home. Pictured are Theo Walley, Charlotte Winn, Edward Walley, Andrea Davis and Freddy Harper-Davis. Freddy, from Kentisbury, plans to become an accountant and, is Exmoor's youngest parish councillor. Theo hopes to join the RAF and Edward is planning an Army career. Charlotte also hopes to join the Army.



WHAT EXMOOR'S YOUNG VOICES SAY:

"The economy of Exmoor will be held back until digital communication reception problems are addressed; new businesses are put off from setting up, and working from home is less viable than elsewhere." "Empty houses, second homes and holiday cottages continue to be a problem." "The average age of farmers at local markets is 60 plus." "As the rent of a one bedroom flat is £400 a month, we are better off homeless with £10 a week and jobseekers allowance." "The small cottages originally built for agricultural workers are sold as second or holiday homes." eligible for affordable housing.

The report also calls for grants and planning support for new and existing businesses, subsidies to farmers to employ and train young people in skills such as hedging, fencing, shearing and other agricultural crafts.

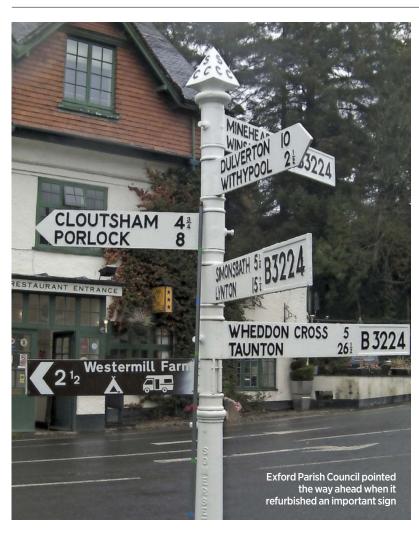
Young Voices also call for affordable homes to be designed specifically for agricultural workers, saying the design of affordable housing is 'too urban and not fit for agricultural purpose'.

'For the past three years we have been advising ENPA what is needed for young people to be able to build their lives on Exmoor'

Public transport should, they say, be extended into the deeper rural villages of Exmoor and a transport scheme considered to address the possibility of a fuel subsidy for lower-paid young people.

From a planning point of view the Young Voices say there are strong feelings about what they term the 'unequal treatment of wealthy incomers, compared to small disputes with residents'.

Marion Silverlock concludes: "A partnership of young people with ENPA is needed to prevent a situation where schools have to close, families are lost and Exmoor's viability as a well-balanced community is jeopardised."



TLC for signposts

Help is at hand for Exmoor's neglected historic signposts, courtesy of a £43,000 Heritage Lottery grant and additional funding from local bodies.

Exford Parish Council pointed the way ahead when it refurbished an important sign (pictured). A subsequent survey of more than 100 signposts revealed that most would benefit from some tender loving care.

New National Park chief executive Sarah Bryan says the signposts are a cherished part of the Exmoor landscape.

The Exmoor Society is now working to understand the history of the posts and the stories behind the name they bear at crossroads and other points.

SARA IS NEW ENPA CHIEF

Exmoor National Park has appointed Sarah Bryan (pictured) as its new chief executive, following a 'rigorous' selection process.

Although a nationwide advertising campaign attracted an impressive 70 applicants, the prestigious post was awarded to an internal candidate.

Sarah has been ENPA's head of access and conservation for four years and was described by an authority spokesperson as being able to bring to the position a wealth of experience of national parks and a strong background in landscape management and conservation.

ENPA chairman Andrea Davis says: "The National Park has always worked very closely with local communities. Sarah will continue the strong relationships forged with farmers, landowners and all who live and work on Exmoor.

"I am confident she will lead the authority successfully through potentially challenging times ahead, and raise the profile of Exmoor as one of Britain's most beautiful protected landscapes."



Sarah Bryan, Chief Executive of Exmoor National Park

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Bounding round The Burn

Simone Standbrook-Byrne explores a tiny parish and encounters an ancient tradition in Mid Devon

BUTTERLEIGH is a tiny village. You can set off to walk round its parish boundary after lunch and be back in time for tea. This age-old tradition of Beating the Bounds is still upheld in the village and takes place every year.

Before the advent of written parish records, boundaries were imprinted on the memory of parishioners by means of a perambulation during which various boundary points were noted. Some sources say that the heads of small boys were beaten against each boundary marker to make them remember. Nothing quite so brutal happens nowadays in Butterleigh. Some of the boundary is no longer accessible and the 'beating' route has wavered a bit in recent years.

The Burn Valley, through which this walk passes, is alight with snowdrops and primroses in spring – but please don't pick them, they are there for all to enjoy.

ROUTE:

From the lane outside the Butterleigh Inn walk downhill through the village to the T-junction in 180m. Here, at Hatswell Cottages, turn right towards Tiverton. In about 50m the recently-bought and much-celebrated Butterleigh Meadow is reached on the left, the acquisition of this community field something the village had been aiming for for years. Enter Butterleigh Meadow through the kissing gate and follow the well-signed footpath, heading down the field with the hedge on your left. At the end of the field pass through the metal gate and continue straight ahead across the next field for a short distance to reach the lane via a metal kissing gate.

Cross the lane diagonally left, perhaps pausing to buy some free-range eggs, then negotiate the stile beside the 'egg box'. Once in the field turn sharp left to follow the hedge on the left, the buildings of Filbrook Farm down to your right. Follow the hedge as it bends right and leads to another stile. After this bear slightly right through the next

field to reach a little wooden footbridge.

Cross the bridge, noticing the arrow on its far end. Follow its direction. There is a boundary to your right for a few metres and you then pass through a line of trees, continuing in a roughly straight line to cross a driveway. Just beyond the drive you reach a stile, about 150m from the footbridge.

Beyond this stile continue ahead as directed by the arrow to yet another stile about 100m away. After this bear right up the field; the large barns of Underleigh Farm are up to your right and the footpath is heading up towards a house. Just before you reach it, in the boundary corner, is another stile.

Cross here and turn left along the drive, passing close to the house on your left (please respect their privacy). As the drive swings left go straight ahead, crossing a horse-chewed stile and continuing ahead down the next field towards its furthest boundary and the buildings of Higher Brithayes Farm. The Burn River is down to the left.

At the boundary, with the farm buildings beyond it, you find access via stiles and a smart footbridge into the next field. Bear left through the field with rising ground and barns to your right, skirting round the slope and keeping the field boundary down to your left. As you continue round you reach a stile followed by a plank bridge which leads onto the lane.

On the lane turn left, almost immediately crossing an old, moss-softened stone bridge that spans the Burn. The lane winds through this verdant valley, passing several farm drives, and reaching Butterleigh Mill in about ½ mile. Just beyond here ignore a left turn and continue uphill on the lane.

In another 300m you find a footpath on the left which offers a shortcut back to the village for those who need an innings. For the shortcut, enter the field and walk towards the right-hand end of the cottages,



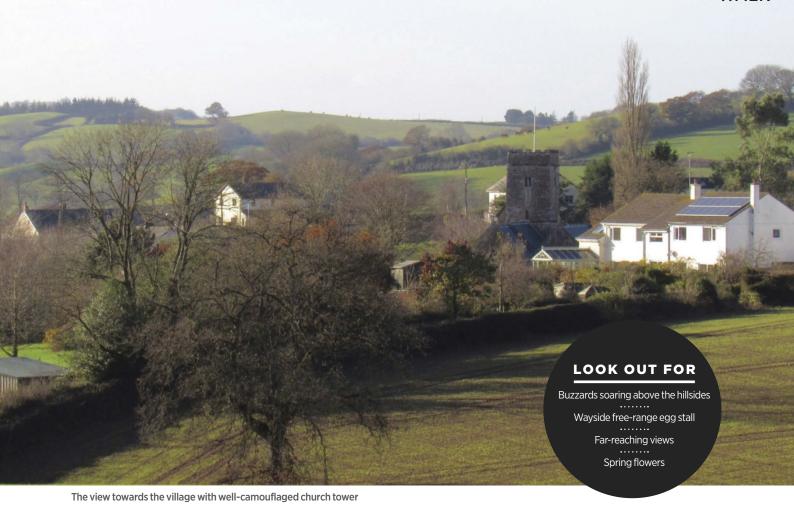


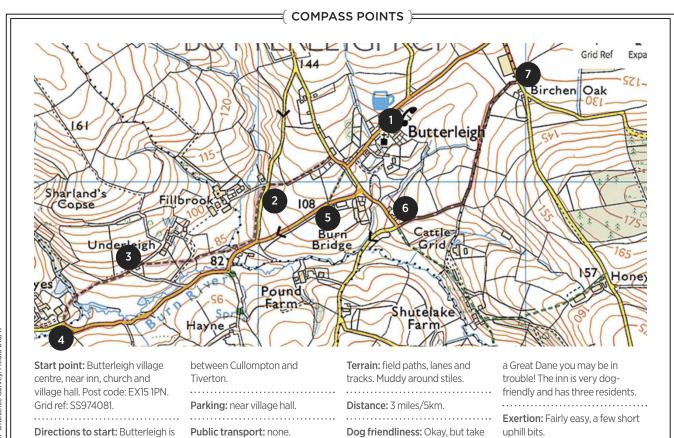
The Butterleigh Inn is central to village life and is very dogfriendly



An organic shed, part of the landscape, guards the bridleway

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in the middle of nowhere, signed off the A396 Exeter–Tiverton

road. It can also be accessed from the unclassified back road

Map: OS Explorer 114, Exeter & the

Exe Valley 1:25 000.

a lead as there will be horses and

dog-friendly. We had to lift

sheep grazing. Stiles aren't always

Pandora over some so if you own

Refreshments: The Butterleigh

Inn: 01884 855433 (closed

Mondays).

as directed by the fingerpost. Here you reach the lane (through their garden) and can walk straight ahead back to the start point. For the full walk, ignore this left footpath and stay on the lane until you reach Forces Cross in another 120m. Turn right here towards Silverton, away from the tempting sign to the inn and follow the lane as it starts to go uphill, passing Butterleigh House and Butterleigh Cottage on the left.

Within 200m the lane takes a sharp right turn. Here go left on the public bridleway (NOT ahead on the footpath) passing a lovely rustic shed on your right. Follow the bridleway (known variously as Parsonage Lane or Scratchface Lane) for 240m, when it emerges onto a farm track. Turn left and follow the track for more than 500m; this is now part of the parish boundary route that is beaten each year. Enjoy gateway views until you reach the lane.

At the lane glance up to your right at attractive Hillersdon Wood, cladding the hillside, then turn left along the lane enjoying distant views to the Blackdown Hills to the right. Continue as far as the next tiny crossroads then turn left and follow the lane, ignoring any turns off, until you are back in the centre of the village, your car, and the hearty welcome of the inn. Next month we head for Brownsham and Clovelly.





Sheep may safely graze: there are also likely to be horses

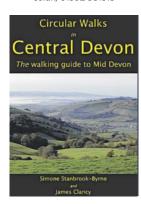




Small tributary waterfalls cascade into The Burn



From Circular Walks in Central Devon, one of a selection of West Country walking guides by Simone Stanbrook-Byrne and James Clancy. Others include: Favourite Walks in Devon, Circular Walks in the South Hams, Circular Walks in East Devon, Circular Walks in North Devon/Exmoor, A Dozen Dramatic Walks in Devon, Town Walks in Devon. culmvalleypublishing. co.uk/01392881513







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WILDLIFE WATCHING

James Chubb is a naturalist, writer and broadcaster currently working as Nature Reserves Manager for East Devon



"HE'S AS MAD AS A MARCH HARE", so the saying goes. This amenable slight on a person's disposition usually means they are rather skittish, hyperactive or headstrong, but what makes hares so infuriated, especially at this time of the year? Let's have a closer look at this county curiosity and find out a little more about it and where you might find one in Devon.

It seems appropriate to start with the madness; we'll get that out of the way first of all. The crazy behaviour hares are renowned for stems from territorial battles fought out between males in the early spring as they compete for female's attention and preference. Hares partake in battles of strength known as boxing, which sees them hitting out and pushing at each other with their smaller front legs, standing tall on their strong hind legs. The battles are short and as soon as the weaker male realises he is on the losing side, he nips off to save face.

The successful male hare will take 'ownership' of the battle ground and the onlooking females and mate with as many of them that are willing, the females giving birth to the young leverets in a shallow dip in the grass known as a form 42 days later. The young remain in the form, protected by the strong female for several weeks before becoming independent by the end of the summer.

So the onlookers saw what looked to be remarkable boxing, leaping and cavorting behaviour and the madness moniker was coined. They're not mad in the slightest, just lively!

The next important issue to clear up is how to tell a hare from a rabbit. Both are mammals which are not native to the British countryside, having been brought over to our shores by the Romans and Normans respectively.

Rabbits are smaller, have shorter ears and hop. Hares are much bigger animals, with long ears tipped with dark brown tufts and they have enormously



Boxing clever

This month James focuses on an animal always associated with March...and picks through some of the legends and history of this fascinating creature

long strong back legs which look rather disproportionate to the rest of their body. But for me, the easiest way to tell one from another is to look into their eyes.

Rabbits have small dark eyes, which you can only really make out the pupil on really close inspection. Hares, on the other hand, have huge yellow eyes which bulge out of their heads, constantly straining to spot the threat of predators. They look forlorn, nervous and fleeting and this, I am sure, also fuelled the madness myth.

As with all herbivores at the bottom of the food chain, the eyes are located on the side of the head looking sideways, giving good all-round vision. Predators, like you and I or a soaring golden eagle, have forward-facing

eyes which provides binocular vision, meaning depth of field, or distance, is easily judged.

Hares are a big powerful animal, so are hard quarry for a predator to take down, but they are enjoyed by lots of carnivores in the wild world, and so that panoramic eyesight is an essential tool in staying alive. As is their choice of home.

Hares are animals of the open plain, big wide grasslands with seemingly no hiding place. Which makes Devon quite a poor county for them if, say, compared with Wiltshire as our grassland is still largely confined to smaller pasture with fabulous hedge banks running through. But you can find them if you know where to look.

One really good place for them is Exeter Airport. In fact, they are so profuse up there on the wide open expanse of grass and hard standing that it really ought to be called Exeter Hareport. Sure, its one of the busiest, noisiest spots in the county, but don't confuse that with disturbance in terms of wildlife as the strict no public access safety policy of the wider airstrip, means that the hares enjoy life without threat of perceived predators.

There are also populations of hare around the East of Dartmoor in the Teign valley and I know of farms near Tedburn St Mary where hares are found throughout the year.

'The crazy behaviour hares are renowned for stems from territorial battles fought out between males in the early spring as they compete for female's attention'

> A friend of mine has them on his farm in the Blackdown Hills AONB, and I have watched them in the South Hams too.

So, get out this spring and keep your eyes peeled for the Mad March Hare boxing and battling in the fields near to where you live. And if you can help add to the list of sites in the county to see these beautiful mammals, I'd be mad keen to hear from you! ◆

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CHRISSY HARRIS sets sail with a charity which is helping young people develop though life on the ocean wave

The charity has three traditional sailing vessels, called *Moosk, Pegasus* and *Tectona*, pictured here



HANGING AROUND with a group of teenagers in a confined space for a week might not seem like much fun.

But sat aboard a traditional wooden sailing boat with Josh, Ben, Owain, Adam, James, Liam, Tyrone, and friends is a pretty uplifting experience.

These 14- and 15-year-olds have just returned from six days at sea with The Island Trust, a Plymouth based charity that provides confidence-boosting sailing adventures to some of the country's most disadvantaged youngsters.

From left to right: Pupils from Marine Academy School in Plymouth enjoy their sailing trip

Many students enjoy trips with the Island Trust

Pupils from St Illyds School in Wales return from their sailing trip He tells his fellow shipmates: "I took away a group of individuals. But I really feel as though I've brought back a team. It's such a proud moment for me."

The mood below deck is incredibly buoyant and you get the impression that these lads will go home with a totally new perspective on life.

"That's the idea," says Roger Crabtree, charity trustee, who has been on the deck, listening to these inspiring accounts from the Island Trust's latest sailors.

"We had a mum say recently that her son has been a different boy at home since he came along on a voyage. It's all about giving personal drive to young people."

Roger says the trips aboard the trust's fleet of three sailing vessels provide youngsters with a lesson in teamwork on a traditional boat across the open sea.

It's a world away from what many of the recruits - some of whom have learning difficulties, behavioural issues or come from areas of deprivation - are used to.

"There's something about the sea – you are in a completely alien environment," says Roger. "Many of them have never been on the sea. We have pupils from a school here in Plymouth who have never been to the beach. This is the society we live in. It's just that they've never had the opportunity."

"I just love seeing the development of the kids," says skipper Rebecca. "You ask them to do something at the beginning of the week and you just get a load of blank stares.

"But, like it was here yesterday, I barely had to say anything. They just got stuck in."

Managing disagreements and mood swings is all part of the job, and, as Rebecca says: "There's no room for sulking on a boat."

But most of the sailors leave their troubles at the shoreline and thoroughly enjoy their week, so much so that many come back again.

"They would never get these experiences if it wasn't for organisations like this," says John Healey, as we clamber back onto dry land.

The Trust has an ongoing commitment to fundraising and this particular voyage was funded in partnership with Reardon Smith Nautical Trust. ◆

To find out more, or to make a donation to the valuable work that the charity does in support of disadvantaged/disabled young people, see theislandtrust.org.uk

'We had a mum say recently that her son has been a different boy at home since he came along on a voyage'

Groups are taken out and - quite literally - shown the ropes as they learn how to work as a team, often in extreme weather conditions.

For most, it's an experience they never forget – and that's clearly going to be the case for Josh and his pals.

We sit below deck, moored in Plymouth Yacht Haven's marina, as these pupils from St Illtyds School in Cardiff take part in a team debrief and tell skipper Rebecca Morley what they have learned from their trip of a lifetime.

"I realise now that I can do new things without thinking that I can't," says Josh Boalch, 15.

"It's been so amazing. And the best part was seeing dolphins!"

There's also talk of exploring Falmouth, barbecues on the beach, a party plus an early dose of seasickness that meant some team members were laid low during their 101-mile trip.

"That was the worst part for me," says skipper Rebecca. "But you lot powered through and have shown so much confidence and done so well this week. I'm so proud of you all. You've worked so hard."

Class teacher and assistant Year 11 head John Healey, is also in good spirits, considering he has just spent seven days on a boat with his pupils.



CONRAD HUMPHREYS

Devon's own world-class professional sailor Conrad Humphreys has just joined the board of trustees at the Island Trust. He says there are so many benefits to being aboard a sailing boat. "There are lots of ways you can work with young people but a boat environment seems to break down barriers to communication," says the Plymouth-based round-theworld yachtsman.

"Salling is one of those rare activities that can really achieve results. It's a sport like no other. You actually have to work together."

DEVON LIFE March 2017 97

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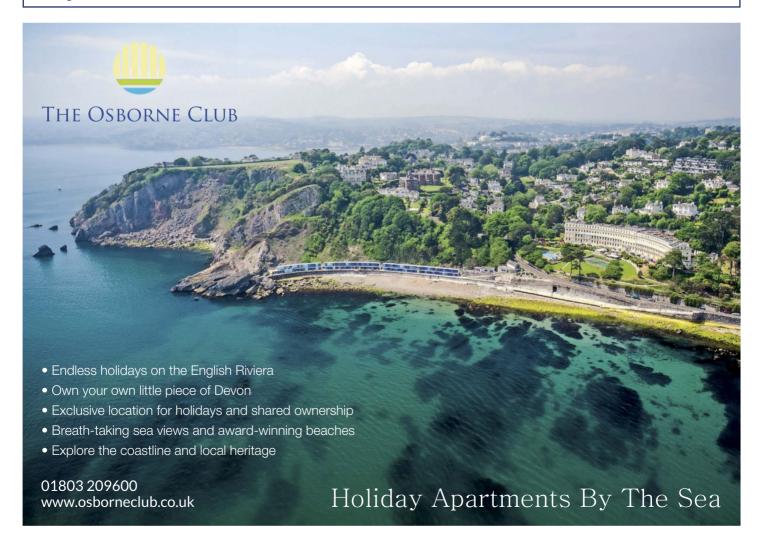
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THE UK'S BEST LAW FIRM ON OUR DOORSTEP

A Devon law firm is putting the county on the map in the legal world, winning the coveted UK Law Firm of the Year award at the British Legal Awards. Stephens Scown LLP's managing partner Robert Camp, explains more

THE established view in the legal sector is that the 'best' firms and 'best' legal work happens in London – but we are very happy to prove that is not the case!

Picking up the UK Law Firm of the Year Award meant that we beat some of the biggest law firms in the country. We are very proud that this win has got some of the key players in the legal sector talking about Devon.

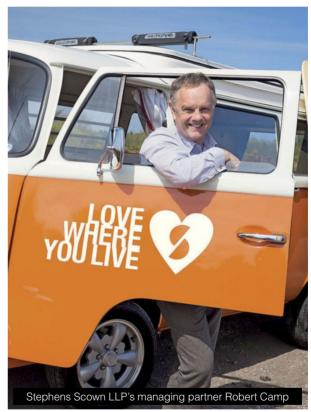
While I'm really proud of winning this award, I'm even more proud of the way that Stephens Scown has changed and improved over the last few years, to make sure it provides the best possible service to our clients.

The starting point for this process of change was taking a look at what we did well – and importantly – where we could improve. We take customer feedback seriously and have made a lot of changes, including introducing family friendly meeting rooms with computer games and toys for children, to help our family law clients' visits be as relaxing and stress-free as possible.

Our staff have also been a great source of inspiration. We stopped simply telling them what was happening, and started to explain why the firm was making its decisions. That encouraged staff to make suggestions for more improvements – recent examples include an IPhone App to help clients keep up to date and the introduction of our own re-useable coffee mugs to cut down on waste.

A lot of law firms are hierarchical, with a feeling of 'them' and 'us' between lawyers and support staff. We wanted to break that down, so we have introduced office choirs, lunch time art classes and knitting clubs, as well as fun events like office table tennis tournaments. Our staff have also pulled together, organising fundraising activities for our office charities, which include Age UK Exeter and Children's Hospice South West. Our staff have also been centraltoourLoveWhereYouLivecampaign, which celebrates the great businesses and things on offer in Devon and Cornwall. Our staff's tips for their favourite things to see and do are at the heart of this campaign.

We are also the first law firm of our size to introduce an



employee ownership scheme – based on the John Lewis model, which gives all eligible members of staff an equal share of our profits – regardless of their role or seniority.

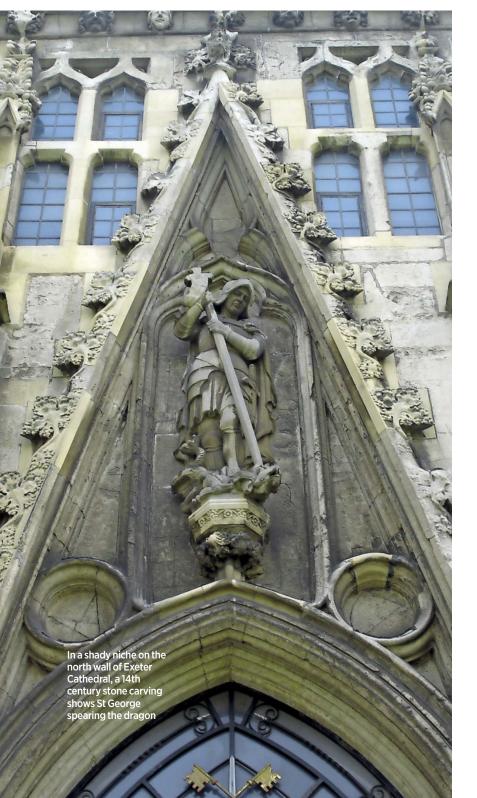
It was this approach which was noticed by the British Legal Awards judges who said: "The winning firm caught the eye of the judges for its investment in its local community, the establishment of an employee ownership trust and its ability to handle some big deals."

"This firm provides a model for the successful regional firm of the future," said one judge. Now that is something for Devon to feel very proud of.



On the trail of DRAGONS

Chris Alton looks into the prevalence of a mystical creature on many Devon landmarks and the reasons why it is so popular



DRAGON MYTHS and images can be found all over the world and have haunted the human imagination for thousands of years. Devon has its own rich history of dragon lore, as well as many images which relate to more widespread dragon myths.

The dragon stories which are unique to Devon are traceable in various written accounts, and it is possible to visit some of the sites where dragons are reputed to have been seen.

One of the most well-known is the dragon said to fly between the ancient hill forts of Dolbury Hill and Cadbury Castle, guarding two hoards of treasure buried there. Cadbury, as the possible site of King Arthur's 'Camelot', is a particularly likely location for a dragon guarding long lost treasure. Cadbury Fort is accessible via a footpath near Cadbury Village, and Dolbury Hill can be reached from Killerton. Both afford panoramic views across the Exe Valley.

'St Michael's defeat of the dragon was symbolic of his role as protector, and churches dedicated to him are often sited on hills'

This dragon is recorded as making an appearance as recently as the 17th century, when it protected Fursdon House by scaring off Sir Thomas Fairfax's Parliamentary army during the Civil War. The historian Polwhele, writing in the early 19th century claimed that some people still believed this story. Fursdon House is open on certain days during the summer months and sometimes runs dragon-related events for children.

Several accounts of dragon sightings in Devon are associated with Bronze Age burial sites, such as the one near Winkleigh, where two 'fire-dragons' apparently resided in the 17th century, and another near Challacombe, about which there is an early 19th century story of a startling encounter with several sheep-eating dragons.

Moving away from local legends, one can find a trail of images across the county •

which were inspired by the dragon-fighting exploits of St Michael and St George.

Exeter Cathedral has an imposing 14th century stone carving of St George and the Dragon on its north wall and Alphington Church has St Michael slaying a dragon carved in the stone over the north porch.

A striking St Michael in the east window of Marwood Church in North Devon portrays a writhing dragon, iridescent in blues and greens, snapping angrily around his feet. In the south window, St George stands on the coils of another vanquished dragon. Marwood Church is well worth a visit and has other interesting features, such as the 'fox' pew end, and a beautifully carved 16th century screen.

Dragons are linked with the ancient 'ley line', also known as the 'St Michael' or 'Dragon Line', that some people believe runs from St Michael's Mount, across Devon to

Glastonbury and beyond. St Michael's defeat of the dragon was symbolic of his role as protector, and churches dedicated to him are often sited on hills. The church of St Michael at Brentor, for instance, which is close to the ley line, stands on a steep outcrop to the north of Dartmoor. It is worth the climb to see this beautiful small church and enjoy the spectacular view.

Images of St George and the dragon also appear in the names of Devon pubs. The George Hotel in Hatherleigh, for example, has a sign which depicts a ferocious, firebreathing, dragon, speared through the mouth by a purposeful St George. Other 'dragon' pubs have names connected with the medieval heraldic use of dragons. The Bull and Dragon in Meeth, which, like The George Hotel, dates from the 15th century, has a sign with a winged red dragon in the bottom right quarter. In the case of The Green Dragon at Stoke Fleming, there is a



Teams compete in the Exeter 'Dragon Boat Festival' run by Devon Air Ambulance Trust

tale of a colour blind Welsh knight trying to find his way home from the Crusades.

Dragons still fascinate the human imagination and new images of dragons continue to appear. Babbacombe Model Village has a dragon which breathes real fire as he guards the castle – a great visit for children. Entertaining for both adults and children, the Dragon Boat Festival in Exeter, run by Devon Air Ambulance Trust, takes place on the last Sunday in September.

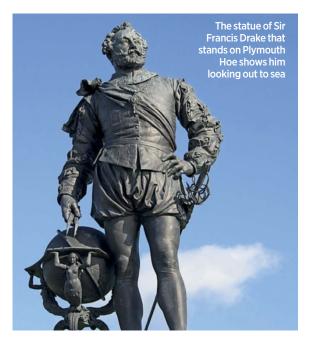
There are many more stories and images of dragons that can be found all over Devon. Just in the small area around Exeter Cathedral, for example, dragons can be found on Mol's shop, on 229 High St, and on a misericord inside the Cathedral. Dragons are very much still around. ◆

THE VIKING DRAGONS

In the 9th and 10th centuries, Viking raids along the coasts of Devon caused locals to become all too familiar with the Viking 'dragons'.

The dragon prowheads of the Viking longships were carved not only to strike fear into enemies, but also in the belief that the best protection against evil sea serpents was to have a serpent on your side.

One invasion near Appledore in 878AD, was led by a Viking called Hubba who died at the hands of King Alfred's Saxon army.



Sir Francis Drake and the upside down Dragon

Sir Francis Drake was known by the Spaniards as 'El Draque', meaning 'the dragon'. When Drake was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I, he used the coat of arms of his distant relatives, the Drake's of Ash - a red 'wyvern', or two-legged dragon. According to a story related by John Swete in Travels in Georgian Devon, this angered Sir Bernard Drake, who boxed Sir Francis round the ears. Annoyed at this insult to Sir Francis, the Queen granted him his own coat of arms, crested by a globe, over which sails a ship with a red wyvern hanging by its heels from the rigging – a slap in the face for Sir Bernard. Drake's home at Buckland Abbey, now a National Trust property, is open to visitors.

DEVON LIFE March 2017

Woodland wonder set to soar

Doug and Claire King-Smith have spent seven years regenerating a pocket of diseased Dartmoor woodland but now face a planning battle that could mean a devastating end to their enterprise, writes Charlotte Dear



JUST SECONDS from the busy A38 lies The Hillyfield, 45 acres of wooded tranquillity, biodiversity and ingenuity. Slopes of ancient forest give way to the serene River Harbourne where dragonflies dance in dappled sunlight and a timber bridge leads across to a sunsoaked organic meadow of grazing sheep, clucking maran hens, productive hives and a nursery of seedling fruit trees.

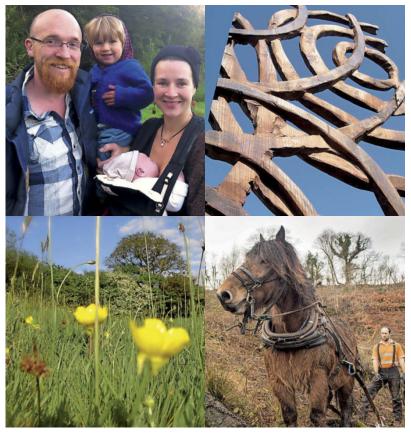
At one corner of the meadow is a canvas canopy, where one volunteer is taking a much-earned tea break from splitting firewood in the blazing sun, while in the next field two young WWOOFers are busy lugging timber to the mobile sawmill, which, thanks to a network of skilled local makers, will later become somebody's garden shed, patio bench or raised bed.

"I've always loved wood, but I came to it backwards," explains owner Doug-King-Smith, "rather than from the seed up, I admired the finished product before working my way to the roots."

'I've always loved wood, but I came to it backwards, rather than from the seed up, I admired the finished product before working my way to the roots'

Doug fell head over heels with the site in 2007 but was at the time working at Bowden House, so would volunteer at The Hillyfield twice a week to help thin the larch. A keen sculptor, Doug set up The Woodshed, a community artspace at Bowden House where he met his wife Claire, owner of Ola Chiropractic in Totnes, and, having introduced her to his real passion, the couple bought The Hillyfield two years later. "Untouched for 35 years, when we arrived it was like walking through a jungle steeped in un-thinned woodland and carpeted by cherry laurel."

Phytophthora ramorum, a vicious disease that can affect 150 species, was found in the Japanese Larch, while Chalara Fraxinea threatened the ash. With the help of Rupert Lane, senior woodland officer at Dartmoor National Park for 29 years, Doug and Claire wrote a 25-year forestry plan to fell the



Top left: Doug and Claire King-Smith Top right: Wood sculpture features heavily at the Hillyfield Left: The Hillyfield is 45 acres of wooded tranquillity, biodiversity and ingenuity Right: Woodland skills are being put to good effect

diseased trees and re-plant with native stock to create a diverse, well-managed woodland that could withstand future disease and encourage biodiversity. "It has been a serious labour of love, but I hope that today, seven years later, we've reached the top of a very steep climb," explains Doug.

In this relatively short space of time Doug and Claire have transformed this once neglected site into a land of promise, not only for the couple and their two small boys, but for the wider community, local businesses and, hopefully, the future of sustainable woodland regeneration on Dartmoor.

Doug explains: "The aim is to make a living by selling wood, which has meant investing in expensive machinery. But simply growing trees and chopping them down doesn't make any money; it's only when you turn the tree into firewood, planks

Logging on to new idea

Doug will soon be launching his new product, The Rocket Log, a free-standing flaming candle made from 100% sustainable home-grown timber. Each log is hollowed out by hand using a chainsaw to create a blazing centre-piece, perfect for outdoor gatherings and ceremonies. rocketlog.co.uk

or products that the value is added."

Keen to support other local businesses, the couple have planted nine varieties of willow for nearby basket makers, sell eggs to the local community and plan to supply their apples to a neighbouring cider maker. For Doug and Claire, education is a crucial part of the Hillyfield vision, and, once the felling of infected timber is complete, they hope to welcome local primary schools for afternoons of forestry skills and games: "What we'd like to impart on children is an understanding of cycles."

This is taken one step further at the bi-annual Woodland Olympics, an actionpacked day of music, craft, wood chopping relay races, wild cookery demonstrations and squirrel stew washed down with locallybrewed ale. "Having launched in 2012, last year we welcomed 300 visitors – it's a fantastic way of combining the productivity of the forest and the skills needed to sustain it. We'll also be the only woodland on Dartmoor to take part in Open Farm Sunday on 11 June and we'll be celebrating woodland culture at the South Brent Wood Fair on 9 September." This uniting of community epitomises Doug's so-called 'benefit stacking', the process of building an enterprise through mutually beneficial opportunities for local businesses, individuals and families.

Sadly, the future of The Hillyfield is uncertain as Doug now faces a planning battle with Dartmoor National Park Authority that has, rather than championing the cause, issued enforcement notices against a wood drying barn and machinery store. Without these unobtrusive structures, both the crucial tree management and Doug's firewood business – for which he would be offering employment – would grind to a halt.

However, thanks to a Crowdfunder Appeal and incredible support from the local community, Forestry Commission and numerous experts, Doug and Claire have successfully raised the £35,000 needed to stand up in court in March and hopefully safeguard the future of sustainable woodland management and its many social, economic and educational strands. ◆ Thehillyfield.co.uk Savehillyfield.co.uk

'A COMPLICATED ISSUE' SAYS DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

In a statement to Devon Life, Dartmoor National Park responded to the issues raised by Doug as follows:

"The site and development at Hillyfield is complicated, by legal requirements around what is reasonably required for forestry purposes and what does not need formal planning permission. We have told the owner that he needs planning permission for the buildings he has erected on the site. He disputes this.

"The Authority indicated to Mr King Smith that a building, for the storage of machinery and equipment might, on its own, be acceptable and that he could apply for just one. We do not consider a building for the storage and drying of timber is reasonably necessary for the purposes of forestry.

"As for the residential use of the land whilst temporary seasonal use is allowed you don't need to live on the land all year round to look after the woodland. "There are structures on the land, such as the Yurt, caravans and van bodies which, are not

reasonably necessary for the management of the land.

"Mr King Smith could make a planning application for his proposals, but he has chosen not do so. We had no option other than to serve enforcement notices, as people cannot simply build where they like within a National Park without the relevant permissions."

DEVON LIFE March 2017

So many reasons to love life in Devon all year round





Make this the year you enjoy Devon to the maximum – and let *Devon Life* help you. Throughout the year we bring fascinating articles on the people and places who make this county so great, plus the latest events,

style, recipes, eating out, homes and gardens inspiration, plus our guide to the best property for sale in the county. And it's all in the pages of *Devon Life* each month – do make sure you don't miss out in 2017.

Hudy

Andy Cooper, Editor

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Inside the April issue:



MY LITTLE PONIES

Why a pony on Dartmoor may not be a Dartmoor pony

MINORITY SUPPORT

The man helping Plymouth's Kurdish community

SHEPHERD'S HUTS

Rooms on wheels being created in Devon

THE NOT-SO-SECRET SOCIETY

We meet Torbay's Freemasons

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To start

This month's food news and finds from Assistant Editor Catherine Courtenay



Robin Rea from The Rusty Pig at at a previous Budleigh food festival

Cooking comps and the last run

IT'S going from strength to strength and organisers of this year's Budleigh Salterton Food and Drink Festival have added more surprises to an already impressive line-up.

Drawing on East Devon's rich heritage of chefs and producers, the festival which started in 2013 runs over two days, from 8-9 April and features local and regional produce, from rare breeds of meat to hand harvested seaweed, gin and charcuterie to workshops, cookery demos and family and musical entertainment.

This year includes demos from Darts Farm master butcher Alistair David, chef Chris Onions from The Old Dairy Kitchen at Trill Farm and South West Home Cook of the Year Sue Stoneman - part of a line-up put together by festival executive chef Willi Rehbock.

There's an artisan market, a real ale festival and, new this year, a Living and Lifestyle marquee. The wider town is involved too, holding special events in its shops, restaurants and pubs and there's a fun food trail to take part in, perhaps before enjoying the after dark party with

live music on Saturday evening. This year there is also a Budleigh Master Chef competition where home cooks have the chance to compete and show off their cookery skills in a live event in the town's Public Hall. Entries are open until 15 February, so if you head to the website you may still have chance to take part.

Talking of comps, there's still time to register for the Devon Street Food Awards which take place at the Nourish Festival in Bovey Tracey in September. If you make and sell street food in Devon, then give it a go. Nourish is a hugely popular event and it includes a Gin Festival this year which will run alongside, at the town's soon-to-be-opened Dartmoor Distillery.

This month marks the last chance ever to take part in (or watch if you're less energetic) the Delicious Dart Trail. The 15 mile 'food festival on the run' involves running from Totnes to Dartington, tasting food along the way. It raises money for Devon's CHICKS charity but organisers say this is its final year. It's on 25 March, so get there and give it a good send off. ◆





GHEE WHIZZ!

Used in Indian cooking, ghee not only tastes great it has health benefits too. New venture, Happy Butter in Broadhempston, Totnes is making it in small batches from organic West Country butter. happybutter.co.uk

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Marco Pierre White's fritto misto dish

NO WAITING FOR ROSETTES

They say they couldn't wait until the autumn, so organisers of the AA awards have gone ahead and handed out a five rosette award to Gidleigh Park. The AA introduced its highest rating, which it says represents "the pinnacle of the nation's restaurants", in 1991. Awards are made in September and January, with five rosettes usually named in the autumn. "We all felt that we could not delay this award until then," says Alistair Sandall, commercial manager at AA Hotel Services. "Michael Wignall has transferred his exquisite skills and style to Gidleigh Park and has made this undoubtedly worthy of this accolade." Twelve new three rosettes were also



Gidleigh Park's food is a hit with the AA inspectors

named, including three from Devon.
These were chef Scott Paton's the Galley
Restaurant at Boringdon Hall; the Great
Western Restaurant at Bovey Castle, which
is led by chef Mark Budd and Thomas
Carr's The Olive Room in Ilfracombe.



QUINOA CRUNCH

Devon's crisp champion, Burts Chips has launched Quinoa Crinkles, a new snack in two flavours, including sweet pepper and chorizo – which has ingredients from Topsham's Good Game. burtschips.com

DEVON LIFE March 2017



Gabriel David of Luscombe Drinks plants trees with Dartington primary school pupils

LESSONS WITH ELDERS

SCHOOLCHILDREN were on hand to help Luscombe Drinks when it needed to plant 1,600 elder trees on the Dartington Estate.

Once matured in three years' time flowers from the trees will be used to make the Buckfastleigh company's Organic Elderflower Bubbly.

The planting, which involved children from Dartington C of E Primary School and Luscombe employees, along with its founder Gabriel David, is part of a project run by the estate. The aim is to pioneer a new method of land

management where farm crops and trees are cultivated together, rather than growing a single crop or plant at a time.

Gabriel says Luscombe was delighted to be involved and adds: "Many of our employees live locally and have young children, this combined with us being a family business means it is particularly important for us to work, where we can, with local schools and schoolchildren. We hope the opportunity allowed the children not only to get hands-on but to also learn more about organic food and drink production."

KINGFISHER'S CROWN

A Plymouth chippy has taken the top title in the National Fish and Chip Awards, which are organised by Seafish. Kingfisher Fish and Chips in Plympton was named Independent Takeaway Fish and Chip Shop of the Year after a vigorous seven month judging period involving mystery shopping assessments, audits by independent experts and a Dragon's Den style pitch to a panel of 14 industry judges. Nikki Mutton and Craig Maw have owned the shop for three years and are one of only two fish and chip businesses in the UK to have a three star rating from the Sustainable Restaurant Association.

Other Devon prizewinners were Krispies in Exmouth, which took the Field to Frier award and Rockfish Devon which received both the Good Catch Sustainability Award and Best Multiple Fish and Chip operator Award.







Wine of the Month

Devon Life's wine writer and Gidleigh Park sommelier, REBECCA MITCHELL recommends...

In the spirit of adventure, this is an unusual wine from off-the-beaten-track. Dobogó Dry Furmint from Mád in Hungary is an exceptional dry wine and perfect for spring. Located 120 miles east of Budapest, at the confluence of the Bodrog and Tisza rivers, the Tokaj region is famous for the luxurious dessert wines with their alluring golden colour and exquisite sweet taste. Founded in 1869, the Dobogó Estate belongs to Izabella Zwack whose family has made sweet Tokaji for generations. More recently winemaker Attila Domokos has created a crisp dry white from the indigenous grape, furmint. Low-yielding vines grown on volcanic soil

produce concentrated fruit which ferment using natural yeasts in large Hungarian oak barrels. Lees-stirring for six months followed by a further year of ageing adds complexity. The result is a rich, dry white with a deep straw colour; scented aromas of hawthorn combine with quince and almond on the palate. It is nutty and complex with pronounced minerality and a taught acid balance. Excellent served with fish such as turbot or brill. A new addition to the wine list at Gidleigh Park Hotel, in Chagford, Devon (recently awarded 5 AA rosettes). To book a Wine Lovers' Escape contact Gidleigh Park Tel: 01647 432367 www.gidleigh.co.uk

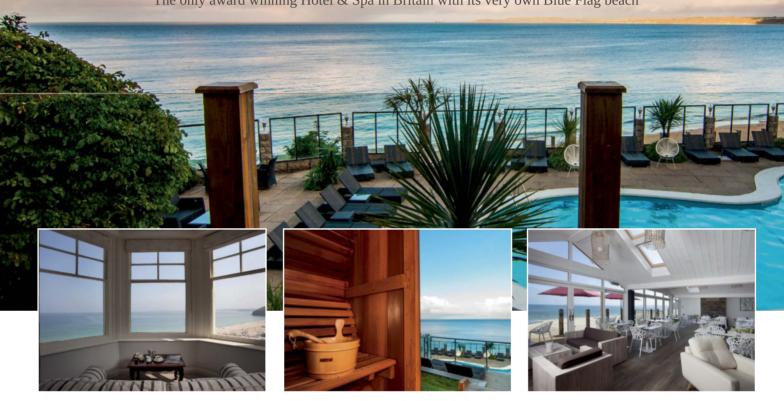
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HE NEVER WENT TO RESTAURANTS, he didn't even own a cookery book, but by the end of his teenage years Simon Hulstone was a world champion chef.

Simon, who began his career as a kitchen porter in Torquay's Imperial Hotel where his father was executive chef, spent his formative years dedicated to the world of competitions. The teenager would travel to London to compete against hotels like the Savoy and the Ritz. Winning titles as a young chef led to job offers and bigger opportunities, including the chance to travel the world as part of culinary teams competing in some of the world's most prestigious events, like the Bocuse d'Or.

"Competitions stopped me from being bored," says the man who'd sacrificed the excitement of playing football at the weekends to work in a kitchen. "I got to do something different, but stay in my industry."

Both Simon's father Roger, and the chef he was apprenticed to, Freddie Jones, were seasoned competitors. It was the world Simon grew up in.

"For me it was fantastic. Other chefs looked at it as a lot of old boys telling chefs what to do, but it was exciting and fun to go to London. Get up early, do your competition, see all the chefs, it was interesting."

At 16 he'd become a European champion and the world title four years later led to a rush of job offers. But he rejected them all and moved to New Zealand where he became New Zealand Young Chef of the Year.

There followed a period when he describes himself as a "competition mercenary". "I got paid to travel and compete – South Africa, Australia, Malta, Canada, Korea – I was bouncing from competition to competition and being paid to do it and stay at fantastic hotels."

It's hard to comprehend when Simon says, it was seven years before he set foot in a restaurant and that he was oblivious to fine dining awards like Michelin, but he explains that competitions were very much what hotel chefs did; restaurant chefs were different.

"Competition chefs were looked down on by restaurant chefs because apparently we could only cook one dish and that was it. But we looked at restaurant chefs as just cooking spinach and peeling garlic, because that's what they did most of the time, and thought they were too scared to compete! A chef from Marco Pierre White didn't want to lose against a guy from Travelodge."

"I was in a bubble of big hotels where the only way you'd get noticed was to win competitions," he continues. "I didn't know anything about restaurant awards, but that gave me an additional perspective, something else to win."

The competition path taught him valuable lessons about organisation, consistency and the use of flavour and ingredients, skills which he utilised when he started to promote himself as a restaurant chef.

"I started to get noticed by the Guides, then I started winning the awards in the restaurant and different people started noticing me, not just competition chefs. It was: 'He does comps and he can cook!'"

The world of the competition chef may seem a dazzling and starry world, fraught with drama and tension, but most times it's just a case of reading the rules and doing what they ask. Simon recounts a tale about when he won £8,000 in a competition run by Lea & Perrins.

"There was a guy making jellies out of the sauce, but all I did was mix it with little ketchup, some pineapple juice and spring onion and put a little dipping sauce out with steak and chips. And that was what they wanted; because they could put it in a jar, and call it Lea & Perrins spiced ketchup. Sometimes something very simple will win! Jellies? It was a lovely dish, but they're not going to replicate it are they? Silly boy!"

Cash prizes aside, the most rewarding

'Don't wear silly trousers and a bandana; have some respect, work in a kitchen and learn your craft. If you're going to be famous you're going to be famous'

highlight for Simon has undoubtedly been winning the Roux Scholarship in 2003. It made him part of a small but elite group of UK chefs, and he was also invited to become a judge for the competition. Being a scholar means he gets to go on educational world tours, organised by Michel Roux Snr. "They are the most unbelievable food trips you could imagine," he says. "The access that Michel Snr and Michel Jnr have in our industry is unparalleled, so we've seen everything that everyone dreams of. It's life changing."

He's earned a reputation for mentoring and helping other young chefs follow the competition route, although he says it's not as popular now as it once was. "If they have a sparkle I'll help, but some want to do it for the wrong reasons.

"So many of them want to be a head chef before they can cook. I blame TV a lot as they all think they're going to become superstars," he laments.

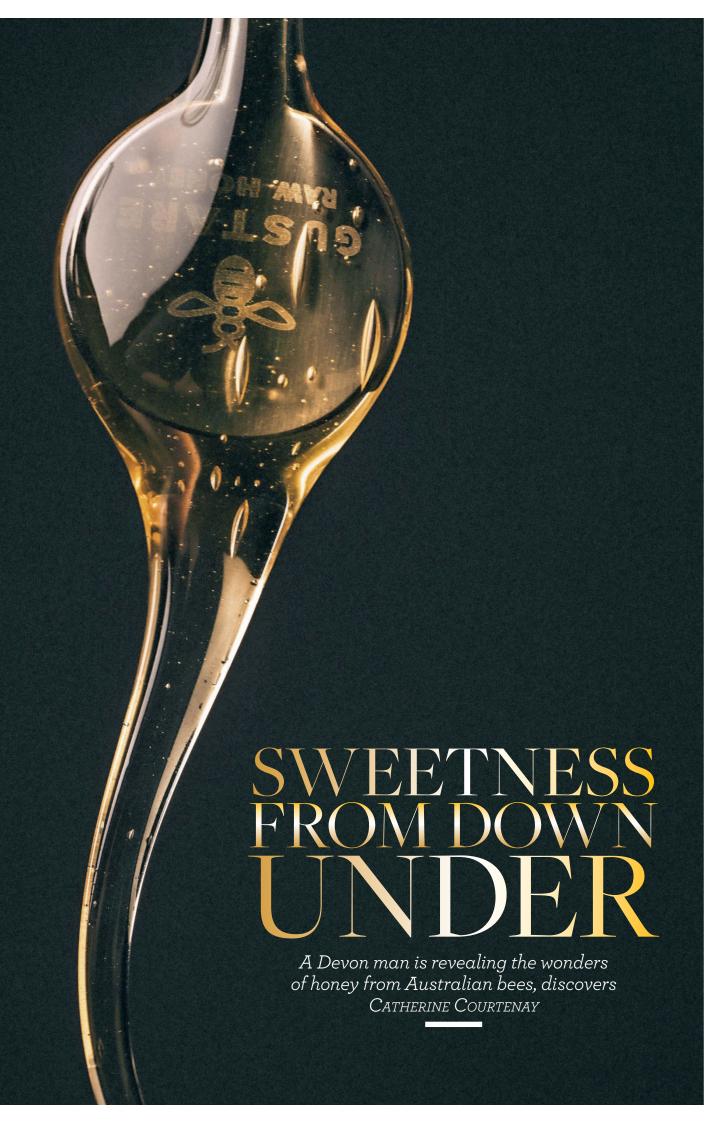
He points out that it took many attempts, and several years, before he ever won a prize, but he learned from his mistakes and kept trying.

"Just winning a competition doesn't make you the best chef in the country," he warns.

And any final words of advice? "Don't wear silly trousers and a bandana; have some respect, work in a kitchen and learn your craft. If you're going to be famous, you're going to be famous."

Simon Hulstone, of Michelin-starred The Elephant restaurant talks to CATHERINE COURTENAY about his career as a





DEEP IN THE FORESTS OF AUSTRALIA there's a species of eucalyptus which only flowers every 15 years. Just imagine the excitement of tasting honey produced from the pollen of those flowers.

This rare experience is one that Jason Hayward-Jones is bringing to the UK. The agricultural consultant, who went to Churston Ferrers Grammar School and trained at the former Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, is a co-founder of Gustare Honey, a range of monofloral raw honeys from Australia.

Spending most of his life working abroad and now back home with his Australian wife and their two children, Jason has fallen under the spell of the Aussie bees and the trees from which they make their honey; trees like the Spotted Gum eucalyptus, which apparently makes them quite angry.

"The flowers open up in the morning and the bees collect the pollen, but around lunchtime they close; it's like taking vodka from a drunk! They go mad." Jason laughs as we sit in the sunshine outside his local, the Church House Inn at Stoke Gabriel.

These individual characteristics are key

'It'll take over six hours a day to check the hives and they do it by hand – all day every day. It's very intensive, a labour of love - and that's why they become so immune to bee stings'

to Gustare as each jar of honey reflects the species of tree it comes from. There is no blending (the honey is taken straight from the hive and filtered just once) and there are around 50 varieties to choose from, all unique in both taste and colour.

It seems fitting to be tasting each of the four current Gustare honeys in a pub because, like all good ideas, this one had its origins when Jason met colleague Paul Costa for a pint in Alice Springs.

Jason was working with Aboriginal corporations, directly helping indigenous people manage their lands. It was the latest job in a demanding career that had seen him traverse the globe, working for the United Nations and aid agencies, helping countries rebuild agricultural economies in war zones and after environmental disasters.

"Paul builds houses; he used to come and see me and we'd go to a pub, and one day he said: 'Did you know I'm a beekeeper?' A month or so later, we started talking again about beekeeping and honey. He invited me to his place where I saw he had a couple of tons of honey in his shed; I'd never seen anything like it in my life!"

It turned out that beekeeping was a big part of Paul's life. Australian beekeeping operates on a big scale, with keepers moving their hives to different forests throughout the year, a process which keeps the bees healthy.



Gustare honey co-founder Jason Hayward-Jones

Many are so dedicated they spend days out in the wilds monitoring and watching the hives and recording every detail of flowering times and honey collected.

Jason says: "It'll take over six hours a day to check the hives and they do it by hand – all day every day. It's very intensive, a labour of love."

Jason flinches when thinking of the bravery of the beekeepers, showing photos of them handling hives with no protective gear. He recalls one of the times he went out with Paul.

"We got in the car and Paul put a defibrillator in the back - this is serious stuff. But if it gets hot they'll take their shirts off and light up a cigarette!" he chuckles. "Then I turn up dressed looking like a spaceman and it's 'Here's the pom!'"

"It's quite something to watch though...it's overwhelming," he says, suddenly serious.

In the past their honey would be sold to big companies, where it would be blended to create a single product and keep prices down. Now however, they can sell different types through Gustare – a factor which has huge appeal and adds to a sense of pride in their product says Jason.

Some varieties will only be available at limited times, so Jason and Paul have created four categories, Delicate, Mild, Rich and Strong into which every variety can fit.

With Paul at the production end, Jason works from Devon and he's approached various people to test the range, including chef Alyn Williams of The Westbury in Mayfair who hit on the idea of using one of them in a rum cocktail. There are also plans to work with Moet Hennessy on a drinks product.

Jason is delighted to be back home, where it seems he's brought a welcome dose of Aussie charm and humour. Friends and locals are understandably keen to sample the honey tasters Jason carries with him; so keep an eye out - if you see a smiling guy with an Aussie accent and rucksack, you may just be in luck. ◆

MANUKA MAGIC

Jason and Paul have also launched an Australian version of Manuka honey.

This special honey has long been known to have anti bacterial properties and other health benefits.

It's mainly produced in New Zealand, and can be very expensive, but the same trees from which the bees gather pollen are also in Australia, but called Jelly Bush. "Unlike many types of New Zealand Manuka, the Jelly Bush variety does not have a medicinal taste, it's sweet and fragrant. The reaction we've had to people tasting it here has been fantastic," says Jason. gustarehoney.com



PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT AUSTIN



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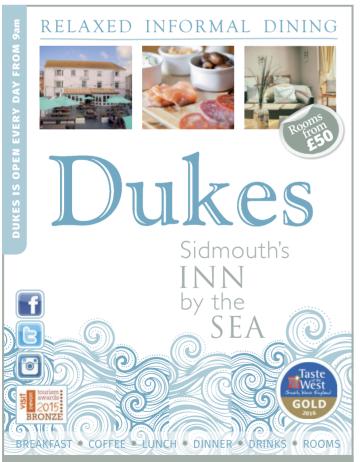
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DEVON LIFE March 2017

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King of the streets

Winner of the Devon Street Food Awards, Dan Edge tells of his mission for perfection and shares a recipe with Kate Haskell



A DESIRE to provide healthy, interesting and delicious street food is making Daniel Edge and his Teign Canteen the one to beat on the street. Now trading for over a year his business is going from strength to strength with awards and praise coming in thick and fast. At last year's Nourish Festival in Bovey Tracey, Daniel won the Best of the Best in The Devon Street Food Awards and it's easy to see why. From the vintage van and its branding, to the presentation, the taste and the whole experience, this is street food perfection - something Daniel strongly believes in.

"Food is so much more than just eating, it's everything that goes into it, from customer service to the atmosphere, the story of it, how it looks and smells - every last little bit is so important," he says.

It's this attention to detail that is making Dan and his van so popular at festivals and markets but he's also a regular at Exeter University where the students queue around the block for his food. Dan tells me: "I've learnt a lot about street trading this year and



Daniel Edge of Teign Canteen street food

people are now getting to know me. Meeting the customers, seeing their reaction when they take a bite, that's what really makes it for me."

Everything from the sauces and marinades to the bread is made by Dan, served and cooked from his compact and bijou van.

We've managed to persuade Dan to tell us one of his recipes to try it a home - although

For a real treat try Dan's awesome banh mi with local fallow deer steak, stalked to order by his gamekeeper up in the rolling fields above the Teign Valley

there's one thing he's not willing to share...
"This recipe is one of the first things that
inspired me to launch Teign Canteen. When
I was travelling in the north of Vietnam this
was one of the first things I ate and when
I took a bite I realised I had discovered
something amazing. I spent a long time
perfecting the bread recipe for it but I'm not
letting you have that as it's a secret!" ◆

A VIETNAMESE INSPIRED SANDWICH

Lime and pepper marinated chicken banh mi with sweet pickled slaw.

Serves 6 Ingredients

6 crusty 7-8in long rolls (french stick or ciabatta work well)
700g boneless, skinless chicken thighs, marinated.
1 cucumber, sliced Pickled chilli Pickled slaw Mayonnaise
Sri-racha chilli sauce (available in most supermarkets)
50g coriander, chopped
10g mint, finely chopped

For the chicken marinade

½ tsp caster sugar. ½ tsp salt, 1¼ tsp cracked black pepper, 1 tbsp fish sauce, 1 tbsp lime juice, 1½ tbsp oil.

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and

add the chicken. Leave for at least 30 minutes.

For the pickled chilli

1 large red and green chilli 250ml cider vinegar 2 tbsp sugar 1 tbsp salt

Slice the chillies into rounds. Boil the sugar, salt and vinegar until combined, then pour over and leave for 24 hours.

For the pickled slaw

250g carrot, 250g white cabbage, 250ml cider vinegar, 180g granulated sugar

Slice the cabbage, peel the carrot and slice using a mandolin into thick ribbons. Boil the vinegar and sugar and once combined add to the vegetables. Leave to pickle

for 24 hours.

Create the sandwich

Over a medium heat in a frying pan cook the marinated chicken for 7-8 minutes, turning regularly until cooked through.

Slice the bread and toast it to get a crispy shell, then spread mayo on each slice.

Add sri-racha to the top half - as much as you dare!

Add about 5 slices of pickled chilli to the top half, then sprinkle plenty of mixed coriander and mint on top.

Lay the cucumber on the bottom half of the sandwich and pile plenty of slaw on top. Add the chicken, close the sandwich - and devour!



Your chance to enter

This year's Devon Street Food Awards take place on Saturday, 2 September as part of the Nourish Festival at Bovey Tracey. They celebrate the very best in street food in Devon and the county's street food producers are invited to enter. Along with Kate Haskell, this year's judges will be Devon Life editor Andy Cooper, and Alex Murdin, Devon Home Cook of the Year 2015 and former director of The Devon Guild of Craftsmen. To enter contact festival organiser Sarah James at hello@nourishfestival.org; website: nourishfestival.org



THE 3 TIMES TABLE

Former head chef at River Cottage, Tim Maddams is a private chef, author, teacher and presenter.

CONTACT timmaddams.com

● @Tim MaddamsChef

MARCH IS HERE, mad hares or not, and there is a definite feel of spring in the air. The hedgerows are groaning with green offerings and it's time to start planting in the garden or greenhouse ready for the main growing season. The fields are dotted with lambs and all seems right with the world; but what three things should really be on the table this month? For me that is easily answered, and they are all wild...

INTRODUCING SORREL Allow me then, to introduce you to 'sheep sorrel' or 'wild sorrel' as it's also known. Once you know what this plant looks like and where to find it (meadowland just about everywhere) there's no stopping you and it's a great accompaniment to all sorts of lovely dishes. It has the zingy, green apple or citrus flavour common to all sorrels which is a product of the oxalic acid contained within. The uses for wild sorrel are best kept to garnish as it's a little too strong to use on its own, though a handful mixed through a nice leaf salad will certainly enhance the experience. Go mad with this

wonderful plant, it's so easy to

come by that you won't struggle

to find more if you run out and its

a really useful freshener; you can



I'm going wild



Three-cornered leek flowers

use it in place of other chopped green herbs to finish a sauce, or add it to some other wild leaves, like wild garlic or nettles, to make a punchy, wild, green sauce.

SNIFF OUT THE GARLIC

. Wild garlic...your nose will soon lead you to a patch. I like it young and tend to ignore it once it begins to stop flowering; that said, the seeds and flowers are both delicious and of course. as with nettles, it needs a good rinse. And don't dig it up or rip it from the ground, simply pick or cut the leaves and stems.

Try making a soup with wild garlic, just like a leek and potato but don't add leeks; just as the potato is cooked add as much wild garlic as you can get in the pot and blend immediately, then season and serve.

CORNERING LEEKS I had thought that, because wild garlic is so common and (although it's perhaps less

abundant) you'll frequently find wild leek patches around, that it would also be well known.

That was until I whipped said three cornered leeks out at a cookery demo and for a few minutes they turned out to be the most fascinating of rarities. Who would have thought? That got me thinking that perhaps I should do a little more to extol the virtues of this mild and plentiful allium, so here goes... Basically, if you like spring onion you can use this plant both raw and cooked in much the same way. Your biggest problem lies in locating a patch and harvesting some but once you have spotted a patch – be prepared for a few disappointments along the way, like all new foraging targets you may well have a few false starts - you will be able to fill your boots. Simply cut them off just above ground level, or dig the whole thing up if you like. The flowers are beautiful - and edible – and the bulbs are also good for cooking with. ◆



Above: Wild garlic soup with parmesan Inset above: The pretty flowers of three-cornered leeks

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PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO



An old English pig

A 16th century farm on the edge of Dartmoor is rolling back the years and producing free range pork just as it was hundreds of years ago

SPENCER COOKE and wife Sarah are producers of pedigree Oxford Sandy and Black pigs, a rare breed and one of the oldest English breeds. Also known as the plum pudding pig, the breed is happiest living a true free range life, enjoying the wet winters and dry summers alike in the 10 acres of pasture and woodland.

Leigh Farm is the home of the Old English Pig Company and has just been awarded the Good Pig Award by Compassion in World Farming in recognition of their high welfare and ethical standards.

Spencer says: "Everything we do here is as natural and traditional as we can make it. Nothing is produced with profit in mind. Welfare and tradition are at the heart of what we do, without compromise. What follows is a product that stands alone in the market.

"Our pigs live life as nature intended. They take twice as long to finish compared to a commercial factory pig, they truly get a chance to 'live life & run



Spencer cures the bacon himself

'Welfare and tradition are at the heart of what we do, without compromise' free' a motto we truly believe in."

Spencer is clearly a passionate producer, involved in the entire production from farrowing (birth) to slaughter, and he even cures and smokes the bacon himself at the farm.

"We are so passionate about what we do, we don't like to lose control so take 100% responsibility for the final product."

The Old English Pig Company only produces small numbers and as such cannot be found in butchers, let alone supermarkets.

They promote nose-to-tail eating which is best demonstrated by chef Anton Piotrowski at the Michelin-starred Treby Arms, Sparkwell, who is committed to using the whole pig to produce a dish called "This little Piggie went to the Treby".

Some say the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and with Michelin star chefs in the list of customers it seems that the plum pudding pig speaks for itself. ◆ oldenglishpig.co.uk

PATRICK'S PUB TRAWLS

In his regular series of columns for Devon Life, **Patrick McCaig** of The Otter Brewery takes us on a trawl of some of his favourite pubs

THIS MONTH we travel upstream, hugging the banks of the River Taw, to an ancient settlement that sits roughly halfway between the flanks of northern Dartmoor and the fringes of Exmoor. The history of the village can be traced back to the Saxons and beyond – Nympton is most likely derived from the Pagan term 'nymet' and means sanctuary or sacred grove.

With its thick stone walls, slate floors and inviting wood burners this whitewashed 17th century Inn has all the virtues of a snug sanctuary, especially when winter stubbornly drags its heels outside.

Never one to have my back to a room we instinctively plumped for a table that provided a clear line of sight towards the bar.

Look up and you'll see about 900 leather bookmarks hanging from the low-slung beams – a 'novel' idea and it's nice to see that some inherited traditions are being kept alive from one landlord to the next. With the sunlight warming us we were now well positioned to enjoy a scene somewhat akin to watching an open galley kitchen in full swing.

Robert hails from Sussex, Deborah from Ottery St Mary and both are great examples of youthful enthusiasm and positive energy very in tune with what customers actually want from a pub. In fact in Robert I saw a mirror of myself, which, I hope, won't put anyone off! It soon transpired that we shared very similar past lives, having both cut our creative teeth in London advertising agencies before opting to escape the rat race.



This whitewashed 17th century Inn has all the virtues of a snug sanctuary



Snug sanctuary

The Grove Inn, Kings Nympton

THE DETAILS

REAL ALE:

Exmoor Gold, Exmoor Ales Gun Dog, Teignworthy Brewery Otter Head, Otter Brewery Brewers Blend, Hanlons Brewery

LOCAL CIDER:

Sam's Cider, Winkleigh Hancocks Cider, South Molton

LOCAL LAGER:

Tarka, Otter Brewery

CONTACT DETAILS:

The Grove Inn, Kings Nympton, Umberleigh, EX37 9ST. Tel: 01769 580406 Website: thegroveinn.co.uk I would defect first, returning home to help whip our marketing into shape, or as Dad, the old school brewer, affectionately refers to it...overseeing the 'Bull**** & Flannel Department'!

Robert and Deborah's own longing to head west started to take hold after watching a number of carefully researched pubs around Suffolk slip through their fingers. Attention quickly

'The food offering is strongly influenced by the producers, farmers and growers that surround the pub'

turned to Devon and with sage advice on tap from Deborah's native father-in-law, in less than four months they had gone from falling for this village pub in 'the middle of nowhere' to moving in.

That was nearly 14 years ago and as the way of life here has seduced them so the pub has been on an ever-upwards trend winning awards and consistent recognition from The Good Food Guide and the CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

The food offering is strongly

influenced by the producers, farmers and growers that surround the pub. The robust menus are then adapted to accommodate seasonal gluts or any local specialties.

We kicked things off with one of Robert's signature free-range Scotch eggs - this week's theme was delicious chicken tikka. Mains soon came in the form of an individual Wellington of North Devon beef fillet and pan-roasted Devon hake. The feel of Deborah's cooking is honest and assured and has no doubt been inspired by time spent in France with clever little twists here and there. Warm Cornish sea salted treacle tart partnered with a cheeky half of Otter Head rounded off a great meal.

An engrained sense of community is clearly evident throughout the pub. Whilst juggling their young sons' after-school activities Robert and Deborah are very much the face and beating heart of the Grove. It's little wonder then that people regularly travel from as far afield as Bath, Bristol and Exeter. We'll certainly be heading north again!

CONTACT

contact@boakandbailey.com

@boakandbailey

BOAK & BAILEY ON BEER

Jessica and Ray write about beer and pubs on their blog Boak & Bailey. Their book Brew Britannia was published in 2014 and won the British Guild of Beer Writers' Gold Tankard award



IN THE CURRENT boom brewing and selling aren't the only careers to be made around beer - there is also demand for people who can entertain and educate, such as Ben Richards, who is a certified beer sommelier based in Devon.

A boyish 35-year-old with the easy charm of a veteran television presenter he winces at any suggestion that achieving accreditation from the Beer Academy, a subsidiary of the Institute of Brewing and Distilling, was anything other than hard work.

"My friends all laughed -'studying', ha ha!" he says, "But I had to sit down every night for months on end and taste three or four beers, side by side, really focusing on the differences between them."

Learning to identify good examples, bad examples, and about the history of each style, he almost began to develop a distaste for beer altogether.

"The final test was a one-anda-half-hour viva with 20 blind taste tests, including some dosed with 'off-flavour' taints." (Beer tasting pros use special capsules to simulate faults such as, for example, the charming 'baby sick' aroma of butyric acid.)

A beer sommelier, as the name suggests, is trained to help customers choose beers and in particular to point to those that will complement particular foods. In practice, for Ben, it adds credibility when he is speaking in front of interested amateurs.

"I run corporate events, stag dos, and private parties," he says. "I'll talk to people and find out how much they already know - sometimes, it's nothing, but other times they've been to Belgium or they are into craft beer already to some extent."

As a player in the burgeoning Devon beer scene he is friendly with the people behind both Powderkeg Brewing and the Occasional Brewing Company and sometimes uses their facilities



Ben Richards aims to grow all the ingredients neccessary to brew a beer on his small allotment plot

Our columnists meet a Devon beer sommelier who has set himself an unusual allotment challenge

"I get the group in, talk them through the history of various beer styles, and through that we I had to sit down work up a recipe which we brew. every night for Then everyone gets a case of months on end and their own beer a month later." taste three or four Another popular format is beers, side by side,

the wine vs. beer face-off for which Ben pairs up with Bruce Evans from Grape & Grain Wine Merchants of Crediton: "It's a grudge match every time, a

to run 'build-a-beer' sessions:

But Ben's newest project takes him away from the stage and out into the open air: he is attempting to grow on his small allotment all the ingredients

necessary to brew a beer.

"Hops are a doddle," he says, but barley and yeast have him fretting somewhat. It started as a personal challenge, became a blog, then a podcast, at which point he went into partnership with the industry-wide campaign 'There's a Beer For That'.

"I'd be lying if I said I hadn't considered whether it might make a good book or a television series," he admits, "but if not, and next year I'm just back where I started, that's fine."◆ You can find out more about Ben's beer talks at beerwithben. co.uk and about the allotment project at growingbeer.co.uk

between them' bit of banter and teasing."

really focusing

on the differences

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The Lamb Inn

Alastair Sawday's 2014 Runner-up: "BEST PUB IN BRITAIN". One of The Independent's "50 BEST BRITISH HOTELS OF 2013". A real community pub with luxury contemporary rooms & award winning food in the heart of Devon, close to Exeter & Crediton. Kitchen open seven days a week and booking advised. The Lamb Inn is a 16th century former coaching house

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Go to the App Store or GooglePlay and search for 'The Menu', select the area you want and start to discover great places to eat, recipes and more.





Dining out across the county with Devon Life's writers

IT raises a smile when you visit Broomhill and one of the first things you encounter is a sculpture of an enormous red stiletto. You see, people often describe this restaurant and art hotel as a 'hidden secret' and yet, are there many better ways to announce yourself than putting a mega shoe like this in the front garden?

Broomhill's owners, Rinus and Aniet van de Sande have created something unique in the county, and they have done so with commitment and quiet modesty over two decades. Broomhill, the elegant but homely period house which they bought with a view to turning into a venue to support emerging artists, is in a wooded valley, not far from Barnstaple. It's surrounded by a garden sculpture park, which they have built up over the years. And that's another key point - it's taken years. This is a couple who have no interest in the slick and quick. And this approach is equally reflected in their food offering with Broomhill being a staunch supporter of Slow Food.

Launched in the late 1980s Slow Food is a global movement, set up as a counterbalance to the rise of fast food, and fast life, and to encourage people to think about what they are





Award-winning food at Broomhill's Terra Madre restaurant

Slow perfection

Catherine Courtenay visits Terra Madre restaurant at Broomhill for some creative indulgence

'CHEF'S FAVE'

Grilled entrecote and fava bean mash, with pul biber and herb spiced butter, says Rinus. For vegetarians feta briouat with the fava bean mash, pul biber and a red onion marmalade eating, where it comes from and how their food choices affect the rest of the world.

So, in line with this more meditative and mindful approach, you'll find dining at Broomhill's Terra Madre restaurant, a truly relaxing and restorative experience – particularly if light evenings allow you to look out over the tree-filled gardens.

Naturally, local suppliers are much in evidence, revealing what a variety of small scale producers there are in north Devon. There are wild foods too, like rabbit, and venison which makes a deeply satisfying casserole,

the impact of its comforting richness heightened by being served in earthenware bowls.

Vegetarians and vegans are very well catered for, and even seasoned meat eaters will find it hard to resist the platter of veggie mezze, a riot of colour and flavour including pesto on slices of tomato, unctuous courgette and aubergine, labneh and slices of lightly-cooked apple. With a large selection of organic wines, this is feel-good food to enjoy in a refreshingly creative environment, from kitchen to gallery and gardens.◆ broomhillart.co.uk

DISCOVER MORE

As well as the magazine, Devon Life brings you information about local food and drink in the following ways:

ONLINE

Go to The Menu section on *Devon Life*'s website for special offers and recipes along with a directory of great places to eat.



APP

Our food and drink app is free to download on iOS and Android devices. Search for The Menu or Devon Food & Drink in app stores or scan one of the QR codes.



Androi

A weekly newsletter with all the latest food and drink offers and information on where to eat. Subscribe through our website.

EMAIL

SPRING TIME IN EXETER means several things, not least, the return of the mighty Exeter Festival of South West Food & Drink. It's the 14th festival and for the first time this year the three day, three night annual event will be held over the Saturday, Sunday and Monday (29 April to 1 May) of the early May Bank Holiday.

The festival, which is held at Exeter Castle and Northernhay Gardens, hosts more than 100 exhibitors selling the region's very best home-grown, farmed, fished, reared, cured, pickled, marinated and cooked foods in the South West.

And as it's British Pie Week this month (7-13 March), we asked two of those exhibitors, Chunk of Devon and Tom's Pies, to tell us a little more about their pastry-wrapped offerings.



CHUNK OF DEVON

How long has Chunk been making lovely pies? Chunk has been making awesome pies and pasties for ten years. We started in July 2006, so creeping towards 11 years! What is your most popular pie? It's got to be the Steak & Ale. We use Otter Head ale in this pie which really complements the roasted carrots and caramelised onion. It comes from the fantastic Otter Brewery, just down the road from Chunk. What defines a pie for you? It really has to have great taste, made using real food, no silly additives. The filling tender with just enough gravy, the pastry strong enough to hold that wonderful filling but light enough to melt in your mouth. You've got to use butter in the pastry, or lard, NEVER margarine!

Pie time at the festival

Get ready for three days of culinary delights with the return of Exeter's famous food festival - and two of its popular Devon exhibitors

FESTIVAL FACTS

Opening Hours

Saturday & Sunday 10am - 6pm, Monday 10am - 5pm After Dark Party Nights: Friday 6:30 -11pm, Saturday 6-11pm, Sunday 6-10.30pm

Tickets

Festival Day Pass (not including Festival After Dark Party)

Adults (Saturday) £8, (Sunday/Monday) £6, Children (5-15 years inclusive) £1, Child (under 5 years) Free Group day tickets (10+) Adults - buy 9 tickets and get the 10th free

After Dark Party Nights (not including entry to the festival by day or producer pavilions)

Friday (Locked Horns, supported by Stephens Scown's Choir and Loose Cannons) £8

Saturday (Leigh Coleman Band, supported by Yazzy, Joanna Cooke and Celine Dos Santos) £8

Sunday (Bill Ding and the Skyscrapers, supported by Roger Styles) £8 exeterfoodanddrinkfestival.co.uk



Demos at the Exeter Festival



TOM'S PIES

What inspired you to make pies? As we all know, Australians love pies, and it was when working as head chef in prestigious kitchens across Australia that Tom developed a real understanding of this. Completing his travels cheffing on super yachts around the Caribbean, he was inspired by his experience of using the fresh produce that surrounded him to return to Devon and create his own delicious pies. What are your predictions for pie trends in 2017? With the pie market saturated it can only push producers to create more interesting and exciting fillings. We have great British meats available to us and game or wild meats, alongside foraged ingredients, will start to appear in pies. What's the most unusual pie you've made? In the early days, when Tom was still working from an old barn converted on the organic family farm in Devon, he was asked to create a bespoke birthday pie for a customer who was mad about Aston Villa. Tom produced a pie in the shape of a football and used beetroot as a key ingredient to create a colour similar to the team's kit. ◆

I'VE HAD an eye on the Salutation Inn for a couple of years. It's one of those places that frequently crosses the radar, praise coming quietly by word of mouth, not only from its many fans but from chefs too. In short, it's rated highly by the people who know what they're talking about.

So, when the Salutation was named Bed and Breakfast of the Year in the *Food* and *Travel* magazine Reader Awards 2016, it was high time for a visit.

Fashion dictates that "bed and breakfast" doesn't have the same kudos as "restaurant with rooms", but don't worry because, as they say with a twinkle in the eye, this is "B&B with attitude".

The 18th century coaching inn is a focal point in Topsham. Through its majestic covered entrance, which has one of the largest single leaf doors in the country no less, you glimpse the Glasshouse. The old courtyard has been turned into a light and airy space offering food and coffee throughout the day and becoming a joyous setting for breakfast. Alongside it, within

'When you hear that Tom spent days single-handedly stripping back the paint and grime on the ancient entrance door, you'll understand how deep this attachment runs'

the inn's old walls, is the restaurant where chef director Tom Williams-Hawkes serves up his celebrated tasting menus.

Tom and his partner, hotel manager Amelia Boalch have put their all into the Salutation and their hard work and dedication is astounding. It must be due partly to their affection for the building, which they rescued back in 2011. They spent two years transforming the Salutation (Amelia admits that she cried when she first saw the appalling state of the near derelict pub) into a modern stylish restaurant while at the same time celebrating its glorious history. When you hear that Tom spent days single-handedly stripping back the paint and grime on the ancient entrance door, you'll understand how deep this attachment runs.

It seems their Salutation journey took off at just the right time too. Tom had steadily built up a strong reputation for his cooking skills; working for Gordon Ramsay and

One of the bedrooms

Saluting a winner

An inn at the heart of Topsham has been named Bed and Breakfast of the Year, so CATHERINE COURTENAY paid a visit



Tom with his chefs, Jack and Ethan



Fine dining

LUXURY BREAK

There's still time to make the most of the Salutation's Winter Break offer. Enjoy two nights' bed and breakfast including a four course dinner and bottle of prosecco on one evening for two people sharing. Prices start from £330 for a Classic Double to £510 for a Master Suite. It runs until May 1. salutationtopsham.co.uk Tel. 01392 873060.



The courtyard and Glasshouse

Marcus Wareing, for the Rothschilds in France and as sous chef at Gidleigh Park then executive chef at the Abode for Michael Caines. He knows Topsham, the surrounding landscape and its producers well.

Tom's food is fresh and exciting, the choice of either four, six or eight course tasting menus carefully crafted and vibrant in both tastes and visual artistry. He likes to surprise – the smoked Topsham eel on the day I visited was a revelation.

There's an understated beauty running throughout the Salutation. The rooms are simply furnished but thoughtful touches like Neal's Yard toiletries and little jars of coffee and teas give the pampered feel and, with mattresses made by Topsham's own Naturalmat, a heavenly sleep.

Guests can use a galley kitchen on the first floor, which has cereals and drinks but don't let that stop you making the most of the breakfasts. Beginning with perfect croissants and fresh yoghurt with a scattering of jewel berries, this is a sensory treat and again reflects Tom's perfectionism. Just the right portions, artfully presented on earthy ceramics, and one of the best veggie breakfasts ever - what a way to start the day!

Leaving around mid morning, there's already a stream of people coming in to enjoy a coffee and perhaps something from the famed patisserie selection. It's clear that many are regulars. I envy them.

OCCASIONALLY you meet people you could just chat away to all day and this month's Inspirational Woman is one of them. Interesting, experienced, lively and passionate about her job and her family, Carolyn Custerson is a woman at the top of her game and I left our meeting feeling there was so much more I wanted to know.

But even then I would probably be only scraping the surface. Born in Maidstone in Kent, Carolyn grew up knowing she wanted to travel; family holidays were always taken in the UK and invariably in the South West so she decided that she wanted to live here as well.

Both dreams came together successfully. After working for SAGA for a number of years, a job opportunity came up in Devon and both Carolyn and her husband, Anthony, knew it was now or never. She tells me: "I loved working for SAGA; it was a vibrant and fast moving company that was so very supportive of female staff but a job at Plymouth University as a lecturer meant we could do what we had always wanted and move to Devon."

area but we're not all working together.' So, over the last six years, I have encouraged 'Team Torbay' so that we become the biggest and strongest seaside destination in the UK."

Thanks to her determination this created the biggest tourism BID in the country, representing 984 different businesses across Torbay. The businesses are required to pay an annual levy so that there is a cooperative approach to promoting the destination in the future.

This wasn't without some negative voices but most progressive businesses in the area could see that this was the best way forward for the area.

Away from the day job Carolyn is a mother of two, now grown-up, daughters. Some might say that you can't have a successful and demanding career and be a good mother but whilst Carolyn admits she is very career-driven she also knows it was the best thing for her and her family.

"When I had my first daughter I went back to work when she was three months old and did the same after my second. The way

'I am passionate and driven about tourism and what it can do for an area like the English Riviera'

That was over 25 years ago and since then Carolyn has had two children but also carved out a very successful career in the industry she always knew she wanted to be in - tourism. This determination has enabled Carolyn to now be CEO of the English Riviera Tourism Company. She also headed a campaign to hold a ballot to set up the English Riviera Business Improvement District (BID).

Changes across the country as to how tourism marketing is funded prompted this campaign with Carolyn leading the charge: "I am passionate and driven about tourism and what it can do for an area like the English Riviera. When I started this job in 2009 the English Riviera, at a national level, was not looked at very positively. I thought: 'I'm not putting up with this as we live in a beautiful

I survived was that we made the decision to have a full-time nanny and I remember putting an advert in the Kingsbridge Gazette saying 'Mary Poppins where are you? Working mum needs the perfect Nanny'.

"Thankfully I found the most wonderful lady and that enabled me to work and to make sure my children were happy. Because my children were well looked after by her and my close family they were thriving and therefore I could thrive in my career.

"I was also still full of energy when I got home so that they got the best of me when we were together. My rock throughout the whole of my career though has been my husband; he has always been so supportive and respectful of the fact that tourism was my passion and understood that I would have to travel, as it's not a 9-5 industry."

It's clear that Carolyn's mantra is teamwork when it comes to family and career and it certainly seems to be one that is highly effective: "As a family we work well as team and I don't worry about housework - you can't do it all! What matters is our time together. My girls are now grown-up and we still have a wonderful relationship."

To meet my personal criteria of being inspirational enough for this series the person has to leave me walking out of our interview feeling just a little bit better about the world and our place in it and Carolyn certainly did that. ◆

WHO INSPIRES CAROLYN?

"Successful people inspire me, but that doesn't mean rich people, but those that have had the courage to step out of the box and try something different.

"I do admire Theresa May and I love having a female Prime Minister. I admired Margaret Thatcher too.

"I'd love to be Minister for Tourism but I fear it's too late now!"





The UK's No.1 Law Firm

www.stephens-scown.co.uk









Devon women mean business!

Here we turn the spotlight on some of our county's most successful and discover what makes them tick.

To celebrate International Women's Day in March, Devon Life Magazine celebrates some of the county's most influential business women.

Talking to a range of exceptional women from solicitors to Managing Directors of beautiful lifestyle showrooms, we ask these leading ladies about how they forged their successful careers and businesses.



Catherine Mathews Stephens Scown LLP

What is the secret of your success?
Hard work, resilience, self discipline, and a

mum who loves looking after my daughter when I'm not around!

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

If I'm honest, the dividing line between work and life is quite blurred a lot of the time. I do try to keep weekends free, though. Prioritising well and delegating as much as possible helps. I work with a fantastic and very supportive team.

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

I work with a number of clients who have set up very successful businesses. This is something I find inspiring because I am naturally quite risk averse and I have a lot of respect for people who are prepared to take that step. At home my daughter is a source of inspiration because she has an amazing imagination. It's so much fun seeing the world through the eyes of a six year old!

Catherine is head of the dispute resolution team at Stephens Scown in Exeter. She is listed as a leader in her field in Chambers 2017 and the team is ranked number 1 in the Legal 500. Stephens Scown was named UK Law Firm of the Year at the British Legal Awards 2016

Curzon House, Southernhay West, Exeter, Devon EX1 1RS

T. 01392 210 700 | www.stephens-scown.co.uk



Catherine Petherick Exeter Audi

I look after vehicle needs of both owners and drivers from small local businesses to National Fleets. By listening to and understanding their needs I ensure they are provided with an informative and pleasurable experience when purchasing vehicles. This includes demonstrations, funding options, BIK advice and handover of the vehicle.

What is the secret of my success?

Do what I say I will do, treat my customers how I wish to be treated and go that extra mile. Having been in this industry for over 20 years, I have the experience and exceptional level of customer required in today's market and I am delighted to provide it.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

Work hard, play hard, be passionate and enjoy my job, I am fortunate to look after interesting customers from all industries so it doesn't seem like work.

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

Other successful business professionals within my client base and the motor industry. My grandmother used to say to me you can have whatever you want but you will have to work for it to make it happen. I feel I am a very lucky lady and constantly look to improve, stretch myself in knowledge and experience.

Exeter Audi part of Marshall Motor Group, Denbury Court, Marsh Barton, Exeter T. 01392 825 425 | www.marshall.co.uk



Donna Barnes Talem Recruitment

What is the secret of my success?

I'm still on my journey to find true success. I think you have to be resilient and have confidence in not only your own ability, but your team's as well. Myself and the Talem Recruitment Group wouldn't be where we are if it wasn't for all the great people involved. I'd like to think that I'm quite creative, which can sometimes come in handy when thinking your way around problematic situations.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

This is one of the hardest things to achieve when you run your own business, and even if you are not physically in the office, your mind is always on business. Funnily enough,

I sometimes have my best ideas in the shower! I try to sign up to a few challenging events a year, in 2017 I plan to do a double marathon as well as a 24-hour event. Another thing that helps is my extremely supportive family; plus, having two teenage girls keep my busy.

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

Those who show endless energy and enthusiasm for their cause inspire me. If I had to choose, it would be Hilary Devey. I was inspired after reading her autobiography, she's a great example of a single mother with amazing vision, who has overcome huge personal and professional hurdles.

2-4 High Street, May Bank, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 0JB T. 01782 710998 | www.shedevil.co.uk

An Swinnen BECS

BECS delivers business skills, management skills and train-the-trainer courses for large corporates in the Gulf Region and Europe.

What is the secret of my success?

Education and Training are my passions, so I'm at my happiest when working hard to deliver high-quality training that is really interactive and up-to-date, so we receive excellent course feedback from our clients.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

I am lucky that a lot of our work is done in the Gulf Region where the pace of life is somewhat slower than in the West. I love socialising and I

Offices in Paignton and London

T. 0203 3683 441 | www.becsltd.com

have joined a private health club in Kuwait to do yoga, pilates and body balance. In Paignton I love walkabouts and exploring beautiful Devon.

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

My Dad! From my earliest memories he showed me the importance of a good work/life balance by combining a full-time teaching job with being the regional journalist for a national newspaper, he designed and built our home, had an organic vegetable garden and life stock and he also set up and ran organisations to protect the environment and historical monuments. He was also a tourist guide and the drummer of a band!



Hilary Roach Lifelong Products

Working with natural products and helping people with my family-run health business is my dream come true! I became passionate about health and nutrition to heal myself, after being left in constant pain through Spinal TB & Scoliosis. Then Breast Cancer. It's wonderful to be pain free, energetic & healthy

What is the secret of my success?

The personal touch! Advising about suitability and product use, resulting in testimonials and satisfied customers. Our success is down to providing product information & free samples; plus sourcing quality, natural products from reputable companies & aiming to keep prices lower. Showing people we care is vital.

32 St Andrews Road, Paignton TQ4 6HA **T. 0800 970 7885 | www.lifelongproducts.com**

How do you achieve a work/life balance? I try to visit family and friends whenever I can. You only get out of a relationship what you put in I have a little cottogs in Turkey, which I visit

You only get out of a relationship what you pur in. I have a little cottage in Turkey, which I visit twice a year.

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

My Mother was my big inspiration. When I was growing up, she always made me believe that I could achieve anything, so I did. She was told by Dr's that I would not see 3 years old, never walk, work or have children! Yet I have gone on to achieve all of these things, so she taught me to "NEVER say NEVER", which has become my motto in life!!



Li Case Orange Tree

What's the secret of your success?

Without doubt, hard work is a key factor in success. Being a single mother of two, striving to put food on the table, was always my driving force. And now, 19 years later, that mentality is so ingrained that it is hard to slow down. With that, my staff, who are resilient, tenacious and dedicated, have been a vital part of the continued development of Orange Tree, and I owe them all a great deal.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

This has always been a battle. When Orange Tree was younger, dragging my daughters out on Boxing Day to help prepare for the sales was never easy, but with limited resources, it

was necessary. However, it has always been important to make time for family and when there is time. I make the most of it.

Who inspires you the most, either at work or at home?

My mum has been a rock for me. She insisted in working in the Orange Tree warehouse, and was a great inspiration to us all. She was hard as nails and had more energy than all of us combined. She was a great support at work and home and, at the points in my life when it all seemed too hard, she was there giving me the encouragement and support I needed. Sadly, she passed away last year, leaving a big hole for all of us.



Darts Farm, Topsham, Devon, EX3 0QH

T. 01392 878271 | www.theorangetree.co.uk



Cathryn Clayden MyPodiatrist

The MyPodiatrist clinic in Torquay was founded in 2012, and is spearheaded by director and lead podiatrist Cathryn Clayden. Committed to promoting the podiatry industry, the team are proud to offer a variety of podiatric specialities under one roof.

What's the secret of your success?

The best advice I was ever given can be summed up in one word: read. From an understanding of the latest evidence base in podiatry to the latest emerging tools for my business, tech or otherwise, I am a perpetual student.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

I have found that waking up before the sun is a major personal and business advantage, and affords me the time for positive affirmations, journaling, meditation and exercise. I also plan my time meticulously, and the things that go into the diary first are my personal goals.

Who inspires you the most, either in work or at home?

I strive to be the best that I can be, embrace change and have cultivated a network of trusted mentors and colleagues. These mentors have solidified my work ethic, sharpened my focus and clarified my priorities in a way that I could not manage on my own.

93 The Terrace, Torquay TQ1 1DP

T. 01803 200212 | www.mypodiatrist.co.uk



Andrea Rice Acorn Multi Academy Trust

Executive Head and CEO of The Acorn Multi Academy Trust which consists of six primary schools situated on the borders of East Devon and West Dorset.

What's the secret of your success?

The success of the Trust is due to the hard work of the whole team and my role is to make sure we provide the best possible education for all the children. I strive to ensure that all the schools have children at the heart of their decision making. My role is to lead the team in the right direction and support the Heads of School to achieve this.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

I live close to the sea, so long walks along the beach are a great way of de-stressing as well as swimming, reading and listening to music. I love travelling and spend my holidays abroad as much as possible, to return refreshed and ready for the next challenge

Who inspires you the most either at work or at home?

I am always inspired by the enthusiasm and joy of the children and a visit to the classroom, talking to them, always puts everything back into perspective. If I can make a difference to their lives by providing them with a rich and high quality education, then I have done my job.

Mrs Ethelston's Primary Academy, Uplyme, Lyme Regis DT7 3TT

T. 01297 442210 | www.acornacademy.org



Gail Streatfeild Director of Chartsedge Ltd

I founded Chartsedge, an independent estate agent in 2012. I started in the business in 1999 working for Knight Frank selling houses on Devington Park, a former hospital in Exeter. This is where I fell in love with the property world.

What is the secret of your success?

Having built up my strengths and industry knowledge over the last 20 years, I now own, through hard work and determination, a successful business. I have a positive personality and pride myself on giving an excellent service. I love interacting with people and what I enjoy most in my job, and what motivates me, is the feeling of selling a house to the right person and the joy of their excitement when they move in.

How do you balance work/home life?

Our children have left home and have their own families so I have the freedom to devote my energy to Chartsedge. However nothing disturbs me when I'm with my grandchildren who are obviously the best in the world!

Who inspires you most, either in work or at home

I set up Chartsedge with Miles 5 years ago. We have the same work ethic... we work hard and still have fun. My inspiration and determination came from a comment from a condescending ex-boss on my last day at work. "I expect you will retire now and help out with some part time volunteering." Little did he know.

4 The Old Tote Building, Exeter Racecourse, Devon EX6 7XS

T. 01392 832446 | www.chartsedge.co.uk

Kelly Forrester Clear Property Ltd

Clear Property is a successful independent estate agency. Set up from home in 2007 by owner/director Kelly Forrester. Kelly has driven her business to the huge success it is now. Located in Southernhay West, with a team of professional ladies making sure our standard of services are consistently unrivalled.

What's the secret to your success?

My team; we are all dynamic and focused on our company goals. We work closely together and I ensure all my staff are motivated, respected and have all the support they need to succeed. Many clients recommend, or remain loyal with us for a great number of years. This is a reflection of the hard work, and success of our

T. 01392 425555 | www.clearproperty.co

business and why many people choose us over other agencies.

How do you balance work/home life?

It is a constant Juggle. I work from home at least one day a week, working ON my business, as opposed to IN it! I won Mumazing Awards for being Best Women in Business 2016. I also love to challenge myself and am a long-distance runner.

Who inspires you most, either in work or at home?

I am inspired by my children and my partner too, who always believes in me and is there to support me whenever I need him most.

a reflection of the hard work, and success of our support me 5 Southerhay West, Exeter, Devon, EX1 1JG



Julie Mackay Beresford Clinic

Beresford Clinic, started in 2002 specialising in non-surgical treatments, facial aesthetics, laser hair removal and weight loss. Julie's energy and drive sought the very latest treatments and products as she travels the globe and recently launched her online shop, Dermarella.

What's the secret of your success?

When I was 21 years of age my loving parents encouraged me to start my own business. Through hard work and determination, I went on to build three businesses by the age of 25. I like to be innovative and think that if you believe in yourself and your idea others will do to.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

Tides Reach, Newton Road, Rydon Gardens, Bishopsteignton, Devon, TQ14 9PP T. 01626 777 027 | www.beresfordclinic.co.uk

My work life is supported by my practice manager Jules Chapman, and my loyal team of colleagues. At home my wonderful housekeeper who's presence allows me to travel, attend conferences and do early morning gym visits.

Who inspires you the most, either at work or at home?

My teenage sons who's support and love has never decreased under the pressures of a single working parent. My younger patients who find self-confidence after we've found solutions for their skin problems, which often lead to bullying and low self-esteem. My mature patients, who after illness, divorce or loss have life changing experiences after our specialist treatments.



Dana Mulligan Dana Mulligan Consulting

Dana Mulligan has recently launched Dana Mulligan Consulting, an Exeter based PR, Marketing and Business Consultancy Company. Dana is an experienced, awardwinning Consultant with a strong track record in marketing and promoting businesses in Exeter.

What's the secret of your success?

My determination, focus and loving what I do. I enjoy meeting people, getting to know their businesses and helping them to creatively exceed their business goals. I have been based in Exeter for over 20 years and feel very rooted in my local community. I am passionate about building meaningful relationships and networks and being part of a vibrant and exciting city.

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

Enjoying my work contributes hugely, many of my assignments enable me to mix business with pleasure so I never feel any tension between the two. My family are very important to me, they are a massive support. They understand when I am busy, help out with chores and make sure I retain my sense of humour when busy deadlines are looming. It's all about communication, understanding and organisation.

Who inspires you the most, either at work or at home?

The companies I work with probably inspire me the most; watching their businesses grow, reach new markets and increase financially.



29 Queens Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 9EP

T. 07769 271651 | www.danamulligan.co.uk



Stephanie Aldridge Arbuthnot Latham, Private Bankers

The Arbuthnot name has been connected to banking since 1833. The Bank was first established in the South West over 20 years ago, with Stephanie joining the team 11 years ago.

What's the secret to your success?

My main focus is on the day-to-day banking needs of private individuals. Providing an effortless service and having a strong working relationship is extremely important. The key to my success is developing deep and meaningful relationships that create value, while delivering an exceptional service.

How do you balance work/home life?

My dog and horses are my hobbies. I am up at 5.20am taking care of them before a day in the office. However, within my role I need to be flexible to clients' requirements and I may be needed outside of 9am – 5pm for events or client meetings.

Who inspires you most, either in work or at home?

I am driven by my father. He has rheumatoid arthritis and he never complains and never gives up – my Dad has taught me to inspire and be inspiring. I want to give my clients and colleagues the best service possible and find solutions.

The Senate, Ground Floor, Southernhay Gardens, Exeter, Devon EX1 1UG T. 01392 496061 | www.arbuthnotlatham.co.uk



Sophie Howe The Westcountry Personnel Group

What's the secret of your success?

Grit and Determination! I am a very determined and driven person, with a clear vision of where I want to be and what I want to achieve, but at the core of this must lay the support of loyal colleagues and friends who can join you on the journey to the mutual benefit of everyone concerned

How do you achieve a work/life balance?

After being caught up in the "rat race" for years, I moved to the West Country to achieve just this. When I'm not driving my business I am walking my two lovely dogs and spending time with my horses on Dartmoor or enjoying the WestCountry coastline.

Who inspires you the most, either at work or at home?

This has to be my Father, a successful business man who not only demonstrated an exemplary work ethic, but supported my decisions with his abundance of common sense. Also having started my career in Logistics, I should also list Hillary Devey as my inspiration to succeed in a male dominated environment.

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Jane Taylor taylor underwood and Ocean Cottages

Founder of taylor underwood estate agents, specialist in North Devon coastal and lifestyle properties, handling the sales of some of the area's top properties, and Ocean Cottages Ltd, specialist in luxury coastal holiday homes.

What is the secret of your success?

I've worked with property in North Devon for over thirty years and still love it. Integrity and trust are my priorities, combined with local knowledge and helping people achieve their goals.

How do I achieve a work/life balance?

I often work beyond office hours, pulling out all the stops for clients, but my family are

everything to me and part of my journey. I think their work ethic is influenced by my commitment. There is however, always time for the nice things in life.

Who inspires you the most at work or at home?

My father. An ex POW in Berlin, he was never beaten in anything he tried. He believed 'hard work never harmed anyone'. He was humble, compassionate and taught me to 'reach for the stars'. I know he is watching over me and I hope I'm making him proud. My ongoing inspiration is seeing my team, including my daughter Melissa, making both businesses succeed.

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A TRAINING DYNASTY

POND House, the training empire of the famous Pipe family, straddles the Devon Somerset border and while those born in Somerset claim the legendary former trainer Martin Pipe CBE and his son David as their own, Devonians are equally keen to say that Devon plays as much a part in the yard's success as Somerset.

David, who took over his father's licence in 2006, is diplomatic and agrees that Devon is as important as Somerset, although he won't go so far as to say he's an actual Devonian. "It's depends who's asking," he jokes.

Politics done with, David is part of an endearingly popular family for whom saddling horses at the Festival is tantamount to how they gauge their season's success.

"These days the Festival is seen as the be all and end all. It's a big four days and your season is geared around the meeting. Everyone wants to saddle a winner at Cheltenham and for any trainer, particularly those that train the larger number of horses like us, it's hugely significant," he explains.

David lives with his partner Leanne and their three children - six-year-old Jack, Sophie, who is three, and one-year-old Martha - a stone's throw from the yard near Culmstock where 100 or so horses are put through their paces every day.

It's an operation that runs like clockwork with the Festival the ultimate goal and such is the importance placed on the four-day spectacular that they host a marquee for the duration of the meeting, inviting owners past and present to share in a little of the Pipe's famous hospitality.

"It's very popular and offers everyone somewhere they can take a bit of a breather, have a seat, and something to eat or drink. Each day we will do a preview and go through the card. It's quiet if we don't have a winner, and extremely loud if we do!" he laughs.

But joining in the camaraderie, and drinking the ubiquitous champagne, is saved for after the meeting. Over the course of the four days David will saddle some 15 to 20 runners. It's a frenetic and stressful time, with high expectations all too often dashed.

"It's very tiring and there's a lot of pressure that goes with Cheltenham as it means so much to so many people. But we do try to send horses there that have a realistic chance and I avoid sending sociable runners, which helps manage people's expectations," he says.

With the luxury of a helicopter, once declarations are done for the next day's runners, David will leave Pond House at 10.30am, arriving on course 45 minutes later. First stop will be the weighing room to chat to the jockeys, and then he will head to the marquee for the raceday preview. The



Trainer David Pipe on the course: 'There's a lot of pressure that goes with Cheltenham as it means so much to so many people'

first race will come under starters' orders at 1.30pm, and then it will be non-stop before the flight home and a family gathering with Irish friends who visit every year.

"There's still work to be done when I get home so you don't really get a chance to relax until everything is done and dusted on the final day. But we are extremely lucky as we have such a good team who keep everything together," he says.

Those all-important people who keep the cogs turning include his father, a groundbreaking trainer who saddled an extraordinary 34 Festival winners and was crowned the champion trainer 15 times. He is the only living person with the honour of having a race named after him at the Festival, the Martin Pipe Conditional Jockeys' Handicap Hurdle, which was established in 2009.

"It's a great honour, although it would be even more special if we could actually win it!" says David who is yet to saddle the victor of that particular race.

However, he's trained a winner every year with the exception of 2009 and 2013, which is an admirable feat, given there are some 600 licensed trainers in the UK, and another 700 in Ireland with just 28 races to win each year.

Gaspara, his first winner, is very special, he says. "He won in 2007, my first year as trainer at the Festival, so it was very special, as the weight of expectation was huge, having taken over from my father," he explains.

He also cites the hugely exciting prospect Moon Racer, the 2016 Champion bumper winner, as another that stands out. "Just because he's a very special horse and, all being well, will run at the Festival this year," he says.

As the countdown begins, David's brow will become increasingly furrowed as decisions are made about which horse should run where. And if he can add another Cheltenham win to his tally, the worry will all have been worth it. "There's a famous saying that trainers swear by and that's that we will settle for just the one winner!" he says.

CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE

Cheltenham Racecourse is situated in Prestbury on the outskirts of the historic spa town of Cheltenham. The Home of Jump Racing, set against the beautiful backdrop of the Cotswolds, Cheltenham Racecourse is a stunning natural arena and offers the highest-quality action throughout the Jump season.

More information is available at cheltenham.co. uk and through Twitter (@ CheltenhamRaces), Facebook facebook.com/thehomeofjumpracing and Instagram (@ CheltenhamRaces).



The roar of the Cheltenham crowd is something which just has to be experienced!

THAT WINNING FEELING

QUALANDO'S peaceful holiday home is close to Ottery St Mary in East Devon. The idyllic countryside and flat, lush grazing paddocks are a far cry from the tumultuous scenes that greeted him following his win at the Cheltenham Festival.

The year was 2015, and he was considered a 25-1 chance for the Fred Winter Juvenile Handicap Hurdle. His owner Kathy Stuart felt her horse was entitled to be there, but had no aspirations that he might actually win. She stood in the paddock watching the big screen. She remembers she was excited, but not apprehensive, as she can be on lesser occasions when her horses run.

"We weren't expecting anything so I wasn't feeling as nervous as usual. We were there for a day out," she explains.

Five of the eight flights of hurdles had been safely negotiated, and three remained before the winning post and glory. Qualando, who is trained by champion trainer Paul Nicholls, was racing with the pace, and travelling easily within himself.

Jockey Nick Scholfield started to urge him on and he took up the lead before the final flight. Nick kept pushing, and Qualando kept responding. With every stride he gained ground, never erring up the famous run-in. And then they surged clear a length and a half ahead of their 21 rivals and into Festival history.

"The way the race evolved he just kept making up ground and ran on up the hill. It was wonderful. It was just the pinnacle of racing. To have my husband Roy there, my family and the team from Ditcheat made it a very special day and I feel happy to have had a Cheltenham winner under my belt," says Kathy, adding: "You always dream of having a winner but it was such a surprise and it was wonderful that Nick rode him. I have known him a very long time."

Horses have been a part of Kathy's life since a very young age but she began to take it more seriously after a mare intended for racing proved too wayward so was put to stud. She produced the good horse Sabaki River, who was trained by Jackie Retter, won seven races and ran at the Cheltenham Festival.

"He didn't do anything there but it really gave me the bug," she says.

Supported in her racing interests by her husband who is a prolific East Devon businessman and farmer, she dabbled some more. Racing is an addiction for Kathy, but it is the Festival that encapsulates everything great about jump racing.

"It's the Olympics of racing and anyone who enjoys great sporting occasions should add it to their bucket list. The atmosphere really is like nothing else I have ever experienced. It's a very special place."



Female jockey Lizzie Kelly: 'I don't think it is something I appreciate right now. It is something that I will probably think about when I hang my boots up'



Owner Kathy Stuart inspects one of her horsest in the paradering with legendary jockey Ruby Walsh

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A JOCKEYS' life is spent largely in the fast line, whether it's pounding the gallops, driving along motorways to get to the races, or throwing the works at a horse in a quest to win races, which is all rather appropriate for Lizzie Kelly, a headline-making jockey who never does anything by half.

On New Year's Day, after a season she describes as "pants," she booted home a double at Cheltenham with Agrapart winning the Relkeel Hurdle and Coo Star Sivola the Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle.

Now she heads into the Festival with a lively chance on the former who is being aimed at the Sun Bets Stayers' Hurdle.

The six-year-old is trained by her stepfather Nick Williams at George Nympton near South Molton in Devon where she lives with her mum Jane, brother Chester, and sister Loveday. She's attached to the yard as conditional jockey (a rider under the age of 26 who can claim a weight allowance until she has notched up

75 wins) and rides about 95 per cent of the 35 horses in training in races.

Just 23 years old, she has amassed a plethora of exploits that piece together like a giant jigsaw and culminated in her becoming the first British woman to ride a grade one winner. To put that in perspective, grade one races attract the sport's very best horses, and the highest caliber jockeys – the absolute crème de la crème.

It was on Boxing Day 2015, when she rode Tea For Three, owned by her mother, and trained by Nick, to win the Kauto Star Novices' Chase.

She recalls: "I don't think it is something I appreciate right now. It is something that I will probably think about when I hang my boots up and am old and talking to my grandchildren. For me, it was far more important that I had won a Grade One, it didn't really matter whether it had been done or not before."

On Boxing Day last year Lizzie was the first female jockey to ride in the King George VI Chase.

But despite racing being one

of the few sports where women compete directly against men, she doesn't believe her successes will shift the desire for trainers, and owners, to use male jockeys.

"There are plenty of reasons why trainers don't use girls, and it is never going to change. Every generation, there are two or three female jockeys who are used, but it doesn't go any further. The subconscious idea of females being the ones who should be at home, looking after the children, is part of our make-up," she says.

Riding a Festival winner is a huge but not unrealistic dream, and Lizzie does not lack for the experience or confidence. She's ridden there twice, finishing closest last year on Coo Star Sivola who was third in the Fred Winter Ladbrokes Hurdle.

If that famous Cheltenham roar carries her home in front, it'll be a well deserved win for this gregarious young woman not least because when the chips are down, Lizzie would never buckle, not even under the glare of a Festival-addicted nation.

PUB REGULARS DRINK IN THE ATMOSPHERE EVERY YEAR

WHY DO tens of thousands of people make an annual pilgrimage to the Cheltenham Festival every year? They might never go racing from one Cheltenham to the next, but they love the buzz, love the people watching, and they will enjoy the day from one of many crowded bars, or from the lawns in front of the stands, or even in the stands, if they can find a space.

Take a group of twelve friends who socialise together at the Five Bells Inn at Clyst Hydon - the policeman, the solicitor, the head teacher, the farmer, the publican, as an eclectic a bunch as ever you'll see – who will head to the Festival.

The Five Bells crowd will be among them, savouring the occasion as they bet on the horses and absorb a unique atmosphere in one of sport's greatest arenas and occasions.

Duncan Sykes, the instigator of the annual trip says: "People just love being there. There is something very special about it. Everyone feels the atmosphere and everyone can be a part of it. It's four days that are as magical, dramatic and joyous as sport gets."

These days the Five Bells' tribe's annual trip is becoming a fixture in this pub's calendar, with wives and girlfriends very much an integral part. It starts with a Full English Breakfast cooked by the pub's award-winning chef and a pint in the pub at 7.30am, before piling into local villager Bruce's minibus to the Festival, a day among the crowd, cleaning out the

bookmakers and then back to the pub for a late dinner to round the day off.

Phil Morris, the village policeman and a big fan of point-to-points, believes the setting, with the racecourse nestling in the shadows of Cleeve Hill, gives you the feeling that you in a wonderful natural amphitheatre, overlooking over an incredible spectacle, where the hairs on the back of you neck literally stand up as you arrive.

Phil has a tried and tested way of picking the winners: "My theory is that you study the horses in the paddock, and pick the one with the longest legs," he reckons.

His wife Vicky, a head teacher, is looking forward to dressing up. "I'll buy a new outfit, maybe tweed – you can't go wrong with that. I will have a little bet. I always go for a grey horse. If not, I look at each horse as they parade, and then its instinct. Sometimes this theory pays off!" she says.

Security consultant Iain Stewart loves the community spirit of piling into the bus and spending the day with friends. "It's great when we all get together and go for days out," he says.

Ray Gibbins, local farmer, prefers to get into the thick of it in the Guinness Village, and already has a specific plan of how he will back some winners. "Ignore Duncan's tips!"

Each year this happy crowd from the Five Bells gets a little bigger as one or two more are added to the trip - Bruce now needs a bigger bus!



The Five Bells regulars who make their way to Cheltenham every year

DEVON LIFE'S GUIDE TO ENJOYING THE GREATEST SHOW IN JUMP RACING

THE CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL is the race meeting of the year when the very best of the home team are pitted against the cream of Ireland's thoroughbreds. It's when the champions are crowned, and reputations cemented – or trashed. This year's Festival takes place from Tuesday 14 March until Friday 17. The gates open at 10.30am every day, with the first race at 1.30pm and the last race at 5.30pm.

ARRIVE WELL BEFORE THE FIRST

RACE is due off and give yourself plenty of time to absorb the pre-race atmosphere. You will also avoid the crowds, tickets touts and lucky heather ladies.

DRESS UP, OR DRESS DOWN; it's not Royal Ascot so anything goes, except a predominance of skin – it will be far too cold! You'll be on your feet for a long time, so wear something comfortable, and if you head out to the lawns in front of the stands, avoid stilettos as they will get stuck, unless you don't mind stepping out of your shoes and onto the grass.

Go to said lawns for the first race and **HEAR THE MIGHTY ROAR** as the tapes are raised and the 2017 Cheltenham Festival gets underway. It's an iconic sporting moment and the atmosphere will be electric.

.....

NEVER HAD A BET BEFORE? Every horse entered is entitled to be there, so if number eight's jockey is wearing your favourite colour, have a little flutter.

.....

If you are wondering **WHICH DAY IS BEST TO ATTEND**, Tuesday is Stan
James Champion Hurdle day, famed
for that incredible roar, Wednesday is
ladies' day, with the Betway Queen
Mother Champion Chase the highlight,
on Thursday the racecourse celebrates
St Patrick's Day and races include the
World Hurdle and on Friday another
champion will be crowned in the Timico
Gold Cup.

There are **PLENTY OF SCREENS** so you won't miss any of the action but do try to watch a race by the rails. Nothing beats the exhilaration of getting up close to the action.

Get there early enough and enjoy a **PRE-RACE PICNIC**. You might get so caught up in the excitement that you forget to eat while you're there. It will temper the effects of alcohol, and save you a small fortune too.

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EVERY jockey aspires to ride at the Cheltenham Festival and those that gallop round Prestbury Park's hallowed turf are elevated into an elite band that us ordinary folk can only marvel at.

The kinship of being a part of this extraordinary group of fearless men and women is something that very few of us can really comprehend, unless we've been there and witnessed that tremendous sense of occasion as we urge our horses on against a backdrop of clamour, excitement and expectation.

"There is nothing like it," says Devon-born Nick Scholfield, who grew up near Winkleigh. "The very best horses are competing against each other, its fast, its furious and it's what jump racing is all about.

"Nothing beats riding there. The horses run quicker, jump quicker, and so you have to have one that jumps and travels well. The course is very undulating too so you need to have a well-balanced horse.

"It is incredibly hard to ride a winner at Cheltenham and it's disappointing if things don't go your way, but that's what makes the Festival so special. As a jockey you really appreciate how difficult it is."

Nick's first Festival success came in 2012 when Hunt Ball won the Byrne Group Plate. He was regarded as the people's horse as his was a real rags to riches story. He was relatively cheap compared to many of the horse that come with a £100k+ price tag, he was trained by the unknown Keiran Burke and owned by the farmer Simon Knott.

For Nick the six-year wait to gain his first victory there proved worth it. "I'd read so many stories about what it feels like to win there, but until you do, you can't actually imagine the huge buzz of adrenalin. It was such a special day as Hunt Ball went into the race the underdog, carrying top weight. It was an incredible achievement."

Nick's career in the saddle began when he was a tiny tot, riding show ponies for producers Ron and Debbie Thomas and showjumping under the tutelage of his mother Teresa. His father Philip Scholfield was widely regarded as one of the best amateur riders of his era, winning the National Point-to-Point Championship in 1988, and Nick cut his teeth early in racing, attending whenever he could.

He showjumped at the highest level, and rode in championship show pony classes but it was a foregone conclusion that as soon



Nick Schofield takes the acclaim astride Hunt Ball

ELEVATED TO AN ELITE BAND

as he turned 16, he'd be swapping tweed jackets for coloured silks.

"I used to go racing a lot with my dad and I'd watch all the meetings on TV. I just loved everything about it and I remember skiving off school to watch the Festival when I was younger," he says.

By the time he was 16, his reputation as rider was already firmly cemented and when he made his debut at Black Forest Lodge near Exeter one wintry day riding No Way A Lady, expectation was high that his racing career would begin in a winning note.

He recalls: "But I got as far as the second open ditch and we fell, breaking my collar bone. It probably did me a lot of good as it gave me time to think about what I really wanted to do, go to college or race. I choose the latter, much to my mother's dismay as she wanted me to showjump!"

These days Nick is among the top jockeys in the country, riding as champion trainer Paul Nicholls' number two, and picking up rides from many other trainers including the West Country's Jeremy Scott and Victor Dartnall.

He's a popular figure with an immense number of friends and when he rode his second Festival winner on Qualando in 2015, there was an outpouring of delight from those in the weighing room.

"There really is nothing like riding a Festival winner and when any of us do it, we are all so genuinely pleased for each other," he says.



Spot the stars

Ahead of the big meeting at Cheltenham a visit to Exeter Races will get you just in the mood for The Festival

WITH SPRING IN THE AIR, and a spring in the step of race-loving folk, March ushers in the first of the Festivals. Cheltenham is on the tip of everybody's tongues and as the sports pages fill with the clatter and clamour of anticipation, Exeter Racecourse will play host to its own little corner of Festival heaven with its preview evening on 7 March.

Just one week before that famous roar heralds the start of Cheltenham 2017, David Pipe, Philip Hobbs, Nick Scholfield and Paul Nicholls' assistant Harry Derham will run the rule over the runners and give their thoughts on possible winners, with sponsors Star Sports adding their expertise, and ITV Racing's Luke Harvey hosting the evening.

Tickets for the not-to-be-missed evening cost just £10 in advance, £12 on the gate, or can be bought in conjunction with a Grandstand and Paddock or Premier ticket for £18.40 or £22.40 respectively. Prior to the evening, there are six races to enjoy, which are guaranteed to whet the appetite ahead of an intriguing evening.

Exeter's second spring meeting is on 21 March and is sponsored by Higos Insurance Services. Ever popular with corporate clients, and those with a special day to celebrate, its hospitality suites allow for unique days at the races. The restaurant allows

RENOWNED FOR QUALITY

That Exeter is regarded as a nurturing ground for future jump racing stars is no secret, with trainers supporting the track with the very best horses as they progress through the ranks.

Its reputation as a fair jumping track is renowned with its two-mile galloping circuit, giving jockeys time to instill confidence in their charges as they make their way around the course.

This 2016-2017 season has seen some exceptional talent. Those that might feature at Cheltenham are Neon Wolf, a winner on New Year's Day. Exeter-based Sue Gardner's Couer Blimey could run in the Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle, Nicky Henderdson's L'Ami Serge, may be a Stan James Champion Hurdle or a Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase contender. Others to note are Paul Nicholls' Le Prezien and Give Me A Copper.

racegoers to dine in style while enjoying a perfect view across the racecourse.

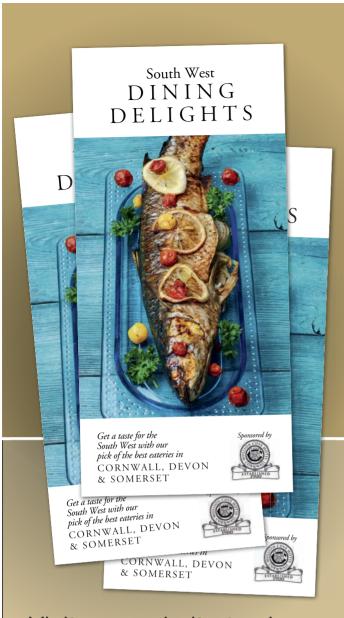
Family day on Wednesday, 11 April is one the busiest and most action-packed days, not just with fantastic racing, including two pony races, but with loads of free children's activities including the Party Ponies and the film Ice Age's Sid and Scrat, who will be making personal appearances at intervals throughout the day.

Behind The Scenes tours will take place before racing, there will be jockeys' autograph sessions during the day and there will children's running races down the home straight.

New this year will be the launch of Junior Jumpers at Exeter – bringing children exclusive news about their favourite jockeys and horses, plus the chance to meet them and take part in special activities. Take a look at the details here http://cheltenham.thejockeyclub.co.uk/juniorjumpers and become a Junior Jumper.

There's the chance to go on an Equisiser, which is an imitation racehorse, and wear jockeys' brightly coloured silks and face painting. Put Family Day on Wednesday, 11 April into your diary and prepare for a great day out! ◆
For more details visit exeter-racecourse.co.uk

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Cash in the garage...

PHILIP DALLING discovers how an exciting and novel investment opportunity can be found on two wheels

OWNING a classic motorcycle may help you recapture your more adventurous youth or provide the basis on which to build a whole new lifestyle. More significantly, it can also represent a major financial investment.

Dartmoor-based motorcycle broker Paul Jayson has been around the two-wheel business since the age of 14, when he renovated an old Honda dirt bike and sold it at a profit.

But the era of simply fixing up old and battered machines is long gone. Today, he sources valuable and reliable motorcycles from across the world for discerning individual customers.

Paul bought and sold motorcycles to pay his way through drama college in the 1980s and a decade later became a trusted broker for dealers throughout the world, seeking out and delivering first Harley-Davidsons and later adding BMWs and classic Japanese machines from the 1970s, '80s and '90s, turning over millions of pounds of other people's money each year.

He brokered 1,500 new Japanese motorcycles to shops every year until 1999, later working for the dealer network of an Italian scooter manufacturer, enjoying trusting relationships with more than 500 motorcycle dealers through out the world.

After building high quality motorcycles in China in the early 2000s and working with venture capitalists, Paul went back to trading used motorcycles to his dealer network.

He explains: "In 2010, a friend came to me with £30,000 to invest and asked me which motorcycles would increase in value, as profits from private motorcycle collections attract no capital gains or other tax liabilities at all.

"After exhaustive research of all the motorcycles I grew up with, we discovered we could only spend £27,000 on five machines. Today that collection is worth six figures."

From 2011 onwards, Paul's business, based at Michelcombe, near Holne, went full circle, going back to brokering again, only this time in reverse. Instead of dealers placing funds with Paul to allow him to buy machines from private individuals, he now accepts funds from private individuals.

With the money Paul purchases genuine classic motorcycles through his own 500-strong dealer network worldwide.



Paul Jayson and examples of classic motorcycles pictured close to his Dartmoor base

Paul adds: "The motorcycles that the baby boomers grew up with are the classics of today. The demographics prove that Japanese and Italian motorcycles of the 1970s, '80s and '90s are where profits are to be gleaned.

"At some point China, the largest nation of motorcyclists on the planet, will allow the importation of motorcycles again and prices of such classics will move on to unimaginable highs."

'The motorcycles that the baby boomers grew up with are the classics of today'

Entry to the classic motorcycle market starts from as little as £2,500 all the way up to more than a million pounds. Paul sums it up by saying: "There are still numerous great motorcycles that will increase in value, priced below £5,000."

Paul has his own collection of 40 motorcycles and recently smashed the world record for sale at auction of a Ducati 996SPS by 500%. "I did it by collecting the right motorcycle, which is exactly what I do for my customers. ◆ For more details check out Paul Jayson's website at themotorcyclebroker.co.uk or call him on 01364 631119 or 07971 497615.

The Clary March

Su Carroll hand-picks her top choices from around the county this month

DANCE BRENDAN COLE

Brendan Cole admits he pays attention to the detail when it comes to his touring shows – an annual treat for his *Strictly Come Dancing* fans. He's in control of everything from the casting and choreography to the rather cheeky title of his ninth tour – *All Night Long*.

"I'm very hands on," admits Brendan. "The show has to be from me and the title of the tour is very, very important. It has to convey a feeling of what they're coming to see. It's like when you hear a piece of music that you love and it makes you want to groove, if not for 12 hours at least for two!," he laughs.

Brendan has been with *Strictly Come Dancing* since series one, an accolade he only shares with Anton du Beke, and he delivers the same high production values on stage in his high energy shows.

"There are so many elements to the production – eight dancers, 14 musicians, the lighting is phenomenal, the staging is phenomenal. It's such a big show. When I started out all those years ago I was very raw in terms of theatre. I wasn't sure how to do it, but I'm still proud of *Live* and *Unjudged* and how the shows have grown from there.

"This show is what I want to put on stage. I want to make the shows really special and we had a limited budget when we started out. They became successful and now we have a bigger budget. Everything grows, making each one slightly better than the last. We keep inventing, which is exciting for the audience."

Over 14 years of *Strictly Come Dancing* on TV, the viewing audience have become clued up to the delights of Latin v Ballroom and can spot a fleckle or a top line with ease.

"It's great that people are interested, but having that knowledge does put the pressure on me," laughs Brendan. "I have to incorporate everything they expect to see and know. But they do appreciate what they see on a different level. I try and create something really special and intimate. What





Strictly Come Dancing star Brendan Cole says he's very hands on when it comes to his stage show, All Night Long

is nice is that we can do longer pieces, not just the one-and-a-half minutes they get on *Strictly*. We can tell proper stories."

Sharing the lead roles with Brendan will be Faye Huddleston and he's looking forward to creating some wonderful dances with her.

"We are doing an Argentine tango as a solo, where normally we do it with a group. We're doing an American Smooth which will be a proper 'Fred and Ginger' routine. We dance to Gloria Estefan's Conga, Ed Sheeran's Thinking Out Loud, Irene Cara's What a Feeling - songs that excite you as a performer. I'm really excited about a Rumba we're doing to Eva Cassidy's version of Fields of Gold. It will give the audience time to reflect. We get great responses, especially in the Westcountry, the Strictly studio audience are much more reserved!" Brendan Cole's All Night Long tour is at Hall for Cornwall, Truro, on 3 and 4 March, Poole Lighthouse on 18 March, Princess Theatre, Torquay (two performances) on March 19 and Plymouth Pavilions on 1 April.

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MALCOLM LE GRICE

Artist Malcolm Le Grice was a pioneer in the British Expanded Cinema movement with multi projection and performance works, as well as making the UK's first computer art films. The driving force in expanding the London Filmmakers Co-op's to include film production, he has had a profound impact on British visual culture since the late 1960s.

He has exhibited at the Tate Modern and Tate Britain in London, the Centre George Pompidou and Louvre in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, MACBA in Barcelona and MUMOK in Vienna and has over 80 works in the British Film Institute.

His new exhibition, *Present Moments and Passing Time*, is in a more modest location - at Peninsula Arts and Plymouth Arts Centre. But is a special show for Malcolm – just a short distance from the house in Headland Park where he was born during the war.

Malcolm, who has returned from London to live in Devon, grew up in a family without any real interest in art – although they did love the theatre. "My dad was a scrap metal dealer. He was kind of a rogue and he did a little time, but I liked him a lot. He was really nice and really caring. My mother ran a dressmaking business which was probably the best in the city.

"They both loved music, mother liked to dance and sing and we went to the theatre every Friday night, whatever was on. We saw everything, even the Folies Bergere with nudes on stage when I was about seven or eight. I saw Ballet Rambert, opera, vaudeville. I think the theatre was a great influence on me."

Malcolm admits he wasn't very good at school, except for art, but studied at Plymouth Art College and then won a place at the Slade Art School in London, although he never believed it would lead to a "proper job".

"The Slade was a big shock to me, because I was very provincial. People who were there really knew about art."

Times were tough – Malcolm and his wife had a young baby and his £6 a week grant didn't even cover the £8 rent on their flat so he was working 30-40 hours a week alongside his studies. But encouraged by his teachers he carried on.

"It was a period when art was in transition and I was getting into film, there was a lot of printmaking and photography around and I was trying out a whole range of stuff. I was interested in the possibility of making film and in Soho, where there were a lot of filmmakers, they would throw out stuff which was just dumped in the bins. I'd just get it, splice it together and project it.



"You wouldn't recognise it as anything to do with cinema, I was just working with found material. I loved the physicality of it – the sprocket holes and the scratches on the film.

"I love exploring the relationship between the work and the space. I think a lot about meaning and the experience of the spectator and how they make sense of things. I like the idea, also, of not knowing what it means.

"I don't have intentions when I start out on something. I respond to the images and build something up through improvised responses."

Malcolm Le Grice: Present Moments and Passing Time is a exhibition spanning 50 years of innovation in painting, film, video and digital art. It's at Peninsula Arts (peninsula-arts.co.uk) and Plymouth Arts Centre (plymouthartscentre.org) until 18 March.

Malcolm Le Grice's
Horror Film 1 is a live
shadow performance
using three 16mm
projectors with
changing colour loops
and a recorded sound
track of breathing

Theatre A DREAM COMES TRUE

Glenn Waldron is seeing a childhood dream come to fruition in the city where he grew up. Glenn, 39, spent his youth in Plymouth attending Montpelier Primary and Plymouth College before university, the bright lights of London and a career in journalism, specialising in fashion and design.

"I've always written and I can remember being at Montpelier and making a little magazine, stapling all the pages together and taking great pleasure in it," he says. He "fell into journalism" but carried on writing other pieces.

"It was what I always wanted to be as a child; a writer," he says.

In the past few years there's been more of a shift towards being a playwright. His first play Forever House premiered at The Drum, Plymouth, in 2013 and he's back there with his latest – The Here and This and Now – which coincides with the opening of his play Natives at Southwark Playhouse.

The starting point for *The Here and This and Now* is those dreadful staff away days designed to engender the team spirit, explains Glenn. "They are very painful and slightly humiliating teambuilding exercises. They ask you things like 'which type of animal would you be?'

"There's a real dramatic potential in that environment and a lot of us can relate to it. You can have fun with that and then it heads into an unexpected direction and gets slightly darker. It is exploring how we maintain our own identity and sense of self in quite a brutal corporate environment."

Glenn has fond memories of the theatre .

"I do remember going on stage with Ken Dodd and the Diddymen during the panto. Then my mum and dad made us leave at the interval because they thought the show was too blue!"

The Here and This and Now is at The Drum, Plymouth, 9-25 March.

PERFORMANCE JAY RAYNER

Jay Rayner regarded himself as a "general hack" for many years during his journalistic career until his "greed" and love of food led him into food writing and restaurant criticism which now includes a weekly column in *The Observer*, Radio Four's *The Kitchen Cabinet* and appearances on *MasterChef*.

"The great thing about food is that it's about everything," says Jay. "It's about family, relationships, sex, politics, the environment and who we are. I do write it to my own appetites, both literal and figurative."

Now, with a wealth of experience in the subject under his belt, Jay's on tour to talk about his latest book *The Ten (Food) Commandments.* "It's not just about the food environment and the world in which we live, the thing about the Ten Food Commandments is that they reach into every aspect of life. It's about seeing the world through the prism of your dinner," explains Jay.

"Take one of the commandents: Thou shall not mistake food for pharmaceuticals. There's an awful lot of cobblers about foodstuff having a pharmaceutical effect – the so-called superfoods. The fact is that we are scientifically illiterate. We need to understand how food works in the body.

"Some of the time the blame can be laid on my own colleagues in the media and their reporting of science. Academia is culpable in this as well. They take money from manufacturers for supposedly independent surveys. "But just look at the statistics. We are a hell of a lot healthier today and we're living longer. The cancer rates are generally a function of our living longer when we're a lot more likely to develop cancer. There's no doubt that we are fatter – that's to do with sugar where our consumption has risen and risen.

"The issue is not processed foods. Most of our food is processed. Turning wheat into flour is a 'process'. And it's not ready meals – they have existed for centuries. I have noticed that children on the streets of London are thinner than in the West Midlands where my mother-in-law lives. That's because in London they are all walking to their primary schools."

In his show Jay deals once and for all with questions like whether it is ever okay to covet thy neighbour's oxen (it is), eating with your hands (very important indeed) and if you should cut off the fat (no).

"The first part of the show I use audio visual stuff – it's a great way to make gags. I'll be talking about the Ten Food Commandments and I ask the audience to tweet their own commandments. The second half is a Q&A, which is the most fun part.

"One of the best questions I was asked I now ask this audience. It was 'have you ever done a runner without paying the bill?' My answer was no, but the first time I asked an audience, about 20 hands went up!"

Jay Rayner is at The Beehive, Honiton on 4

March. Visit thebeehivehoniton.co.uk or call 01404
384050. He will be signing copies of his book.



Writer and food critic Jay Rayner will share his Ten Food Commandments on stage

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Tenors Unlimited are coming to two Devon venues

TENORS

THE RAT PACK OF OPERA

Three tenors with a wealth of experience in theatre and opera visit Devon this month as part of their Venice to Vegas tour. Described as "the Rat Pack of Opera", Tenors Unlimited will deliver a show packed with operatic classics alongside their own versions of modern favourites.

Scott Ciscon, Paul Martin and Jem Sharples have been performing together as Tenors Unlimited for ten years, appearing with Sting, Lionel Richie, Beyoncé, Hayley Westenra, Simply Red and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This year their tour takes them beyond the UK to America and Bermuda.

Tenors Unlimited's wide-ranging repertoire includes *La Donna E Mobile, The Pearl Fishers Duet* and *Nessun Dorma*, interspersed with crooner and pop favourites such as Ed Sheeran's *Thinking Out Loud*, Sting's *Fragile*, Freddie Mercury's *Barcelona* and swinging classics *Volare* and *Moon River*. Expect to hear *Senza di Te*, which they wrote themselves, from their current album *The Journey*.

"We perform a wide repertoire of all music so there is sure to be something for everyone," says Jem, who has performed in Aspects of Love, Whistle Down The Wind and Barnum. Scott Ciscon hails from Chicago and performed in Europe before heading for the bright lights of London and The Witches of Eastwick.

Paul Martin discovered his love of music singing in the local church choir and joined National Youth Choir of Great Britain. He has performed with opera companies and ensembles all over Europe, Japan and the USA. As well as their passion for music, Tenors Unlimited are united by a love of cooking and cricket.

Tenors Unlimited are performing at Babbacombe Theatre, Torquay, on 3 March where they will be joined by Razzamataz Torbay, a choir of youngsters aged 11 to 16 (babbacombe-theatre.com). At Exmouth Pavilion on 4 March, they will be joined by Exmouth Community College Choir.

Classical music

CLARE MCCALDIN

The outstanding mezzosoprano Clare McCaldin will bring her tremendous stage presence to bear for a performance in Devon this month for Concerts in the West. Clare will be accompanied by Libby Burgess, a pianist, who is dedicated to song and chamber music.

In operatic repertoire Clare has sung a wide range of parts including in *The Cunning Little Vixen, La Belle Helene* and *Hary Janos*, and in concert with the Academy of Ancient Music, Philharmonia Orchestra, Die Kölner Akademie, the Northern Sinfonia, the choir of King's College, the Orchestra of the Golden Age and the Northern Chamber Orchestra.

Catherine Maddocks. founder and director of Concerts in the West, describes Clare as a remarkable and elegant performer. "She not only sings beautifully, but also draws on her impressive range of dramatic abilities to deliver superbly accomplished performances. Her ability to draw audiences into the atmosphere and emotion of each song is exceptional and her natural ringing voice is both controlled and accurate."

Clare's programme includes work by Vaughan Williams, Faure, Britten and Cole Porter.
Clare McCaldin is at Lower Pulworthy, Highampton, Hatherleigh on 16 March.
Tickets from Salar Gallery, Hatherleigh on 01837



Rags to riches: Cinderella

BALLET CINDERELLA

Vienna Festival Ballet are bringing the when he ended h

classic rags to riches fairytale to the stage with a performance of *Cinderella*, the magical combination of a mistreated young girl, a glass slipper, two comical ugly step-sisters and a handsome prince.

The company was founded by celebrated Austrian dancer Peter Mallek in 1980 when he ended his dancing career. It has a reputation for quality ballet productions.

Music is by Rossini, arranged, rewritten and conducted by Chris Nicholls, with choreography by Sheila Styles from the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet. *Cinderella* is at Exeter Corn Exchange on 22 March and the Princess Theatre, Torquay on 12 April.

MUSIC

PREPARING FOR FESTIVALS

By Sarah Gosling

It's inevitable: one season leads into another. I'm not talking about winter into spring, although the idea is appealing. No, I mean something far more important. Festival season is in the air.

Devon's fertile pastures seem to sprout more and more of these events every year, with notable additions to 2017's roster including Torbay's new "mudless" festival Grinagog in April. This may seem a touch premature, but I do have cause to bring it up; the live listings confirmed early for March have nearly doubled compared to previous months, and I don't doubt that it's all due to the oncoming magical music summer camps. Practice needs to be had, venues need to be scouted and it seems that thoroughness is key this year.

So without further ado and for your planning perusal, here's the best Devon has to offer this March:

2 March STORNOWAY, EXETER PHOENIX

After finding themselves a firm fixture of the indie folk scene whilst still at university, Stornoway have been the central tent-poles of major festivals all around the world and darlings of gentle beatniks and mid-field meanderers alike for the last decade. Now though they find themselves drawing to the amicable end of their musical journey, and are going out with one last double bass-ed twang on their Farewell Tour. Expect stunning harmonies, instrumental ingenuity and the uncontrollable urge to tap your feet and sing along.

9 March ELBOW.

PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS

The story of Elbow is one set down in music lore, and perhaps the one most likely to give the veteran band who've not yet hit the big time that extra dash of hope. Despite consistently gigging and recording for 20 years now, they've only really been a household staple since 2008 when the now legendary album *The Seldom Seen* Kid won the Mercury Music Prize. Today they're one of the most revered acts on the touring circuit winning two Ivor Novellos, the BRIT award for Best British Band and the commission to write the BBC Theme for the 2012 London Olympics. Probably decent enough to give a whirl then.

10 March ALEX HART BAND, **B BAR PLYMOUTH**

I had the pleasure of watching Alex Hart's set on the Looe Music Festival main stage this year. Having never heard of her before, I was pleasantly surprised, as were the sizeable crowd who despite the draw of the sea and cocktail vans, stuck around to watch her and her band in their element. When your brand of Americana elements



fused with a dash of folk and a dulcet vocal is more tantalising than a beachside mojito, you're onto something.

11 March WILLE & THE BANDITS,

THE PALLADIUM CLUB, BIDEFORD

The South West blues rock bandits return to the county for what will undoubtedly be a stonker of a set. After sharpening their musical talons on festival bookings everywhere from Glastonbury to Greenman since 2010, the group have become live favourites and are sure to astound in this fairly intimate venue.

16 March RICHARD BARBIERI & GRICE, EXETER PHOENIX

If you're in the market for something intellectually and culturally stimulating, this is the gig for you. Bringing the notorious talent of former Japan keyboardist and New Wave pioneer Richard Barbieri together with the stunning art rock stylings of Grice, the whole soundscape is set to be topped with a landscape of projections and 8mm film imagery. An event for almost all of the senses.

Top left: After forming a decade ago at university, Stornoway embark on their farewell tour

Top right: When the going gets tough Billy Ocean brings a back catalogue of hits to **Plymouth**

Left: Intellectual and culturally stimulating Richard Barbieri & Grice

Right: Mercury Prize winners Elbow head for Plymouth Pavilions



NEXT MONTH: Strictly Come Dancing finalist Danny Mac and fiancée Carly Stenson star together in Sleepless, a new musical inspired by a classic romantic film.

GIGS IN BRIEF

4 March: Dreadzone at Exeter Phoenix

11 March: Mad Dog McRea, Exeter Phoenix

21 March: Lloyd Cole, Exeter Phoenix 27 March: Marti Pellow,

21 March: Blossoms, Lemon Grove, Exeter

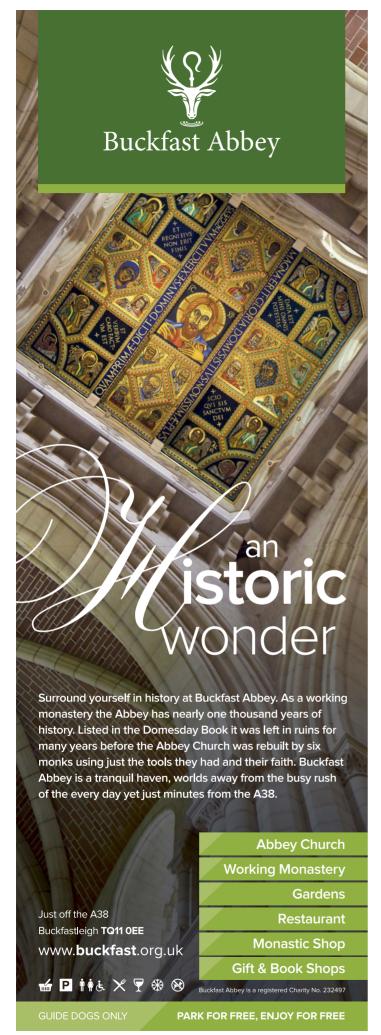
23 March: Martin Harley and Daniel Kimbro, Exeter Phoenix

Plymouth Pavilions

28 March: Daoiri Farrell and The Damien O'Kane Trio, Exeter Phoenix

29 March: Billy Ocean, Plymouth Pavilions

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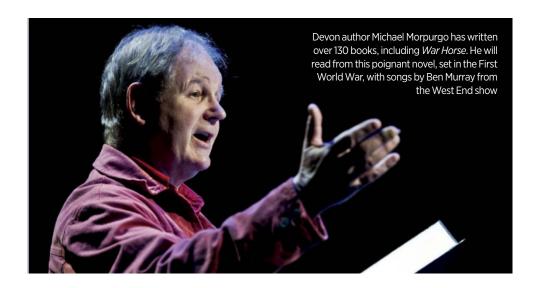


www.budleighfoodanddrink.org.uk

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Town of festivals

It may only be a small market town, but Chagford has big ambitions, as Su Carroll discovered...



'Audiences like to see an

author and for a writer

it's a change from being

in their ivory tower and

writing away'

CHAGFORD, in the heart of Dartmoor with a population of just a few thousand, has all the potential to be another sleepy Devon market town. But a thriving community has created not one, not two, but three festivals to attract visitors to the area.

"We love our festivals," laughs Melissa Brooks who has lived in the area for more than 25 years. "We have a very lively community with a lot of artists - in the widest sense – and people congregate here. There's always been a 'we can do this' attitude and that's rather nice."

A private get-together in the garden transformed into the first Chagstock music

festival in 2007, limited to just 5,000 visitors. That was followed three years later by the Chagford Film Festival and another three years after that came a literary festival,

Chagword, now preparing for its third event and establishing itself on the literary circuit.

"People like to hear what writers have got to say and the publishing world can promote their books. Audiences like to see an author and for a writer it's a change from being in their ivory tower and writing away," says Melissa, one of the organisers.

"It was hard to begin with; to entice authors to deepest Devon and our small festival was a big ask in the first place. But we do look after them, we don't just leave them to just drift. It's also a chance for them to meet other writers because writing can be a solitary experience."

The festival is possible because of the

support of a team of hard-working volunteers who offer their skills and put in the time. There is also a growing number of Friends of the Festival, sponsorship from local company Helpful Holidays and a grant from the Arts Council. Lots of other local businesses give what they can which all helps to keep the ticket price as low as possible.

There are around 1,000 tickets sold for Chagword and, while Chagford itself doesn't have a bookshop, Crediton Community Bookshop runs a pop-up shop for the three days of the festival.

Melissa has her favourites in this year's line-up, beginning with chef Shaun Hill,

who won a Michelin star at Gidleigh Park in the 1980s. He will be talking about his book Salt is Essential: And Other Things I Have Learned from 50 Years at the Stove.

Getting double BAFTA

winner Peter Moffat (*North Square, Silk, Criminal Justice, The Village*) is "quite a coup", says Melissa, thanks to a connection with a friend of his in Chagford.

He will be in conversation with Marnie Dickens, winner of the BAFTA Breakthrough Brit award in 2016. Both at different stages in their careers, they will discuss the challenges and rewards of writing for the small and large screen.

This year's Chagford festivals: Chagword is 17-19 March (chagword.co.uk), Chagford Film Festival (chagfordfilmfestival. com) will be held 25-30 September and Chagstock (chagstock.info) is 21-22 July. ◆

ON THE BILL



Sophie Hannah is a writer of psychological crime fiction who published a new Hercule Poirot novel, *The Monogram Murders*, in 2014



Former barrister Peter Moffat wrote for legal dramas *Criminal Justice, North Square, Kavanagh QC, Silk* and *Undercover*



Kate Adie's life as a television news correspondent includes war zones in the Gulf and the Balkans and the Tiananmen Square protest in Beijing

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More excerpts from the Devon diary of Tom Cox

14 January: As a naturally clumsy person who goes on over a hundred long country walks a year, I don't do too badly for falls, experiencing an annual rate of two or three. I felt it was best to get one of 2017's out of the way early, slipping in some mud today not far from Hawksridge on Exmoor and, in my attempt to save my camera from damage, landing hard on my side in a puddle. We're in the height of winter right now but it seems higher up on the moor: Exmoor is far less intimidatingly vast and never gets as bleak as Dartmoor does on its north western edge, but it has its own frightening dark boniness today, all bare knobbly witch trees, soupy light and monsterous moss shapes. I stand beneath a vast, deafening murmuration of starlings on a ridge overlooking the River Barle: the second great one I will see this month, alongside those who magically arrive upon on the unveiling of the 'Bridges Not Walls' banner in my local town, Totnes, on the day of Trump's inauguration. It's the dead time of the year but something is turning and the birds can sense it.

15 January: Trip to the local supermarket. I'm preceded through the doorway by three men and a woman in their early twenties. The two smallest men push a supermarket trolley containing their larger friend, who shouts and cheers. The men all wear very comfortable-looking matching grey tracksuits. They end up at the same checkout as me. "Are you coming with us?" the woman asks one of the men, as he pays. "Nah," he replies. "I've got to get home and feed my lizard, ain't I?"

18 January: Was asked today whether I ever think about my retirement plans, even though they are probably a long way in the future. I answered honestly and said I don't. I'm an author. My retirement plan is this: I write until I no longer can, as a result of death.



Out on the moors

21 January: I never experience the urge to steal more forcefully than when I see logs piled on an unattended trailer.

24 January: A ten mile walk above Sheepstor on Dartmoor, up where the moor gets big and yellow and can implacably swallow a person. The midpoint of my route is Crazywell Pool, an isolated, flooded crater of eery stillness. It was once believed that Crazywell was bottomless but this has since been proved untrue by the wonders of modern measuring equipment: formerly a tin mine, it's just fifteen feet deep. Legend has it that if you stare into the pool and see your reflection, the water sucks out your soul, leaving you as nothing but a husk,

like Piers Morgan. But on this sunless moment of the day, I do not see mine in the surface. The other folklore associated with the pool is that if you visit it at dusk - which is fast approaching when I arrive - a ghostly voice will whisper through the wind the name of the next person in the neighbourhood to die. I'm assuming "neighbourhood" is meant in a fairly wide sense here. Dartmoor Forest Parish Council? The South West as a whole? Spookily I do hear a sound almost like words being made by the breeze twanging the reeds of grass behind me as I sit by the pool but I can't make out if any of them are names. Even if one was "Tom", there are loads of Toms living in Devon. It could have been referring to pretty much anyone.

30 January: People say writing books is like having children but I'm not sure that's true: I could never love all mine equally. I much prefer the latest two to the first six and will probably be guilty of more favouritism still to the one I'm currently writing in a few weeks when it is fully out of me. I see a contradiction in my emotions as I write it: I'm finding the creative process hugely rewarding yet I can't wait for it to be over. Non-linear, almost a book about Devon, almost a nature book, almost a folklore book, almost a humour book, almost a social history book, almost a family memoir, it's the least

'I'm an author. My marketable thing retirement plan is I've ever done and **this:** *I* write until *I* the truest to who I no longer can, as a am, and I don't think result of death'

straightforwardly those two facts are any coincidence.

I feel totally represented and engulfed by it right now but no doubt that will be different by the time it hits the shelves: my mind will be in the next project. As an author you are never quite in the same place as work you've completed and that is a big part of both the addictive challenge and the frustration of the job. ◆



OVER THE YEARS, I have listened to many different styles of live music, but never a male voice choir. The genre to me is associated with the Welsh Valleys, so I was surprised to discover one right on my doorstep.

The Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir started in 1974 under the inspirational endeavours of Pam Jones, now Life President. From the original 20 members, numbers have swelled to over 60. Singers from East Devon, Exeter and even Torquay gather each week in Budleigh Salterton to rehearse an array of songs from a wide range of musical categories.

Although not generally admitted in public, the average age of the choir is currently 60 (or so). Members boast an interesting mix of backgrounds; one singer was once Secretary to the Home Office and another owned a market gardening business. But whatever their personal history, choir members pitch in together for the common musical cause.

Choir Chairman, Geoff Cound is keen to tell me about the many positive health aspects. "This is a unique opportunity for men 'of a certain age' not only to have something to do, but to do it with pride. Singing in a choir is good for breathing; it stimulates the memory and helps co-ordination."

"After retiring at 73 I was looking for something to fill my days," says choir member, Rowland Curtis.

"To start with I sat at the back and listened in awe." But Rowland persevered and is now an enthusiastic singer.

The choir is being taken to a new level by Musical Director Michael Graham, organist and Lay-Clerk at Exeter Cathedral and Director of Chapel Music at Exeter University. A youthful 25, Michael is an energetic, challenging

WHY SING IN A CHOIR?

It can help the memory

Trains lungs to breathe better

Boosts the immune system

Reduces stress levels

Uses core muscles and can feel like a workout

Is emotionally rewarding

Supports your community

Singing is (allegedly) healthier than yoga

conductor and an accomplished singer himself, with vast experience of choral music.

"My aim is to introduce a wider repertoire to make Budleigh Salterton choir more contemporary, and perfect the sound by improving how choir members listen to each other and learn music. The more a voice is used, the better it gets," he explains. It was Michael who arranged for the choir to make a new CD, recorded in the wonderful acoustics of the Mary Harris Chapel at Exeter University.

The choir is keen to encourage younger members. There's no audition process – interested singers simply turn up and Michael listens to them sing before placing them in the right section (first tenor, second tenor, baritone or bass), with section leaders acting as a 'buddy' to bring them on.

It may be a lot of fun, but this is most assuredly a serious choir. In May, they are competing at the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival, an event that attracts choirs from Europe and beyond.

There is a strong emphasis on community running through the choir and its activities. Support has been given to many local charities.

I was fortunate enough to attend one of the choir's performances, at St Paul's Church in Honiton. I sat spellbound, listening to an extraordinary range of songs. A rendition of *Bridge Over Troubled Water* had the hairs on the back of my neck standing up.

Musical Director Michael says he wants an audience not just to be sung to, but to be given such a full entertainment that they leave smiling and inspired to hum the tunes. I believe they have already succeeded, as I was whistling *New York New York* for days after the performance. ◆ *Budleighmvc.co.uk*

PRESENTING DEVON



Every month in Devon Life the team at BBC Radio Devon brings us news and opinion from their team of presenters.

WOULD YOU KNOW what's happening around the county at five o'clock on a typical weekday morning? I suspect many reading this will say: "Not a lot." If you are one of those, then you may be surprised.

We all know how diverse Devon can be. But from bustling towns to the relative calm of the countryside, there is a common link.

While a good proportion are in a different world and maybe a couple hours away from an alarm clock starting the day, many are already into their daily routine.

Being an early morning radio presenter, I know this only too well. Yet it is my job to try and motivate thousands of people at the start of their day.

If you are not one of the special breed - and I use the phrase carefully - of people who need to be awake before daylight strikes, I suspect you want some cheery music, maybe a little humour.

Also, most certainly, news and information, particularly if you commute and require information on the state of the roads and public transport.

Suddenly, my role seems more important, and it comes with a responsibility. Yes, I love nothing better than having fun on the radio. That's one aspect of radio Lord Reith had in mind for the BBC. If it was good enough for radio in the 1920s, it's certainly applicable nearly a century later.

Yet, there is no connection with an audience quite like that of being the voice of information when it is needed.

From the delay of a train to breaking news. The fire in Exeter in the latter part of last year is testament to that. I realised how serious the fire was when I



Rise and try to shine...

This month in the chair for the Presenting Devon column is GORDON SPARKS

received a call from a listener. She described to me, in such a calm and detailed manner, how the flames were reaching the height of the Cathedral and through her words the fear of fear for people and buildings could be sensed.

When your day is starting, there are many who have already been hard at work to make your day begin as smoothly as possible. Those who have been on security patrols, men and women who deliver our essentials, and others who, in all weathers, are often forgotten but have clocked on early to make sure your morning bus is there when you expect it.

When your day is starting, there are many who have already been hard at work to make your day begin as smoothly as possible'

In my mind, the stalwarts of early mornings form a special community. But to many, their first contact with the 'outside world' is through the powerful medium of radio.

Luckily, I'm not alone when I start my shift. There is the producer and the newsreader who has been checking any overnight developments and ready to inform. Also in the building our some colleagues from BBC South West TV. The newsreader, weather presenter, director and producer - all arriving (and I mean this) with collective smiles.

We may not admit it, but I can honestly say nobody arrives at the studios in a bad mood, despite that shock of the early alarm. That's because we love our job.

So tomorrow morning, as you begin another daily routine, please spare a thought for those that have helped shape your day. If you include our team in the radio studio, even better. •

Murder, she wrote...

Publisher HarperCollins launches its HQ imprint with a series of three Devon-based novels by author Christopher Wilson under the pen-name T.P. Fielden, starting with The Riviera Express. Christopher is a former Fleet Street columnist and now royal pundit. He lives in Kingsbridge. The three murder mysteries are set in Temple Regis - 'the prettiest town in Devon'. Devon Life is publishing this exclusive short story ahead of the launch.

THE DRY MARTINI MURDER BY T.P. FIELDEN

Temple Regis was unquestionably the prettiest resort in the whole of Devon, though the rest of the county always hotly denied it.

Certainly it had one of the best newspapers, the Rivera Express - but if you wanted to read about crime and murder and general bad behaviour, it was best to look elsewhere on the newsvendor's stand.

So the death of one of Temple's most admired townsfolk, Gloria Hanbury-Hardman, was never going to make front page news

in the Express. Even though there was a pistol nearby and signs of a struggle.

"Murder," sighed Miss Dimont, shaking her corkscrew curls in satisfaction.

"You don't know that," snapped her editor Rudyard Rhys. "Could be suicide!"

The chief reporter rolled her eyes - the old boy hated any whiff of scandal. "Inspector Topham has arrested Sluggo Pinkerton, Mr Rhys!"

"Rr...rrr," growled the editor, wrestling with his disgusting briar pipe. "Best thing that could happen to this town. Pinkerton runs the Grand Hotel reasonably enough, but that nightclub of his – attracts all the wrong types. Brings down the tone. Ought to be bulldozed."

"Wasn't him. Didn't do it." Miss Dimont was tugging out her report on the sizzling display of chrysanthemums at this year's Horticultural Society show, and feeding fresh paper into her Remington Quiet-Riter.

The editor sniffed. "What's more, I've never seen him without a drink in his hand - thoroughly irresponsible behaviour for a man in his position."

"It's why they call him Sluggo," muttered Miss Dimont, this statement of the obvious barely escaping through clenched teeth. She started to type furiously.

"What...are you doing?" Rhys craned anxiously over her shoulder

but the typewriter carriage was moving too fast for him to catch the words.

"Old Patrick
Glenallan came
down on the early
Pullman - Mudge
the station porter
told me," breathed
Miss Dimont as she

typed. "He's famous, of course, now we've got ITV down here at last."

It was 1959, and quite apart from recent innovations like bubble cars, Teddy Boys and the threat of decimal coinage, Devon had been finally been granted a second television channel. One of its biggest shows was What's Your Game? and the benign, stuttering, bowtied Lord Glenallan was its star.

"What's he got to do with Pinkerton? Or the dead woman?" "Before he inherited the title, Glenallan was married to Mrs Hanbury-Hardman – that's the family name. He was going to divorce her

when he became famous but she wouldn't have it. She moved down here, then Sluggo moved in with her. Bit of a coincidence, wouldn't you say?"

"You suggesting Glenallan did it? A lord? You can't write that!"

Just then blonde Betty Featherstone appeared, looking quite lovely even though her coral pink lipstick and tangerine shoes jarred somewhat with her electric lime-green dress.

"Got the gen, Mr Rhys," she said, licking her lips. She was Miss Dimont's rival each week for the front page lead.

"Rr…rrr."

"Just had a briefing from Inspector Topham. Mrs H-H was shot at about five o'clock this morning. Someone was seen up on the cliff path walking away from her cottage on the beach. A man."

"Yes?"

"In the cottage, an old service revolver, one shot fired. On the table, two glasses – both with a martini in them. That's Sluggo's drink, as anybody who goes to the Grand knows."

"I think you'll find..." began Miss

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Temple Regis was unquestionably the prettiest resort in the whole of Devon

Dimont, but Betty was so thrilled at having whipped away the scoop from her rival she plunged on regardless.

"And as everybody who goes to the Grand also knows, Mrs H-H was fed up with Sluggo and wanted him out of her life. He treated her very badly, you know. All that drinking and – other things..." Betty paused momentarily and shuddered.

'The death of one of Temple's most admired townsfolk, Gloria Hanbury-Hardman, was never going to make front page news in the Express.

Even though there was a pistol nearby and signs of a struggle'

"She'd changed the locks on the doors and let everybody know she'd have nothing more to do with him. But somehow Sluggo still got in the house and there was a scuffle – furniture pushed around, that kind of thing – the place reeked of gin. Then, Mr Rhys," said Betty, eyes wide

with excitement at Temple Regis' very first crime passionel, "he shot her!"

There was silence in the newsroom. All eyes slowly turned to Miss Dimont, as if challenging her to repudiate this open-and shut case.

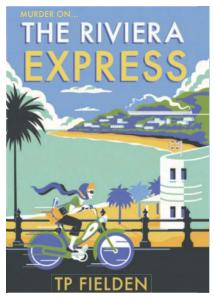
Devon's most glorious detective did not disappoint. She sat back in her chair and eyed her audience.

"As I say," she started, "it wasn't Sluggo.

"That trademark cocktail glass he has in his hand all the time at the Grand – it's for show. Looks like a dry martini, but it's actually water with an olive in it.

"Sluggo never drinks on duty and according to my good friend Peter Potts, the wine waiter, he prefers a pint of Portlemouth beer. If there were two cocktail glasses of at Mrs Hanbury-Hardman's house, my guess is they were a plant. He doesn't drink gin.

"When I spoke to Mr Mudge this morning, he was very excited at Lord Glenallan's arrival – he recognised him from the TV. But, he told me, his ticket was from Exbridge, not London."



The first of three new novels by T.P. Fielden

Betty Featherstone wasn't sure where this was going but didn't like the sound of it.

"Why would someone who lives in London get off one stop short of Temple Regis, then buy another ticket, get on again, and complete his journey?" she demanded crossly.

"Precisely. Mudge told me milord's shoes were damp and covered in sand – hardly the state they'd be in if he'd travelled down here First Class from town."

"Mudge seems to be very observant."

"And so would you be, with
a boring job like that."

"So?"

"So we've established it can't have been Sluggo. Mrs H-H had dumped him, she'd changed the locks, didn't want him in the house. And don't forget the martinis.

"It had to be somebody else. My guess is it was our famous TV star. He wanted a divorce so he could marry his co-star on What's Your Game, that blonde actress Helen Whatshername - it was in all the papers.

"It's clear, from what Mudge told me, that he came down last night, waited till dark, knocked on her door, did the dastardly deed then set it up to look as though Sluggo had done it. He caught the first train back to Exbridge, turned round and made his official arrival at Temple Regis. A pretty good alibi – and he got Sluggo arrested.

"Only he'd forgotten his shoes. Patrick Glenallan's your man."

With that, Miss Dimont started typing her Page One story:

"LOCAL BEAUTY KILLED BY TV STAR HUSBAND"

Betty looked as green as her dress. ◆ Copyright © 2017 T.P. Fielden





Robots on Dartmoor

The dramatic scenes of Dartmoor provides a fitting backdrop to a sci-fi feature film crafted from a film crew of only three, writes Alexandra Hurley

SMALL independent film company, Rendered Pictures, from Exeter has spent the last five years making a sci-fi feature film called *Robot World*, filmed on Dartmoor, now out on DVD and online.

The crew consists of three people, husband and wife Neil and Amanda Rowe and Neil's brother, Ian Rowe. A small team not to be under-estimated; Neil, Amanda and Ian's individual experience in 3D animation, visual effects and film making, acting and the arts (fine art and music) creates a strong company foundation.

As a self-funded project, the team relied heavily on resources to hand. "We are all from and still live in Exeter so we had the wonderful landscape of Devon right on our doorstep," Amanda says.

The film is apocalyptic with one actor (Ian Rowe) who is sent 60 light years across the galaxy to arrive on an alien planet, soon to discover the planet's only inhabitants are



Robot World was made in Neil, Amanda and Ian's spare time - each working a day job as well



Screenshot from Robot World



(L-R) Neil Rowe, Amanda Rowe and Ian Rowe: The crew are currently in pre production with their second feature length film after the success of *Robot World*

FILMING LOCATIONS

Wheal Betsy – a disused engine house located beside the A368 between Okehampton and Tavistock Road.

Saddle Tor

Rippon Tor rifle range, southeast of the 437m high Rippon Tor near Widecombe on the moor.

Lenteny Battery on the Plymouth coast

Mountwise, Plymouth a series of underground tunnels associated with WW2 predatory machines. "We needed locations with no signs of life – another plus for using Dartmoor," Amanda explains.

Neil, Amanda and Ian worked closely with the Dartmoor National Park authority in the early stages, who helped them identify landowners and assisted with ensuring they got the relevant permission to film across Dartmoor.

In 2015, they entered *Robot World* into various film festivals around the world and, to their surprise, won some awards, including Best Feature Effects at Other Worlds Film Festival in Boston, USA and Best Director at Hyperdrive Film Festival in Sussex.

Rendered Pictures is now in pre production with a second feature length film, which the proceeds from *Robot World* are helping to fund. Only this time round Neil, Amanda and Ian have 15 people and more crew to help them! • renderedpictures.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY: RENDERED PICTURES PRODUCTIONS

The holiday album

Take a look at the best family holiday pictures from our readers

WELCOME to The Holiday Album, *Devon Life's* monthly feature showcasing the best pictures taken by our readers which sum up what a holiday in our fabulous county is all about!

If your picture is chosen as our Pick of the Month then you will win a family ticket (two adults and two children) to visit any one of the attractions who are part of the Devon's Top Attractions collection (see full list at lotstodo.co.uk).

Here is a selection of the latest photographs submitted by you, the *Devon Life* readers.

If you would like to see your photos on the page and be in line to win a fantastic prize, why not send them over? Simply e-mail them to alexandra.hurley@archant.co.uk with the subject line 'Holiday Album', tweet them to us @DevonLife or post them on our Facebook wall at facebook.com/DevonLife. We're looking forward to seeing your photos and, in the meantime, enjoy these great family shots.



Susie Groom's grandchildren enjoy a day out at Saltram National Trust



A snowy scene taken by Tony Velterop at Nun's Cross Farm Dartmoor



Libby Woodhatch captures Dartmouth from the foot passenger ferry on the way to Kingswear



A kitsurfer braves the waves at Bantham Beach during Storm Barbara in December 2016, taken by Richard White



The Family Law Company is proud to sponsor the Devon Life Holiday Album feature

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WIN A FAMILY DAY OUT AT A TOP DEVON ATTRACTION

Devon's Top Attractions - Quality inspected and approved visitor attractions waiting to be discovered!

Here's your chance to WIN a family day out to visit one of Devon's Top Attractions.

The winner whose photograph is chosen will get to choose which attraction they visit. There are 40 attractions to choose from and you can see the full list online at lotstode, could

Devon Association of Tourist Attractions - represents over 40 of Devon's top attractions and is a non for profit organisation.

Members are regularly inspected to meet rigorous criteria and quality standards. This ensures that visitors always experience a quality day out in terms of venue, facilities, content, service and value for money. The Association continues to work to raise and maintain the standard of Devon's top visitor attractions.



Devon's Top 40 Attractions are located right across Devon and offer a whole host of interesting and varied days out. The attractions include mysterious castles, botanical gardens and impressive stately homes. Award winning steam railways, narrow gauge trams and boat cruises.

Zoo and farm adventures, thrill seeking theme parks and activity centres are all amongst their choice of fantastic venues. The attractions cater for all ages, tastes and budgets and pride themselves on having 'everyone's perfect day out'. Many of the attractions are multi award winning and this year so far has seen them gain many local and national tourism awards.

For more details pick up a FREE copy of their 'Complete Guide To Devon' brochure or see their website www.lotstodo.co.uk The prize will be for a family ticket (2+2) to visit one of Devon's Top Attractions



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Marsdens Devon Cottages is one of Devon's leading independent holiday letting companies with more than 40 years' experience. Here are some of the reasons why our home owners choose – and remain – with us.

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A place of beauty

Discover the charms of Dartmoor from the comfort of the Two Bridges Hotel, says Emily Diamond

SITUATED IN THE HEART OF DARTMOOR'S National Park, driving through the wild moors to reach the charmingly rustic Two Bridges Hotel is how I'd imagine it would be to step back in time into the Thomas Hardy country of Wessex or the unyielding landscape of Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. Ponies and their foals graze by the roadside and gallop freely over the terrain; here, there's a palpable sense of romanticism and abandon, which you'd expect from such a place of beauty that has inspired many great works of fiction. Originally built as a coaching inn by Sir Frances Buller in 1792, the Two Bridges Hotel is steeped in history and played host to many notable guests, including Sabine Baring-Gould, Vivien Leigh and HRH Prince Charles.

'There's a palpable sense of romanticism and abandon, which you'd expect from such a place of beauty that has inspired many great works of fiction'

Upon arrival, we nestle ourselves in armchairs beside a roaring fireplace to enjoy our drinks; Dartmoor Brewery ale for my husband and a crisp yet fruity New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc for myself, courtesy of Tavistock wine merchant Charles Steevenson. Fragrant peach and tropical passionfruit flavours are balanced with sharp gooseberry, citrus and herbal grassy tones. The atmosphere is friendly and informal, seemingly typical of a pastoral Devonian establishment, but its modest nature belies the excellence of the fare that follows; in my husband's words, it's "the best meal I've ever eaten".

We're offered double AA rosette award-winning executive chef, Mike Palmer's taster menu, which showcases a selection of inspired dishes, meticulously prepared and artfully presented. To begin, we enjoy Asparagus velouté with truffle cream, smooth and rich - with the heady fragrance of truffle - yet also fresh and light. My husband starts with black pudding scotch quail egg with Sladesdown guinea fowl terrine, candied apple, raisin and walnut. My crispy quail egg with wild garlic mayonnaise and candied walnuts perfectly complements tender seasonal English asparagus.



We spend a restful night in one of the hotel's well-appointed premier suites







Top: Everything chocolatey Middle: Dartmoor Lamb, three ways; rare rump steak, fragrant shepherd's pie Bottom:Fillet of Hake with Exe mussels

My husband's main course presents three ways with Dartmoor Lamb; rare rump steak, fragrant shepherd's pie and belly with wild garlic and lamb jus. My monkfish is elegantly spiced, beautifully grilled and served with aromatic king prawn masala, sagaloo and onion bhaji.

We share two 'pre-desserts' of chocolate praline mousse with honeycomb and popping candy and marinated pineapple with rum granite. Dessert itself is all about the Cornish strawberries, served two ways; with white chocolate pannacotta, honeycomb pieces, shards of meringue and buttery praline shortbread and also atop a fresh strawberry jelly, served with honeycomb and meringue. We finish with coffees and homemade petit-fours, including fruit pastels, chocolate hazelnut truffles, vanilla fudge and strawberry mousse.

Although elegant and indulgent, the menu comprises many small plates of superbly prepared food, which strikes the perfect balance. Comfortably satiated, we spend a restful night in one of the well-appointed premier suites. Boasting a faultless dinner menu, idyllic views and country charm, the Two Bridges Hotel is the perfect destination for a romantic weekend mini-break; venture into the heart of the moors and allow the dedicated staff to look after everything as you enjoy all that Dartmoor has to offer. \blacklozenge twobridges.co.uk



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Your photos could adorn this space at the new ELF Family Suite

Picture perfect contest

Photography enthusiasts have a chance to see their pictures on display for a good cause, thanks to a new competition launched by Devon Life

DEVON LIFE and Exeter Leukaemia Fund are looking for readers to fill a bright new space in the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital with a beautiful Devon scene.

The empty space is in the new ELF Family Suite at the Yarty Ward at the hospital.

The ELF Family Suite opened in January and means that haematology patients from all over Devon can be together with their loved ones during really difficult times.

The suite is a haven for families so that they can be together in comfort and privacy while their loved one is being treated for blood cancer or other blood disorders.

But we need your help to turn it from an empty space to a warm and welcoming home from home.

Devon Life and ELF are seeking amateur photographers to send in their best photos of Devon.

The winning three photos will be printed out and framed to be used in the suite as well as featuring in the May edition of *Devon Life*. Neil Toghill, one of the judges

and Matron at Yarty Ward, says: "It would be great to have some peaceful photos to adorn the walls of the family suite, then it will start to feel like home for families."

Andy Cooper, Editor of *Devon Life*, adds: "We know what fabulous pictures of the county the readers of *Devon Life* take. This is a fantastic

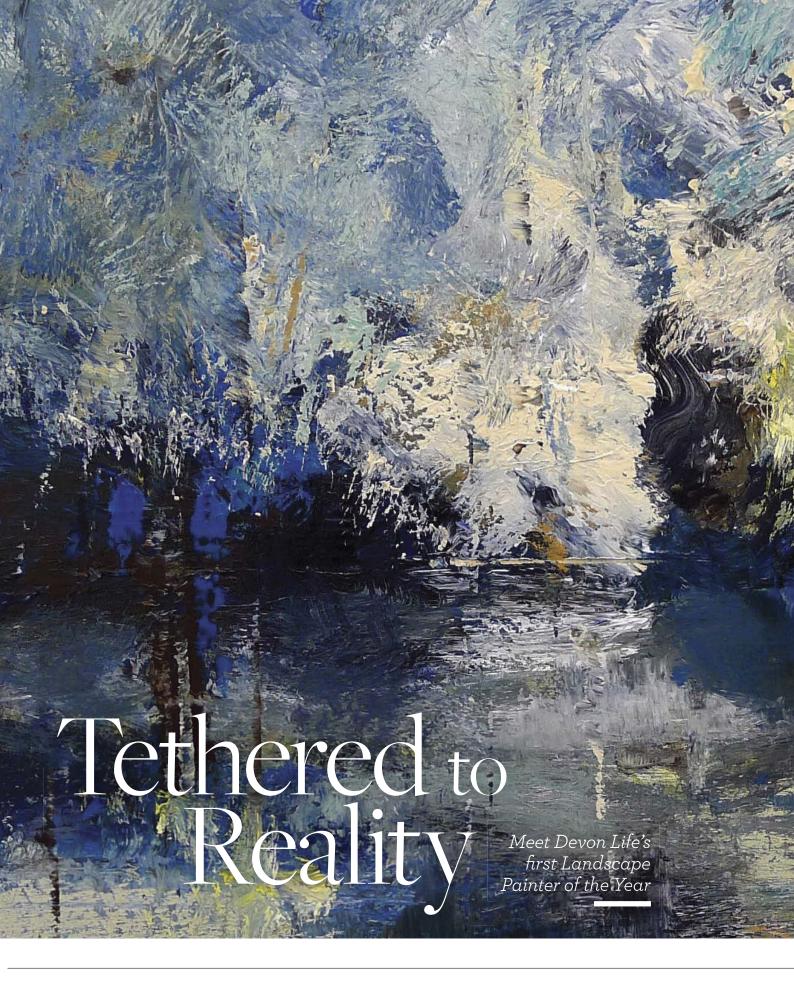
'It would be great to have some peaceful photos to adorn the walls of the family suite, then it will start to feel like home for families'

opportunity to see your work immortalised not only in the pages of the magazine, but also permanently on the walls of this special space at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital."◆

To enter the competition, please e-mail your photos as unedited, high resolution JPEGs, along with your name, address and description of the photo to andy.cooper@archant.co.uk.

The pictures must have been taken in Devon and feature a scene from the county.

The closing date for pictures to be submitted is 1 March, 2017.





Showcasing the 6 finalists of the Devon Life Landscape Painter of the year competition 2016.





CAN YOU SEE WHAT IT IS? Is that a tree? A beach? A mountain? Within art we too often put paintings into a single category – representational, abstract or nonrepresentational. This exercise is often a split second reaction to take us into a comfort zone – and give us that all important 'in' to understanding the work before us. But too often these labels give us an 'out'. We don't know art, but we know we don't like that kind of art.

So it's not surprising that our winning artist of Devon Life's Landscape Painter of the Year rejects labels for his own work – and is perhaps one of the reasons the judges were wowed by his work.

"I think that the terms 'abstract' or 'representational' as they apply to my paintings are inadequate and even misleading," he says. "All of my paintings are based on close observation of reality, yet my paintings do not necessarily 'represent' things, but are things in themselves.

"My life line is careful observation of reality, including nature; my painting may be selective, simplified, or exaggerated depending on how I feel about a place."

Not, 'this is that' but 'this is this'."

But there is always a vital connection between his painting and the reality we observe. "My life line is careful observation of reality, including nature," he says. "My painting may be selective, simplified, or exaggerated depending on how I feel about a place."

Looking at the work it is impossible to separate the image from the process of how the work is created. "My paintings are the direct result of my observations and experiences on actual locations," he explains. "All of my paintings begin *en plein air* with drawings, water colours or acrylic sketches. The larger works are then completed in my studio either in acrylics or oils.

"My goal in painting is to show the world in a new and personal way," he explains. "It often involves simplifying the scene to try to capture its essence and inner spirit as I see it. I am particularly interested in the effects of light, shadow and movement. The paintings often incorporate the use of rough textures as the picture may warrant. I am interested in trying to capture my direct and often passionate responses to a scene which convey

Private View: Saturday 1st April Exhibition: Monday 3rd - Saturday 22nd April.

www.maynegallery.co.uk info@maynegallery.co.uk 01548 853 848 14 Fore Street, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1NY

141 ofe Street, Kingsbridge, Devoit 1927 1111



something of what it felt like to be there."

"Some people look to art to confirm everything they already know, but James's artistic enquiry embraces the unknown," says judge Carol Burns, arts editor of *Devon Life*, and herself a trained professional artist. "Artists are always finding new ways to represent not only the view, but its texture, its feel and a visual reflection of our emotional response to what is before us. And James' work has that in spades."

Fellow judge Jane Price is owner of Kingsbridge's Mayne Gallery which will be exhibiting the finalists of the competition in April. "The things that most strike me about the submissions received are the range of styles and the genuine richness of talent that have chosen to enter the competition," she says. "Watercolours, oils washes - a mix of realistic and abstract renditions of the beautiful scenery we have around us in the region. And after all, that is what the competition sought to find: something magical in art that captivates us, tells us something new that a photograph could never do; take us on a journey into the landscape through the eyes and the hands of the artists that will impart an essence of the moments they experienced, transformed and rendered with the power of the compositions, textures, paint and the interactions of the brush on the surfaces.

"The work creates a personal relationship between the viewer and the work that questions, informs, delights and creates the desire to spend your life with the work, knowing that each time you see the piece it will be a memory and a chance for something new to be discovered! And with that point in mind I feel that, for me, James Tatum is the one most deserving of the honour.

"Here at Mayne Gallery we are really



Devon Life Landscape Painter of the Year winner James Tatum is largely self-taught although he has drawn for most of his life and became a professsional artist in 2010.

looking forward to featuring the finalists in the gallery. A fantastic array of art that deserves to be showcased under the banner of Devon Life Landscape Painter of the Year."

Largely self-taught, James says that although he has been drawing all his life, he only became a professional artist in 2010. "Art teaches us how to live with uncertainty and mystery," he adds. "For me, painting is a celebration of that mystery. The power of painting lies in its position between the illusion of complete understanding and complete obscurity. It is not about representation versus non-representation or figurative versus abstraction. For me, all painting is abstract.

"My painting is a physical process, not a theoretical one. It's an expression of the essence and energy of what I observe. It is as rough and real as nature. Making a painting is a fight and a struggle, and you do not always win; that's the risk − but a risk that has to be taken." ◆

Meet the finalists

Devon's leading gallery, the Mayne Gallery in Kingsbridge, has a reputation for discovering new artists as well as showcasing established artists.

In April the gallery will open its exhibition showcasing the six finalists of the Devon Life Landscape Painter of the Year Competition 2016, including our winner James Tatum. The exhibition opens 3 April and runs to 22 April with an invitation-only private view planned for Saturday, 1 April featuring an evening of fine art with suitably celebratory canapés and bubbles. You can book tickets for the event through the gallery on 01548 853 848.

The other finalists featured in the exhibition are Cherry Lyons, Johanna McWeeney, Mike Jory, Laura Boyd and Peter Blakesley.

Don't miss this opportunity to admire the works of some of the most talented artists in the region.

Mayne Gallery, 14 Fore Street, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1NY maynegallery.co.uk

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may GALLERY

EXHIBITION













SHOWCASING THE 6 FINALISTS OF
THE DEVON LIFE LANDSCAPE PAINTER
OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 2016.



Private View: Saturday 1st April

Exhibition: Monday 3rd - Saturday 22nd April.

Don't miss this opportunity to admire the works of some of the most talented artists in the region.

Call us on 01548 853 848 to reserve your tickets for the Private View. An evening of fine art with some suitably celebratory canapés and bubbles too!

James Tatum
Cherry Lyons
Mike Jory
Laura Boyd
Peter Blakesley
Joanna McWeeney

Capturing Dartmoor

A group show of contemporary artists working in Dartmoor today will show a range of different perspectives on this stunning area

DARTMOOR HAS LONG inspired artists – whether its stunning views across everchanging landscapes, its ability to inspire our emotions, play with light or simply capture the changing seasons. Now a group of artists from the South Hams bring together their different approaches to recording the ancient landscape in a single show at The Gallery at the Ariel Centre in Totnes.

DartLife features eight artists working in a diverse range of media, from painting to ceramics whose work shares a single theme exploring the geography and landscape, flora and fauna surrounding the River Dart. The work also considers the local buildings, natural materials, community and history. The work in the show represents each artist's expression of something related or connected to the landscape and communities surrounding the River Dart in all its diversity.

Among the artists exhibiting is landscape painter Rosemary Bonney from the village of Holne on the edge of Dartmoor who incorporate elements of found materials from Dartmoor, such as moorland grasses and sand, into her work. "The Dartmoor landscape is my constant passion," she admits.

"Being near to this wild and spiritual place gives me endless inspiration and has enabled me to merge my love of art and the natural world. I am particularly drawn to unusual subjects and to the less visited and wilder areas of the moor, especially

The East Dart near Postbridge Rosemary Bonney

to the fleeting mood and light changes that the unpredictable weather brings.

"I am drawn to the ancient sites such as the stone rows and circles that reflect the moor's history but also to the tumbling rivers, the wooded gorges, the tors, the field patterns and the clipped hedges of the more gentle parts of the landscape."

Amanda Cardrick works primarily in acrylic on canvas, taking inspiration from the coast, the sea, and also creating still life paintings of shells, flowers and fish.

Ann Chester King works in paint, ceramics, and photography and is drawn to the colours and textures of the moor. "I had never lived in a landscape without trees and I was struck by the ways in which sky and earth were so powerfully contrasted," she says of her move to Dartmoor ten years ago.

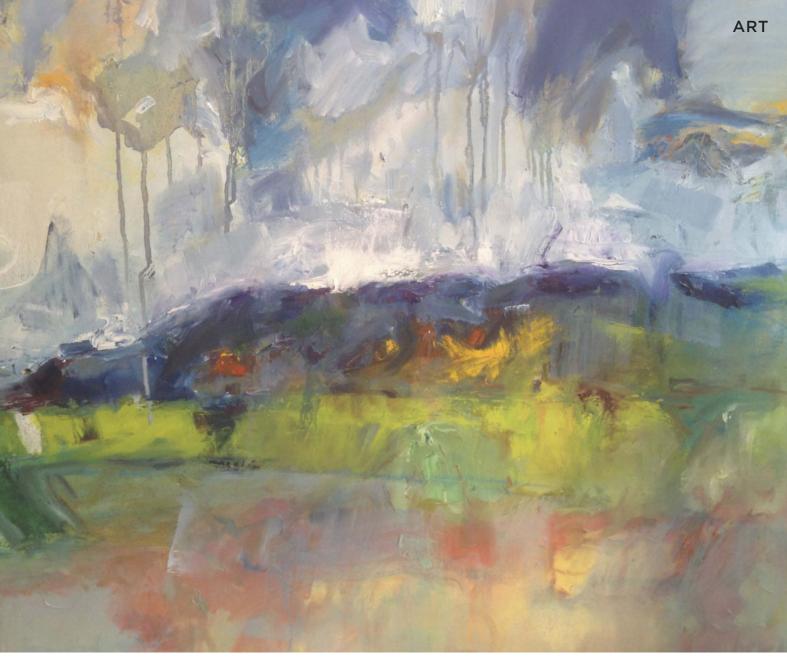
"For me, this work on the moor is about exploring its feelings of intimacy and strangeness - the ways in which it shifts without warning from the idyllic to the foreboding."

Ceramicist Chris Pring is inspired by sculptors like Dame Barabara Hepworth and Andy Goldsworthy. He taught pottery in various schools across the UK for more than 30 years before retiring to the South Hams. He now teaches in what is probably the most southerly pottery in Devon, near Start Point, and works in earthenware, stoneware and porcelain. His larger sculptural pieces for the garden are influenced by the monumental nature of the tors on Dartmoor.

'The Dartmoor landscape is my constant passion. Being near to this wild and spiritual place gives me endless inspiration and has enabled me to merge my love of art and the natural world'

Fellow exhibitor Sue Farrow-Jones is a screen-printer, printmaker and watercolour painter who trained as a textile designer at Manchester Art College and has taught at Kilworthy House, Tavistock, Plymouth College of Art and Dartington College of Arts, retiring in 2010 when DCA moved to Falmouth. "I lived on The Dartington





Looking Across Ann Chester King

Hall estate for 19 years and walked my lurchers and Irish Wolfhounds along the River Dart on a daily basis," she says of her inspiration of the area. "My hounds and all wildlife are my inspiration for prints and paintings, lampshades and scarves.

"I feel privileged to live in such a beautiful part of the country. With its coasts and Dartmoor within easy reach. I love the wildness that Dartmoor keeps safe."

Mixed media artist Val Uglow originally taught art in London schools specialising in textiles. "I now concentrate on my mixed media paintings which are based on two main themes," she explains. "The first is aged surfaces with rich patinas and strong underlying structures that result in abstracted composite works. My other recurring inspiration is the land and seascape of the area in which I live."

Watercolourist Ann Yeoman enjoys the translucent quality of her chosen medium and its capacity to capture the inner light and life of her subject. She is interested in the play of light, in texture, and in what she

sees as the inherently abstract quality of the 'real' world. She paints landscapes, seascapes and plant life. "I'm drawn to Dartmoor by its unspoiled, primal beauty, its wildness, the mythical, magical quality of 'otherness' that pervades the moorland's more remote areas, and the stories, legends and layers of history imbedded in its landscape," she says.

Fellow watercolourist Breda Holden's work is infused with colour, light and atmosphere. "I use the spontaneity and movement of watercolour to capture a play of light and a spirit of place," she explains. "The River Dart and its many moods is a recurring theme in my work. Living in Totnes, between Dartmoor and the sea, I am fascinated by how the river's journey connects us to the natural world. I like to work intuitively with watercolour, creating light, movement and, at times, the unexpected." ◆ DartLife 13-30 March The Gallery at the Ariel Centre King Edward VI Community College Ashburton Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JX



My Tribute to Barbara Hepworth by ceramicst Chris Pring

DEVON LIFE March 2017

kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk

SHOWCASE



Arts Editor Carol Burns with her pick of the latest exhibitions and news from Devon's art world

CONTACT carolburns.co.uk @CarolBurnsArt





Left: Patrick Jones with one the works that will

be on show. Photo: John Andow

The language of colour

THE stunningly colourful abstract paintings of one of the UK's most prolific abstract expressionists continues to cheer us in this rather gloomy spring with his show at Barnstaple's White Moose.

Showing work mostly created in his farmyard studio near Exeter, the works are everything you would expect from an abstract expressionist who trained under Terry Frost and Patrick Heron at Plymouth College of Art - who themselves were inspired by the South West to create light-filled luminous works.

Patrick Jones, who hails originally from Sidmouth, went on to enjoy the vibrant artworld of 1980s New York where he

undertook a master's degree and took part in the famous Triangle Workshops and mingled with influential - and highly collectable artists like Larry Poons and Ray Parker. The highly influential art critic Clement Greenberg rated his work and chose it for an exhibition. And who are we to argue?

If you are not a fan of abstraction, this exhibition is just the one to change your mind. Filled with life-enhancing colour and shapes, free your mind from literal interpretations of the landscape and just feel the joy. Patrick Jones The Language of Colour Runs to 1 April, White Moose, Trinity St, Barnstaple EX32 8HX whitemoose.co.uk

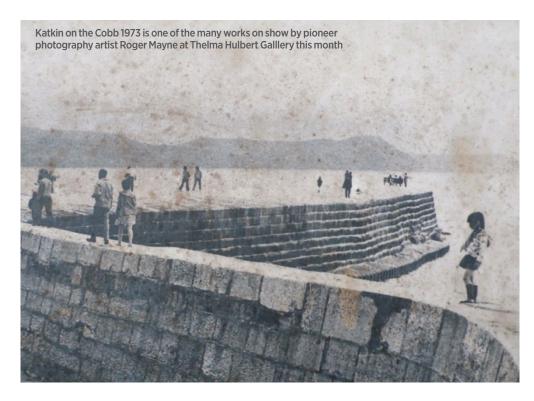
Different way of working

Born in Scotland, but well-known for her decades spent working over the border in Cornwall, this month The Burton at Bideford welcomes work by renowned printmaker Wilhelmina Barns-Graham. Spanning fifty years of vibrant, colourful and abstract printmaking by a master of the genre, this exhibition will cover Barns-Graham's work from the early 1950s to 2003. The depth and variety of her artistic exploration into the printmaking medium and her use of vibrant colour, shape and scale reflects an artist who spent her whole life exploring the visual arts right up until her death in 2004 aged 86 and should be an inspiration to us all to never give up trying. Burton Art Gallery and Museum, Kingsley Road, Bideford EX39 2QQ burtonartgallery.co.uk



Wilhelmina Barns-Graham CBE working in her St Ives studio

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BEYOND THE LENS

Head to Thelma Hulbert Gallery this month for an exhibition of rarely seen, large-scale photographs by one of Britain's most outstanding photographers.

Roger Mayne famously documented the children and young residents of Southam Street in West London in the 1950s and 60s. These photographs led to him becoming one of Britain's most important post-war photographers.

This is a chance to see work spanning the 1950s to the 1970s from his personal hoard of images which were hung in his Dorset home. Many were originally shown in 1974 at the Arnolfini in Bristol in 1974. His work has also been exhibited widely including the V&A and the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Mayne died in 2014, by which time - thanks

to leading artists like Andreas Gursky and Nan Goldin – photography was established as a serious art medium, but when Mayne began in the 1950s it was used mainly for reportage and seen as a purely mechanical process which had no artistic merit and his work was refused entry on to gallery walls for many years.

"It is this particular mixture of reality and unreality, and the photographer's power to select that makes it possible for photography to be an art," he said.

The exhibition sits alongside Mayne's photographs for the *Shell Guide to Devon* from 1975, which was written by his wife, the playwright Ann Jellicoe.

Beyond the Lens - Roger Mayne

11 March-22 April, Thelma Hulbert Gallery,
Elmfield House, Dowell Street, Honiton EX14 1LX

Aspiration and design

Plymouth's Council House will become a visual feast as the Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery continues its Museum on Tour programme.

This month a fascinating exhibition explores the history of post-war design.

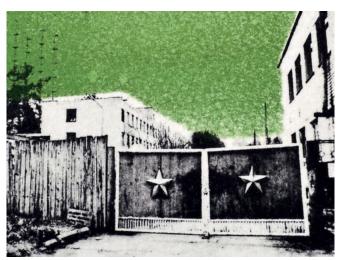
Britain in the
Fifties: Design and
Aspiration looks at
all aspects of 1950s
design with a
diverse range of
exhibits including
furnishings, fabrics,
ceramics,
magazines,
machinery and an
iconic Vespa.

The 1950s was a significant decade for Plymouth when the devastation of the Blitz led to an ambitious rebuilding programme - the legacy of which can still be seen today. Britain in the Fifties: Design and Aspiration 25 March-3 June Plymouth City Council PL1 3BJ plymhearts.org

Explore the forgotten

Conceptual or contemporary – today's art should forever question our perception of the world and our idea of art – so if you like to be challenged head along to Green Hill Arts for enTrance, an exhibition of three artists whose work brings together fragments of lost lives using print, photography, video and drawings to explore a sometimes forgotten world.

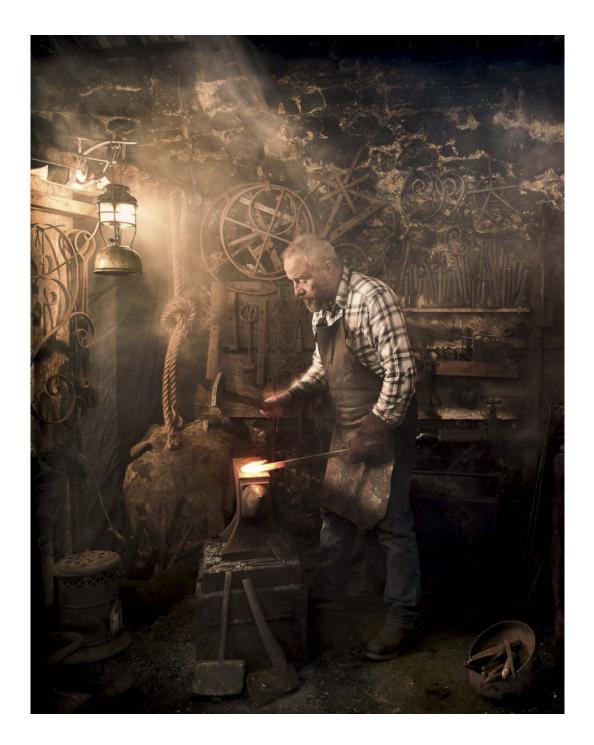
4 February-18 March Green Hill Arts, Fore Street, Moretonhampstead, TQ13 8LL greenhillarts.co.uk



Untitled (Chernobyl Exclusion Zone) by Claire Gladstone







THE GAZE

ARTISANS OF DARTMOOR

SUZY BENNETT

DARTMOOR boasts one of the richest of artisan communities in the country with makers from all walks of life drawn to its incredible varied landscape. Among them are sculptors and soapmakers, potters and painters, honey-farmers, hide-tanners and wood-turners.

Now a major exhibition at the Devon Guild of Craftsmen brings many of these - often hidden - makers together.

Travel photographer Suzy Bennett goes behind the workshop walls to produce intimate portraits of some of the moor's finest artists, makers and producers. Among Suzy's subjects are Devon Guild members Jane Deane, a textile designer who breeds her own silk worms, blacksmith Greg Abel (pictured above) and Luke Shepherd, a sculptor who teaches London surgeons the art behind reconstructive surgery. lack

Information: Suzy Bennett's work appears as part of the Dartmoor Artisan project 3 March-3 April at Devon Guild of Craftsmen, Bovey Tracey crafts.org.uk

ALEXANDRA HURLEY discovers a classic jewellery collection, a freelance makeup artist working her magic and how you can create your own wardrobe

alexandra.hurley@ archant.co.uk 🔰 @alexandhurley

Instagram @alexandra_hurley

WE LOVE THESE KIT **HEATH** PIECES



BLOSSOM

Be enchanted with the whimsical designs of the Blossom story inspired by the beauty of nature.



SIGNATURE

Within the industry there's a move towards personalisation. Find your initial in Kit Heath's signature sweeping tapered font - there's also the option to add in a diamond.



COAST

This simple style will smarten up any outfit or will just as easily take centre stage against a dark grey, black or cream roll neck jumper. Prices vary, visit kitheath. com for more information

TIMELESS BEAUTY

BROTHER AND SISTER team Kit Heath and Katie Nickell have built Barnstaplebased jewellery company, Kit Heath, from its humble beginnings to the recognised and well-respected brand that it is today.

Kit's love of jewellery started from a very early age when he used to sift through the handfuls of intriguing gems his grandmother brought back from Burma, where she lived before the war. "I have always loved the idea of jewellery and this passion grew when I was a student at Ashburton School. I started the business when I was 18 and at 21 I used to sell my wares out the back of a VW camper," Kit smiles. As a result of this memorable start-up, Kit has got customers that he has been dealing with for 30/40 years. "The nice thing about the brand is that it's stayed with its roots in Devon," Kit says, adding, "I'm a Devon boy; I love the beaches and the moors. It's a lovely place to bring up your family." Devon certainly provides some inspiring views, but Kit and Katie also work closely with two designers based in London, who keep their fingers on the fashion pulse of the country's capital. What ensues is a jewellery collection that is full of personal and enduring designs, yet is still in-keeping with current fashions.

The company sell to a wide audience regularly frequenting trade shows in Ireland and America, and is a favourite with independent jewellers and department stores alike, in particular John Lewis. A wide range of Kit Heath jewellery is also available in Carol Anne jewellers in Barnstaple, Taunton and Exeter.

At the heart of the family-business stands authenticity and reputable quality. "Classic' is the word," states Kit. "A piece of Kit





Heath jewellery is something somebody will buy and wear time after time. It's a statement piece that makes a fantastic 18th gift, a memorable 21st birthday present or a sentimental declaration of love."

Looking through a Kit Heath brochure is like flicking through a glittering story book. "We sell in stories, which feature eternal themes of love, friendship and the beauty of nature," explains Kit. The Bevel story, described as being 'classic Kit Heath with a subtle modern edge, cool in silver and simply timeless', is one of the company's more popular stories. "It's full of clean lines and beautiful statement pieces that are transitional and timeless. The Blossom story is particularly popular around Mothers Day," Kit says. And, it's easy to see why. The flora and fauna designs are perfect for giving mother's a slightly different bouquet that will last a lifetime.

One glimpse of Kit Heath's magical collections – whether that's in a brochure, on a jewellery stand or at the nape of a friend's neck – will have you lusting after something you never even knew you wanted. kitheath.com



WITH MAKE-UP ARTIST, ROWAN BURROW

What inspired you to start your own makeup business, Makeup by Rowan?

I've always had a huge passion for makeup so, after years of working in beauty salons and spas, I decided to take the chance to fulfil my dream job.

What do you love about makeup?

You can be so creative! Makeup is like art; I find it fascinating.

What are you offering clients?

Makeup services for bridal and special occasion makeup. I also include makeup for proms or even if it's just a night out with the girls. I'm a freelance makeup artist [covering the South West], which means I am able to travel around!

What makeup items can you not live without?

An eyebrow pencil – a good brow always frames the face, mascara – a must for opening up the eyes and looking awake, and lip balm – to hydrate lips all year round. ◆ makeupbyrowan.co.uk Instagram: @rowan_mua





One of Rowan's clients before her make over ...



... and after her make over

SEW YOUR OWN STYLE

Get creative! Create your own new wardrobe with Make at 140
Vauxhall St, a modern haberdashery, café and workshop space between Sutton Harbour and Plymouth's Barbican. Your
Complete Wardrobe Sewing
Course is a series of workshops based around four of the five core garments in the book by Lotta
Jansdotter, Everyday Style. The course is designed for beginners

who are comfortable using a sewing machine and want to learn or relearn some sewing basics. If you're more of an experienced sewer, then the Intro to Pattern Cutting Course will show you how to create a top block and sew a top to fit you perfectly.

To find out more about these two creative sewing courses and see what other workshops are on offer, visit makeat140.co.uk



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Tickets just £5 in advance



Hello spring

It's time to upgrade your beauty routine for spring and what better way to do so than with a makeover at Clarins, says EMILY DIAMOND

I'LL ADMIT the notion of spring cleaning is not exactly inspiring, but after months of hiding away beneath layers of woolly – read itchy – jumpers and surviving through days with as little as four hours worth of natural light, it feels really liberating to blow away the cobwebs and reorganise certain aspects of everyday life.

At this time of year, I particularly love to refresh my makeup bag and shake up my beauty routine. Back in autumn, I couldn't get enough of really moody shades of liquid lipstick from vampy reds, to berry hues and deep smoky eye colours. But with the subtle change in weather comes a new mood and all of a sudden, pastel pink blushers, neutral eye palettes and light glossy lip finishes once again have a shiny allure.

When Clarins invited me for a complementary makeover at the Debenhams counter in Princesshay, I was really excited to discover some new hero products to work into my signature makeup look.

"With the arrival of spring, pastel pink blushers, neutral eye palettes and light glossy lip finishes once again have a shiny allure"

When I first meet Charlie at the Clarins counter, I instantly feel at ease. Charlie has an idea to create a really fresh and dewy spring look and we take a look at the stunning array of lip glosses – all brightly glistening at me like traditionally wrapped sweeties in a candy store.

After Charlie cleanses my face, she begins to prep the skin, first with the multi-award winning anti-ageing **Double Serum** (£70) with plant extracts for youthful radiance. Secondly, Charlie applies the Hydra Quench Lotion (£36) to moisturise the skin and the iconic Beauty Flash Balm (£30) to prime the skin for makeup and to add a subtle glow. Next, she applies the True **Radiance Foundation in 105 Nude** (£28) for a natural, dewy finish and uses the **Instant Light Brush-On Perfector in 01** (£26.50) just beneath my eyes. Charlie then fills in my brows with the **Brow Pencil in 05** Soft Blonde (£17.50) and applies Blusher in Rosewood (£27) to the apples of my cheeks, taking care to follow the contour of my cheekbones for a really natural glow.



It's time for the lip gloss and we opt for a rosy-hued shade of nude Instant Light Gloss which complements my natural colouring so beautifully



The final look is bright and delicate with a hint of rosy colour and a dewy finish to allow natural beauty to shine through



Charlie takes the time to ask me about the colours that I like to use

We opt for a neutral palette of pale beige and taupe-hued **Ombre Matte eye shadows in 02 and 04** (£19 each) and Charlie applies the lighter shade to my eyelid first, before gently contouring the lid at the natural crease. Charlie then uses a little **Instant Light Concealer in 01** (£22) to cover red areas.

Next, Charlie applies the **Eye Liner Pencil in Black** (£18) along the inner corners of my eye on both the top and bottom, applying extra definition to the outer corners to create the illusion of superlong dark eyelashes. Charlie then applies the **Super Volume Mascara in Black** (£21.50) to my lashes for a lifted look.

Finally it's time for the lip gloss and we opt for a rosy-hued shade of nude **Instant Light Gloss in 06** (£18) which complements my natural colouring so beautifully. Charlie sets my make up with the **Fix Make-up Spray** (£20) – which I initially mistake for a fragrance and which smells so good, frankly it could double up as both.

The final look is bright and delicate with a hint of rosy colour and a dewy finish to allow natural beauty to shine through. This is a perfect spring look for work or the weekend. Just add a final slick of lip gloss and this makeup look will take you from boardroom to bar in a flash. ◆

Make up for this look was supplied by Clarins in Debenhams, Princesshay, Exeter (0344 800 8877) debenhams.com



BEFORE YOU GO

white trousers has the

sweaters to off the

shoulder shirts - team

day to evening look.

Whimsical floaty

Keep an eye on Princesshay's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) for all the latest discounts.

Invite your friends - make a night of it (just make sure you're not competing for the same top).

Make a list! That frustrating feeling when you know there was something you wanted in Debenhams but can't remember what it was...

WHEN YOU'RE THERE

Mix it up. Punctuate a bit of shopping with some pampering taster sessions and live music.

Stay focused. Shopping in a group is lovely but sometimes vou just need to focus on what you want, so split off for a bit. You can always compare notes over coffee (or cocktails).

Talking of which... treat yourself to cocktails with your friends in Coal Bar and Grill

Weekend wedding inspiration

Spring has sprung and with it comes the launch of Bride: The Wedding Show at Westpoint Arena in Exeter from 25-26 March

IF YOU'RE PLANNING A WEDDING in 2017 or beyond, pay a visit to Bride: The Wedding Show at Westpoint Arena, which welcomes a second show this year.

Historically held every autumn, the new spring edition of the event will run from 25-26 March (10am to 4pm) and will offer all the components for brides and grooms-to-be to plan their big day under one roof. Featuring dresses, cakes, stationery, menswear, transport, catering, entertainment, venues, photographers and more - as well as a dedicated vintage/handmade area - the show will host more than 130 exhibitors who are all local to Exeter.

Aimée Spencer, director of Rockbeare Manor – a Grade I listed wedding venue exhibiting at the show - says: "We have exhibited in 2015 and 2016 and as we are a brand new wedding venue in Devon; it's a great opportunity to meet lots of newly engaged couples and also catch up with those that have already booked our venue."

Fellow exhibitor, Mandy Teague, owner of Glitz Photo Booth, adds: "We are exhibiting at Westpoint as it's the biggest show, and has the best of South West. We love the excitement on the brides' faces and it's such a happy day. Such a great buzz."

There will be goody bags available for the first 100 brides through the door, show-exclusive deals and discounts, as well as a multitude of opportunities to win amazing prizes.

'We love the excitement on the brides' faces and it's such a happy day. Such a great buzz'

Don't miss the spectacular catwalk show, set to take place at three times on each day of the event (11.30am 1.15pm and 3pm). Presenting designs for the bride, groom, bridesmaids and mother of the bride, the catwalk offers an illustrious line-up of local boutiques and brands which include: Te Amo Brides, Prudence Gowns, The Bridal Emporium, Jane's, Moss Bros and Youngs Hire.

Rest your feet at the champagne bar – hosted by Posh Nosh, with a complimentary copy of South West Bride magazine, or



Bride: The Wedding Show at Westpoint Arena is set to attract and delight visitors with a second show for 2017

enjoy even more entertainment on the café stage. Featuring a diverse range of musical acts, the café stage will provide a platform for groups such as Anthem and Blue Lion Band – all set to get your toes tapping.

Simone Breckell of Bristol, was at the 2016 autumn show and says: "There is a really good selection of exhibitors and the catwalk was so good. It's been really helpful."

In addition, the event will be marking mother's day with a free mini bottle of Prosecco for the first 100 mothers of the bride or groom through the door on Sunday, 26 March. ◆

Tickets are £5 each or £15 for four in advance at theweddingshow.co.uk/buy-tickets. Devon Life readers can enjoy £3 tickets using the code LIFE33 at checkout. Tickets bought on the day are £7.50 each. Find out more at

theweddingshow.co.uk/westpoint-wedding-show

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF A WEDDING SHOW

Five of the event's exhibitors offer their advice on getting the most out of a wedding show:

"Take your time and have a good chat with exhibitors, get to know the people who could potentially be helping make your wedding dream a reality." Will Reddaway, owner of Will Reddaway Photography.

"Don't feel pressured. It can be tempting if suppliers are offering a discount or special offer but you've got to make sure that whatever the product or service is it's right for you." Aimée Spencer, director of Rockbeare Manor.

"Try to plan your visit and be open-minded, also take a note book and gather as much information as possible." Kathy Murdoch, managing director of Ocean Kave.

"Don't rush into booking anything, but to spend time going around and seeing all the exhibitors and then take the time to sit and digest everything." Jo Hamlyn, owner of It's Your Day.

"Visit and see as much as you can, try before you buy." Mandy Teague, owner of Glitz



DEVON LIFE March 2017



DEVON

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Wedding CHECKLIST 1

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INVITATIONS PHOTOGRAPHER FLOWERS

CATERING BRIDAL WEAR SUIT HIRE TRANSPORT

MUSIC HAIR MAKE-UP RINGS HONEYMOON

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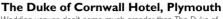


pirouettethecollection@gmail.com www.pirouettethecollection.co.uk

Salcombe Harbour Hotel & Spa

For a stylish Devon wedding venue Salcombe Harbour Hotel is truly magical. Devon weddings don't get better than this. With a wedding suite for up to 80 guests, offering unique estuary water views, the hotel is set to become the most sought after wedding venue in the UK, having recently been named as a finalist in the South West wedding awards, and has been shortlisted for the UK Wedding awards! Couples can take their vows against the stunning backdrop and enjoy a Champagne reception on the private outdoor terrace, along with photos on the water's edge.

Cliff Road, Salcombe, South Devon, TQ8 8JH 01548 844 444 www.salcombe-harbour-hotel.co.uk salcombe.events@harbourhotels.co.uk



Wedding venues don't come much grander than The Duke of Cornwall Hotel. With the accolade of being 'Plymouth's First Luxury Hotel', this iconic building embodies striking Victorian gothic style in a superb city centre location. The hotel offers a flexible range of luxury wedding packages, with features that include fine dining, a red carpet entrance and a selection of beautiful bridal suites. There's also a Master of Ceremonies and Wedding Co-ordinator to make your big day run smoothly. For a venue with everything you need for an unforgettably magical day, the Duke of Cornwall Hotel is the perfect choice.

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CARON CARES

Every month, award winning care blogger and personal assistant for the elderly **Caron Sprake** will be writing about issues in care



I BELIEVE "you are what you eat." Whilst good nutrition is important for everyone it is harder to maintain for the elderly. Older people require different nutrients as they age, with the body less able to process certain vitamins and minerals from food or less able to retain them.

Good food promotes better recovery. There are currently one million people aged 65 and over in the UK at risk of malnutrition and hospitalisation.

'Protected mealtimes' in NHS hospitals, means closing the ward to visitors to enable patients to eat without interruptions. Whilst the principle is good, it also has potential pitfalls for elderly patients. "John's Campaign" which called for open visiting by relatives and carers for someone with dementia has been a great success. It is now being championed by over 330 NHS hospitals.

I think this should be extended to anyone elderly who feels they need additional help during their stay. This especially applies to elderly people who have sight and or hearing loss.

My partially sighted, disabled mother-in-law was admitted to hospital with two broken collarbones many years ago – had I not been available to visit at meal times she would have definitely gone hungry. Her food tray was left out of reach, bearing in mind both arms were in a sling, she was incapable of getting it, let alone cutting the food and feeding herself. And that was years



Recipe for disaster?

CARON SPRAKE asks if 'protected mealtimes' in NHS hospitals is a good solution for all patients?

Above: Whilst good nutrition is important for everyone, older people require different nutrients as they age, with the body less able to process certain vitamins and minerals from food

ago when staffing levels were better than they currently are.

I also think visitors play an important part in encouraging someone elderly to eat. The lids to the soup and ice-cream tubs are often so tight they can't manage to remove them and need help doing so. A visitor can also help keep an elderly person awake long enough to eat something. It's not uncommon for someone to completely miss a meal by sleeping through it.

In an ideal world, staffing levels need to be increased to ensure that anyone who needs help or feeding receives it, but sadly this is not an ideal world and as the elderly live longer, resources are going to be further stretched.

Another aspect is that in most hospitals the menu for the following day is often left on the meal tray. Many elderly people miss this or forget to order leaving them without food choices the next day. Food for thought?



Think Drink

If you are going to be visiting a relative or friend either in hospital or a care home please 'think drink'.

This is something so dear to my heart as my mother-in-law was often left with drinks out of her reach during a hospital stay.

Visiting someone recently in hospital, I noticed a frail arm reaching out for a glass of water, unable to reach it. I would always jump up and help. This article is to ask you to be mindful that someone elderly may appreciate your help.

I know it's seemingly not always our place to assist, but the nurses are so busy with the medical issues they need to attend to, they don't always get time to help.

DEVON LIFE March 2017





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THE Somerset Clinic in Taunton provides high quality effective and evidence-based psychological therapies. Our service is professional, personal, flexible and responsive; everything we do is designed to achieve the best possible outcome for you.

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Our specialist child and family psychologists provide assessment, guidance and therapy for children and young people. They also provide advice and support for parents regarding emotional health and behavioural difficulties. We have experienced educational psychologists who provide assessment and intervention individually and within school.

Everyone is considered as an individual and we provide a personal and comprehensive assessment. We work with you to devise a treatment plan designed to achieve the best outcome. We offer a variety of evidence-based therapeutic interventions and work in partnership with the NHS and other agencies.

You can come to us directly, or you can be referred by your G.P. or health professional.

Mark's daughter was a patient at The Somerset Clinic recently. "My daughter didn't have the obvious symptoms of depression: she was eating really well and had no difficulty sleeping ... so I suppose we just let it go on. But things came to a head when she said that she felt she couldn't cope with a family holiday or with being away. She eventually came with us but she might as well not have been there. She just didn't talk... We were so worried. On our return we found help at The Somerset Clinic. Their psychologist helped her to open up and seemed to just know exactly what to say to support her. After a few months our beautiful daughter came back to us. I realise now that in spite of the love we have for her, we couldn't help her and needed some expert help. I am so grateful."

We provide clear information about fees in advance. For more information about **The Somerset Clinic** please call **01823 336072**, e-mail **info@somersetclinic.com** or visit **www.somersetclinic.com**.

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186

EASY ON/OFF CLOTHES

Do you know someone who struggles with buttons and yet still wants to wear lovely clothes?

There is a range of clothing produced by a womenswear company The Able Label, which cleverly uses colour-matched Velcro, which touches closed. Clothes are available in sizes 8-22 and start from around £35.

The Able Label founder, Katie Ellis, was a fashion buyer for the high street clothing retailer, White Stuff. Her grandmother had been diagnosed with Parkinson's and Katie saw that dressing was becoming increasingly difficult for her, so she searched for solutions but found there was nothing that fit the bill. Katie decided to do something about it and she designed, developed and tested a range of great-looking, adaptive clothing that so many people like her grandmother would love to wear yet also find it easy to live with.

The Able Label womenswear range is designed to make dressing easier whilst maintaining style. The main focus of The Able Label is to encourage independence and selfconfidence without compromising the look, quality, or style. All their clothing has hidden features to help overcome the barriers to dressing with ease, such as use of softer, easy care fabrics with increased stretch Velcro fastenings and colourcoordinated internals. You can order a catalogue by calling 01622 828994 or in writing to Iden Farm Cottages, Heath Road, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone, Kent. ME17 4JE. theablelabel.com



The main focus of The Able Label is to encourage independence and selfconfidence without compromising the look, quality or style



The memory street is set in the heart of the secure dementia community within the care home and includes replicated well-known local landmarks such as Lloyd's bank, Co-Op and the Post Office

A walk down memory street

SEFTON HALL care home in Dawlish has brought the outside in by introducing a memory street, complete with a 1960s inspired ice-cream parlour for residents, as a part of their developing dementia care programme.

The memory street is set in the heart of the secure dementia community within the care home and includes replicated well-known local landmarks such as Lloyd's bank, Co-Op and the Post Office.

Businesses, retailers and members of the Dawlish community have supported dedicated staff at Sefton Hall to help create the memory street by donating items for the 'Black Swan' boutique, an old-fashioned toy shop and a bus stop sign from Stagecoach.

Paul Courtney, operations director of Sefton Hall owners Southern Healthcare, says: "Our village enables residents to continue living a meaningful life; we believe that you don't have to leave your life at the door when entering one of our care homes.

The street is designed to provide memorable landmarks for people living with a dementia, and it provides opportunities for staff and residents to engage. Certain dementias can cause frustration, the street and bus stops help support staff in reducing those frustrations."

The home has also worked closely

with local public house, The Barton Inn, to recreate a 1970s style pub so residents can enjoy pub lunches with visiting relatives, fully equipped with draft beer, wine and spirits, bar stools, a pool table and a 'last orders' bell.

The Sefton Hall dementia care programme, believed to be the only one of its kind in the South West, has even extended into the garden. The Southern Healthcare in-house maintenance team has refurbished a former storage shed, to create a vintage ice-cream parlour and café. Popular local ice-cream shop, Gay's Creamery, have worked with Sefton Hall on the project by generously donating ice-cream display fridges, signage and the all-important ice cream to the parlour, affectionately named 'Little Gay's Creamery'.

Mike Harvey, whose wife Eileen has resided at the home since April, says: "I am delighted with the changes introduced at Sefton, particularly the bar, the ice cream parlour and cafe. These wonderful and enlightened changes, which permit special and secure freedoms, represent a new and real bonus to many of the residents. In addition, these freedoms allow individuals to further express their separate personalities. I have to add that I hold the dedicated and committed management and staff in the highest regard." ◆

DEVON LIFE March 2017









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Emily Diamond reports on education in Devon



SOUTH DEVON COLLEGE has been awarded a £1million grant towards a new Hi-Tech and Digital Centre, to be built on the Vantage Point campus.

The new purpose-built facility will be both innovative in its design and use as well as nationally significant and is planned to open to students in September 2019.

The grant was awarded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and is one of the largest grants from the HEFCE Catalyst Fund to a Further Education College to date – it recognises the importance of the new Centre which will offer even more opportunities for local students to develop higher skills and gain university level qualifications in Torbay and South Devon.

Laurence Frewin, vice principal and deputy chief executive at the College, explains: "This exciting project, costing £17million in total, will allow the College to develop a new and flexible educational offer that is both distinctive and appealing to a wider range of both technically and creatively orientated young people.

"In turn, this will help to fill the skills gap of local employers, including in the digital and hi-tech sectors, who provide sustainable jobs for local students. Our students will have even more opportunities to study at higher levels, to gain a foundation or honours degree, or learn while they earn with a new higher or degree apprenticeship."

Yvonne Hawkins, HEFCE director for universities and colleges adds: "We are delighted to support this proposal which will deliver new provision, higher level skills, and successful employability outcomes for both students and employers in the South West and nationally."

The overall building layout will effectively follow the concept, design and development stages of manufacturing processes and will be laid out in such a way that it will mirror a real business

New Hi-Tech and Digital Centre gets £1million grant



environment, with zones for manufacturing and production.

Students will have access to workshops and studios to practice 3D printing, develop augmented and virtual reality environments and explore techniques for rapid prototyping of new products.

There will be zones for creative and technical design including computer-aided design (CAD) and computer-aided manufacturing (CAM) facilities; alongside design suites and zones for more traditional activities such as classrooms and lecture theatres.

The project has been developed in consultation with over 40 local businesses. The Centre will provide individuals with the skills that employers need to support their growth in a range of important local Hi-Tech businesses, such as; electronics, lasers, fibre, satellite and communications, aerospace, marine, medical and data analysis 'Big Data'. The offer will also extend to creative industries including gaming, digital design, film and digital media, smart clothing and textiles. •

The overall building layout will effectively follow the concept, design and development stages of manufacturing processes and will be laid out in such a way that it will mirror a real business environment, with zones for manufacturing and production

TUITION FEES CUT

The Maynard School in Exeter has launched a brand new award scheme that will significantly cut the costs of tuition fees and open up opportunities for families who may not otherwise be able to afford a private education.

The Maynard Awards will offer the opportunity for 19 successful

applicants to join the School (in all years from 11+ upwards) in September 2017 at a potentially huge discounted rate, depending on two separate assessment elements: The first is a means tested bursary, based on family income and calculated by the Finance Office. This element can account for

anything up to 45 per cent reduction in fees, although a family with a combined income of over £50,000 is unlikely to be considered.

The second half comprises a scholarship which will be awarded at the discretion of the headmistress, primarily for academic ability, but enhanced due to sporting, musical or creative talent. This, too, can offer additional significant reductions and will be awarded on individual merit. The Maynard Awards will run alongside 26 scholarships already on offer. Interested applicants should contact the Admissions Office (admissions@ maynard.co.uk) for further information.

Magdalen Court School & Tutorial Centre - Exeter



01392-494919 www.MagdalenCourtSchool.co.uk





devonlife.co.uk





BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL

Kate Williams edits the Business & Professional pages for Devon Life



Leading lawyer

Mark Roome, the President of Devon and Somerset Law Society, knows from personal experience how the society can help members of his profession. He talks to Sharon Goble

WHEN Mark Roome's wife suggested upping sticks from London to raise their family in rural Devon, he had no idea what the future would hold for his legal career. Having practised as a barrister, his first port of call for professional guidance was the Devon and Somerset Law Society or DASLS (pronounced dazzles!).

Through its recruitment service, DASLS knew of an opportunity with a law firm in North Devon and, as a result, Mark crossqualified as a solicitor and joined Toller Beattie in Barnstaple. He's now a partner, specialising in Commercial Law and Property. At 41, he's also the youngest-ever President of DASLS and the first to come through its own recruitment process.

"I've seen how law operates from both sides", Mark says. "I've been selfemployed as a barrister and worked in a firm as a solicitor, so I felt I had a good background to take on this role. It was a privilege to be asked, and I thought I could bring something new to the position."

With some 1,400 members throughout Devon and Somerset, DASLS is one of the biggest law societies outside London and one of the most active in the region. It works to promote, support and represent its members across the two counties - primarily solicitors, but also legal executives and support professionals.

DASLS has existed in its present form since 2008, but the society can trace back its history a further 200 years to the founding of the Exeter Law Association in 1808. The profession has changed enormously since then.

These days, a quarter of the society's members work 'in-house' in local government or big corporations and that sector is growing. It reflects the increasing regulatory burden large organisations face. An in-house group helps these members share information and



best practice across the sector. Although the American term 'lawyer' is now widely used in this country, legally it doesn't mean much, as Mark is at pains to point out.

He says: "A 'solicitor' is a properly-trained legal professional who has gone through a rigorous process to qualify and has to comply with stringent regulations. From the client's point of view, using a solicitor gives security and protection every step of the way. If you use an unqualified will writer, for example, you will have limited recourse if things go wrong. Likewise, small and medium-sized businesses can pay a price if they fail to get robust terms and conditions or partnership contracts drawn up." ◆
For more information go to dasls.com

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10 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT WHAT DASLS DOES

Helps members of the public to find a good solicitor in their area

Provides a mediation service to the public to help resolve civil issues, for example, neighbours' disputes, and contested probate

.........

Raises awareness among small and medium-sized businesses of the value of taking appropriate legal advice, for example, to draw up robust terms and conditions or partnership agreements

Provides a recruitment agency for solicitors and firms within Devon and Somerset

Provides training and conferences to help solicitors understand new developments and procedures to support their clients, also practice management support for law firms

Connects members dispersed throughout Devon and Somerset, sharing information, trends and best practice within the profession

......

Promotes the interests of solicitors by campaigning and lobbying for change on legal matters

Welcomes new solicitors into the profession with an annual ceremonial event to celebrate the start of their career

Showcases the profession and the talents within it at DASLS' annual Legal Awards (launched in 2015)

Liaises actively with national and international bodies

DEVON LIFE March 2017

B&P: MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Kate Williams has news on who's on the move and who's moving up in Devon

Integrity at scale

Rockfish, the seafood restaurant group founded and run by restaurateurs Mitch Tonks and Mat Prowse, has announced that Will Beckett, the co-founder and CEO of Hawksmoor Group, has taken the role of Non-Executive Chairman.

Will says: "Having turned down similar opportunities in the past, I leapt at this one because I believe so strongly in the future of this company and the vision Mitch and his team have for Rockfish. I'd like to think I can help, but I can definitely also learn from what they're doing. I'm really interested in restaurant companies trying to do integrity at scale, and I am really excited about being part of Rockfish doing just that."

The first Rockfish opened in Dartmouth in 2010, since when the focus has been to create a restaurant experience that makes seafood accessible and to serve seafood on the day it is landed, a day ahead of other restaurants away from the coast. Rockfish has grown to five locations on the South Coast over the last five years, and with locations at Brixham and Plymouth fish markets



Mitch Tonks with Will Beckett

it has restaurants closer to the source than any other in the UK.

This appointment is the latest in the assembly of a highly capable management team to execute the future expansion and Tonks's vision to create a leading seafood restaurant brand founded on integrity of supply, including Ed Fevyer (ex-Jamie's Italian) as Operations Director.



Newly promoted Amy Read is now a partner

PROMOTIONS AT WBW

Devon law firm WBW Solicitors is delighted to announce two senior promotions of associates to partner status.

Amy Read joined WBW in 2013 after attending the University of Plymouth and undertaking her training contract with a Plymouth law firm. She is a member of the firm's private client team and has particular expertise in will and inheritance disputes.

Ashley Bevans joined the property team in 2016, having previously worked in Exeter and Torbay. He advises on a broad range of commercial property matters.



BECKY'S BACK WITH TINIES

It's a new era for childcare agency Tinies as it welcomes Becky Hold to the team as the proud new owner of the first Tinies Devon and Cornwall branch. The national franchise company - which finds nursery managers, Early Years practitioners, nursery staff and nannies for parents and businesses all over the UK - has grown exponentially since launching in 2010.

Having previously worked as a nanny for Tinies when she was 18, Becky then took a break from the industry to work in banking and for the



Becky Hold is the owner of the new Devon and Cornwall franchise of childcare agency Tinies

local council, and has now made the decision to return to the childcare world.

Becky says: "After being involved in the childcare industry for many years I couldn't wait to launch the new Tinies franchise in Devon and Cornwall. I've known the company really well having previously worked as a nanny for them, so myself and the team are thrilled to start work in this new area."

Tinies is a national franchise which is one of the UK's leading providers of childcare.

RETURN OF GEORGINA

International law firm Trowers & Hamlins announces the expansion of its real estate team in Exeter with the return of partner Georgina Savill-James.

Georgina was at Trowers & Hamlins between 2000 and 2015, and joins the firm again after a short time at Foot Anstey LLP.

She specialises in acquisition and disposal of vacant and tenanted stock; joint venture projects involving new build development; disposal projects and acting for a local authorities on a joint venture agreements.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL

Kate Williams reports on business news from across the county



SKI RETREAT

Seven-time British Ski Cross Champion Emily Sarsfield has been confirmed to lead Devon-based Ticket to Ride's first ever womenonly ski retreat. Visit tickettoridegroup.com for details

TOP OF THE LOTS

Auctioneers Chilcotts of Honiton celebrated a record-breaking sale, topping all previous auctions, with the two-day sale achieving a total of £144,500 at hammer price

POWER SURGE

Expansion continues for South West independent electrical wholesaler Devondale Electrical with the opening of the company's ninth branch in Bideford's Clovelly Road Industrial Estate.

WORKING OUT

Fitness instructors from Devon, Dorset and Bristol have been selected as trainers for joyful cardio fitness workout
SwingTrain, after securing investor Deborah Meaden during BBC Dragons' Den.



Green Shoes apprentice Polly Collins

ACCOLADE FOR SHOE MAKER POLLY

Devon-based handmade footwear brand Green Shoes has been awarded apprenticeship funding by the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QEST) to help an apprentice continue to develop her skills and training.

Supporting high-quality British craftsmanship, the prestigious QEST apprenticeship funding is awarded once a year to those learning from a master craftsman, who display a high level of skill and are looking to reach a level of excellence further in their career.

Polly Collins, 26, from North Devon, has been working under Green Shoes CEO and master craftsman Alison Hastie for the past six months and is thrilled to be acknowledged by QEST as having such qualities. Polly says: "It's a real accolade for me and Green Shoes and I am delighted to get the opportunity to further expand my skill set and with a company I am passionate about."

Established in 1981 by Alison, Green Shoes leather and vegan shoes, boots and sandals are hand made to order in the Moretonhampstead workshop. *greenshoes.co.uk*



HOTELIER'S SHREWD MOVE

Torquay hotelier Keith Richardson, of Richardson Hotel Group, has announced his decision to bring celebrity chef John Burton-Race on-board to headline the new restaurant at Torquay icon The Grosvenor Hotel.

Mr Richardson says: "We're very excited to be working with John. His background is in world-class dining, and that's something we want to promote in The Grosvenor's Brasserie and Terrace. He's lived in Devon for many years, so he knows how to really harness the best of what Devon has to offer. We aim to make the hotel a real destination not only for tourists, but for locals too. We want to serve the very best food possible, and John is certainly the man to do it."

John Burton-Race will be involved in every aspect of the restaurant, from the actual kitchen design to menu planning and preparing dishes.

Although many would be daunted at the task of turning around the hotel's somewhat infamous reputation, following the Channel4 reality TV show The Hotel, John is adamant about what needs to be done.

"We're so fortunate with the produce that's on offer locally," says John. "The animal husbandry, the pastureland and the seafood of the county allows my menus to have a real seasonal focus."

He is keen to emphasize the importance of quality in producing food.

Say YES to NHS

New research shows that thousands of young people in the South West could be missing out on fulfilling and rewarding careers in the NHS due to lack of knowledge about apprenticeships.

In response, Health Education England (HEE) is launching the #NHyeS campaign to attract thousands of young people into the NHS through apprenticeships.

Opportunities within the NHS are not limited to becoming a doctor or a nurse. There are 350 different job roles available across a wide variety of disciplines including marketing, engineering, human resources and construction on the stepintothenhs.nhs.uk website.



Joshua Stephenson, 20, is an apprentice at North Devon District Hospital

Business and professional sales manager JESSICA RIMMER 07584 503054, jessica.rimmer@archant.co.uk

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DEVON LIFE March 2017

07875 411538

The Next Chapter - a matchmaking service for discerning gentlemen - has just launched from a Devon kitchen table. **Kate Williams** talks to the two businesswomen who aim to put an end to loneliness

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL

THROUGH experience and research, Julie Mackay and Judith Payne have pinpointed a group of individuals who have all the trappings of success but no other to share them with. And this is what they endeavour to change.

Working with gentlemen from around the globe, the pair are launching The Next Chapter, to introduce successful businessmen, who are cash rich and time poor, to women to form long-lasting and meaningful relationships.

"Success is nothing without someone to share it with," says Judith, who lives in Torquay. "Loneliness is an epidemic and a virus that is changing the landscape of our society. It is fascinating to discover the positive feedback regarding ending loneliness for the mature single. This group of individuals has all the trappings of success but no other to share them with."

Judith and Julie, who have self-funded this new company, are passionate about love and connection and their objective is to create a bond between two like-minded people by providing niche services that allow them to really get to know and understand each individual client's desires and deliver solutions. The pair have developed a method that integrates a more customerfocused approach combined with other psychologies.

Julie, who now lives in Bishopsteington, previously ran several businesses in retail



Judith Payne and Julie Mackay have launched The Next Chapter

Making connections

and customer services in the UK and in the USA. Always at the forefront of innovation, Julie started the first upscale control circulation magazine in New York promoting fine dining and beverages. Whilst living in this dynamic city she interviewed many successful men and women who had all the trappings of wealth but in fact were very lonely.

She says: "We are committed to providing the best customer care using and confidential and ethical approach, ensuring complete satisfaction for our clients. We are providing life, relationship and growth coaching services. Through extensive research and our combined experience we have developed a personalized process that enables us to facilitate the bond between two people.

"Our business is based in Devon but our business activities have got no geographical barriers. With our extensive connections within Europe we are ready to operate on a global scale." Judith has been running her own event concept and design business for more than ten years. Dealing with clients at an international level has given her the opportunity to learn different cultures and religions.

She says: "We are very positive about running our new company together and do not think that it is tough starting a new business. We believe all challenges are learning curve. We have experienced some unnecessary bureaucracy from one of the banks but there is always a solution for a problem. We also had some issues with building our dream team of experts, however through our local networking in Devon we have found some terrific talented people here.

"Our goal is to run a business that demystifies and provides transparency to the dater. We would like to build a presence here and also become an international player in the market." •

nextchapter.global

THE RESEARCH BEHIND IT

Julie and Judith have started initial work and research about a year ago. The whole idea of connecting people was based on the pair's personal experience and extensive research among dating agencies. They discovered that there is a need for more tailor-made and "hand held" services for those gentlemen who are cash rich and time poor due to their very busy lifestyle. As research shows, there are more single women than men above the 40-45 therefore it is The Next Chapter's aim to provide an introductory service for the gentlemen from our selective database of lady members.

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Left: Meet the Grohe Concetto Essence Professional with professional dual-spray taps with a spring arm that swivels 360 degrees. Stockists: grohe.com Right: Ashton House Design shows how the traditional can blend seamlessly with the modern ashtonhousedesign.co.uk

OUR KITCHENS tend to be at the very heart of our homes - and there is no room that we ask more of. It has to be functional for much of the grunt work that keeps the household ticking over; we want it to be a social space where we can gather to cook and eat - and we want it all wrapped up in a good looking package to show off our taste in design as well as food.

"With many of us enjoying open plan living, kitchens need to fit with the overall interior design of our homes,' say Caroline Palk from Ashton House Design (ashtonhousedesign. co.uk). Never before have the finishes and lighting needed such careful consideration.

"The island continues to be pivotal to most kitchen layouts – with surfaces incorporating heating elements, extractors that appear out of nowhere, fabulous finishes – and presents an opportunity to include must-have stool seating. What is a kitchen if not an area for family and friends to congregate where they can engage, carry out a useful chore or two, or simply entertain the chef at work! An interesting mix of materials that sees a contrast of textures – timber with zinc, glass with copper, marble with steel – will elevate it beyond a workplace."

My new favourite thing is bespoke fused glass splashbacks. Many artists working in glass will create something totally unique for your kitchen, turning a mundane practical necessity into a thing of beauty and turn your cooking space in to the room's focuspoint (so make sure you keep your range spotless!). Alternatives are tiles, mirrored spashbacks

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or off-the-peg toughened glass panels.

Technology has transformed how we use our kitchens – and no where is this more illustrated than with the once humble tap. Today's tap can supply ice cold filtered water to drink, boiling water for your teapot and everything in between and they have spray hoses and swivel as standard. Turn it on with the touch of your hand (or even foot, if your hands are full). "Some manufacturers are now offering clever technology that prevents the tap body, including the spout, from ever getting hot, thereby ensuring no scalding," says Kelly Everest from GROHE UK.

Technology really has revolutionised our kitchens. Karen Chung is from Intelligent Abodes (intelligentabodes.co.uk) who will not only install the latest technology - but teach you how to use it. In her smart kitchen, technology helps ensure the temperature and lighting is always right - long before you enter. Whether it's warming the room or the automatic blinds which rise with the sun (and the children) or cooking dinner. "I can switch the oven on from my smart phone knowing it will be beautifully cooked when we all get home starving," says Karen. "We select 'all on' lighting mode as we clear the kitchen and stack the dishwasher, then we adjust to 'TV' mode and settle down to



Freestanding kitchens have much to recommend them. Classic and portable - they allow you to treat the kitchen like other rooms in your house - choosing individual pieces and you can refresh them without ripping everything out. We love Barnes of Ashburton's latest range which are bespoke and handmade. barnesofashburton.co.uk



'Always include soft seating where space permits - they're bound to be among the most popular seats in the house.'

watch a family programme on our Aquavision TV which is neatly flushed into the wall.

"In the evening, the kitchen becomes a peaceful haven for me and the other half to enjoy a glass of wine, listening to our favourite music from the discreet speakers, dimming the lights and shutting the blinds from the comfort of our cosy chairs with my smart phone."

My favourite kitchen design tip comes from Ashton House Design. "Always include soft seating where space permits," Caroline Palk adds. "At the very least upholstered bar stools offer a comfortable perch or two. Add sofas and swivel armchairs − they're bound to be among the most popular seats in the house. Soft furnishings that include fabrics, hides, throws and scatter cushions add texture and acoustic benefit to an otherwise hard surfaced and potentially noisy interior." ◆

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OUR TEAM

Founded in 1997, Bradburys began as a small family business and now boasts a fabulous showroom in the city of Exeter.

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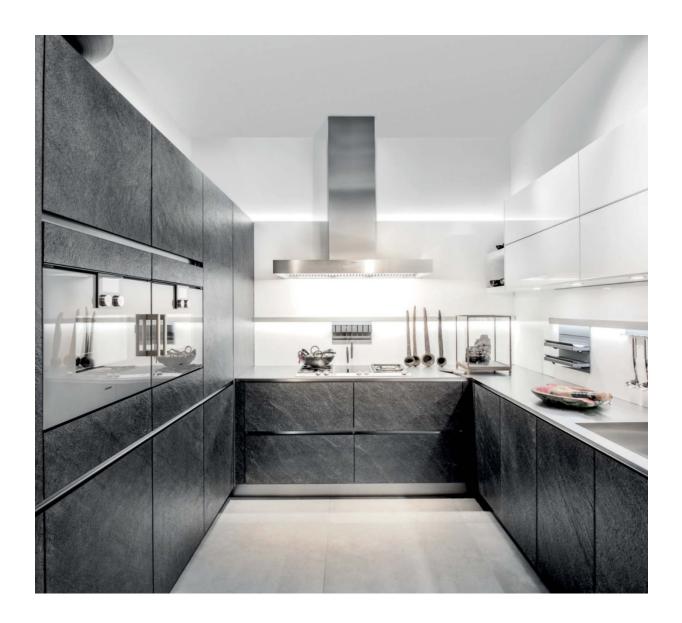




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Ralph Winter Kitchens, 47 Marsh Green Road West, Marsh Barton, Exeter EX2 8PN 01392 433620 ralphwinterkitchens.co.uk

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Real rooms: The Kitchen

When it comes to creating the perfect kitchen, good design is the starting point as this Howard Wilson Robinson kitchen in Prixford illustrates





Top left: A large double Belfast sink, integrated dishwasher and pull out bin form the ideal solution to all the washing up needs of a busy working kitchen. A clever addition is the oak drip bar under the sink which prevents excess water from running down the face of the units

Left: A recurring feature in Howard Wilson Robinson kitchens is a granite up stand and shelf behind the Aga to house cooking utensils. The plain brick pattern ceramic tiles keep the clean lines of a modern kitchen while still echoing the traditional look of many period properties

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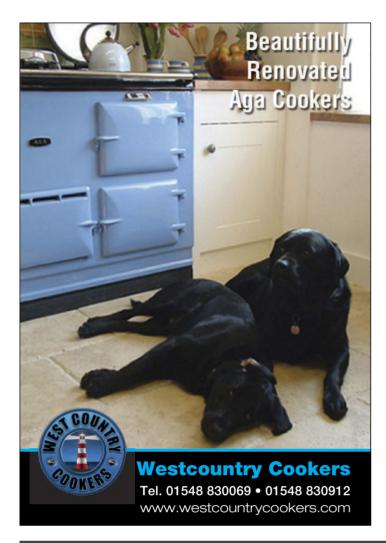
The drawers and interiors are polished oak. Each kitchen has two removable oak inserts, one for utensils and one for cutlery. The drawer is lined in gray baize at the customer's request for a contemporary look rather than the green baize traditionally associated with cutlery drawers

ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Howard Wilson Robinson is a kitchen and furniture designer with more than 40 years of experience, designing and making period style and contemporary fitted furniture for every room in the house, including panelling and staircases. He has gained an enviable reputation in the business thanks to his eye for detail and his attention to period features. Howard also designs architectural buildings such as summer houses and gazebos - and was recently asked to design and build a Victorian 'folly' double dog kennel. His projects vary in size from a Victorian castle to a simple country bathroom vanity unit.

howardwilson robinson.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY: ND PHOTOS





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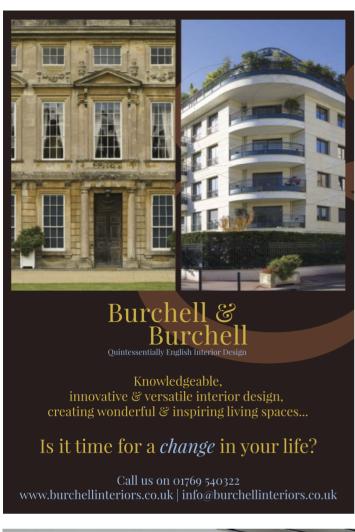




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WIN A CHILDREN'S NATURAL MATTRESS

One lucky winner will win a completely chemical free Cottonsafe® children's mattress, (worth £199 - suitable from 3 to 12 years old) and three runners-up will receive a £50 off voucher!

PARENTS often struggle with their children not getting enough sleep. Now help is at hand as The Children's Sleep Charity is coming to Devon. Liz Dowen, a qualified Sleep Practitioner from Cottonsafe® Natural Mattress, is working with The Children's Sleep Charity to deliver a Sleep Tight 2-day course at BuckfastAbbeyinMarch.SleepTightisaneffective



time-limited behavioural sleep programme. The training is for practitioners working directly with families like support workers, nursery nurses and health visitors. Evaluation found that on average, children had 2.5 hours more sleep per night after the intervention. Parents report improved changes in family life and children's daytime behaviours.

Liz said, 'So many parents ask us for advice about children's sleep, so I was delighted when founder and CEO of the charity Vicki Dawson, agreed to deliver the programme with me on 13th and 14th March. It will be fantastic to have more Devon professionals trained to give free help to parents with sleep

problems.' For more information about the course contact info@thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk or call 01302 751416.

Cottonsafe® Natural Mattress are also on a mission to inform parents about the toxins and endocrine disrupting chemicals that can be found in children's mattresses. They have launched a unique, chemical free and completely safe Children's Natural Mattress. As it is made with natural fibres such as organic cotton and pure wool, it is highly breathable. This keeps kids cool and helps promote peaceful sleep. The mattress is also especially designed to give them the support they need whilst being super comfortable. The Cottonsafe® Original Children's Mattress costs as little as £189 because they believe safety should be affordable. A gloriously soft hypo-allergenic Alpaca version is also available.

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ARTISANS AND ARTISTS









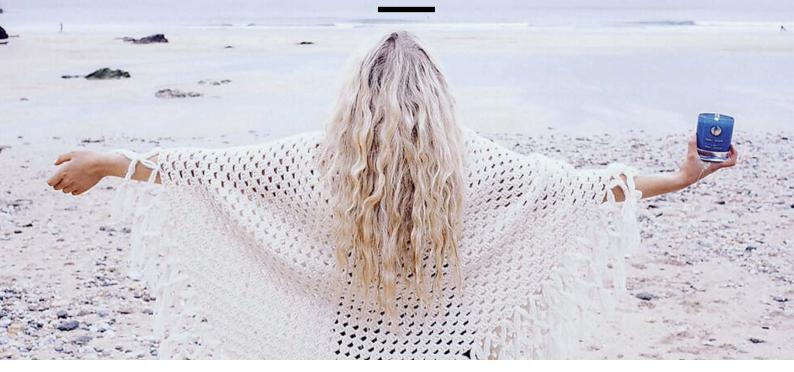
In a romantic manor ... following a complete design and project management service for the external and internal heritage restoration, re-arrangement and refurbishment of this listed medieval manor house, the master bedroom and attendant master suite rooms were furnished with a range of bespoke designed cabinetry, custom made lighting, furnishings, art and antiques reflecting the clients love of history.

The house is discreetly placed with a private view from the master bedroom of some two miles or more across open countryside and out to sea, the bed was floated out into the middle of this impressive room to take full advantage of the vista.

PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT AND INTERIOR DESIGN

Scents of the sea

Evoking the smells of our glorious coastline, artisans have launched a new range of handmade candles designed to smell as good as they look



IF YOU THINK kiss-me-quick hats, sticks of rock and naïve prints of your favourite beach are passé when it comes to bringing home a taste of Devon's coastline, how about a scented candle that evokes the nasal memories of Devon?

Hightide was set up last year by partners Chloe Bayliss and Nick Crabtree to offer a new kind of memento of your time at the coast - with candles that evoke the scents of the seaside.

"We love how fragrances and scents have the intense power to transform an atmosphere, to recall memories, past times and moments shared with others," explains Chloe, who lives with Nick alongside one of South Devon's favourite beachfronts.

The couple grew up together by the sea and were inspired to create something that could help relive and remember those favoured moments all year round; a kind of 'bouquet photograph'.

"We grew up here in Shaldon and over the years shared a lot of great memories and good times on the beaches and have always appreciated how lucky we are to live somewhere so beautiful," she continues.

"We wanted to be able to try and share these types of moments we are so lucky to experience living here in Devon with others.

"We know that everyone loves holidays and the beach and we thought that as candles symbolise 'memories' we could create names,



Mermaid is one of the sea-scented candles

mixed with fragrances and pictures to take people to different 'beach moments' every time they re-light one of our candles."

Each of Hightide's candles have been named after unique beach moments such as Shell Seeker (to evoke smells of the summer sunshine), Surf (think riding the waves) and The Beach (think ice creams and sandcastles).

"We researched all the fragrances and we have decided to keep the actual fragrances almost a secret – hence why we have our names, such as The Cove (Think Relaxing by the Rocks) so when you smell it, you imagine you are relaxing by the rocks at a beautiful cove. This particular candle [The Cove] has a mossy scent of seaweed and lying on hot rocks."

Aimed at the luxury end of the market, they are still designed to be used, say their creators. All are hand poured using natural soy wax and every candle offers a unique fragrance.

There are a range of candles from large 30cl for £25 set into their own bright, reusable jars, 9cl size for £13 and a set of shell-shaped tealights priced at £10.

Whichever size you choose, they are all served up in different coloured cotton beach bags that can be re-used at your next visit to the seaside. ◆ hightidedevon.co.uk

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Beautiful Homes & Gardens

A keen eye for classic and contemporary designs, our readers are consistently looking to improve their home furnishings. Many will be planning a major improvement project in the next twelve months including kitchens, bathrooms, flooring and garden landscaping.

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CUSTOMER TEST: APP-CONTROLLED HEATING

Adjusting your heating from your phone sounds great – but what's it really like? We asked three Westcountry homeowners about their experiences switching from night storage heaters to ELKAtherm® electric radiators with HeatApp controls.

If you're struggling with night storage heaters – guessing the temperature and trying to make the heat last all day – simply having instant, reliable warmth, whenever you want, must sound wonderful. So being able to adjust that heating using your tablet or mobile phone might seem like science fiction.

Cornwall-based South West Heating has already installed ELKAtherm® electric radiators, with HeatApp controls, in hundreds of Westcountry homes. The benefits are obvious: set the temperature and timing in every room, for a warm, cosy home without running up energy bills while you're out. Pre-warm the house before you get home, and turn the heating up or down without even leaving your sofa. All the warmth you want, and save money at the same time.

But does the system deliver? We asked three South West homeowners to share their experiences.



"It's a pleasure to be here"

Jenny Wakelin from Carbis Bay had struggled with night storage heating for fifteen years before switching to ELKAtherm® heating in 2013. She is impressed by the performance of the new radiators.

"The night storage heaters were incredibly inefficient – the house was cold," Jenny recalls. "Now we have a very even ambient temperature throughout the house. It's a pleasure to be here."

But what about the iPhone controls – are they easy to use?

"It's a bit of a no-brainer, really. When my son came to visit I could sit at home and switch on the heating in the morning so the house was nice and warm when they got up – result: 'Thanks mum!' "It's been a revelation, really. How it's transformed this house is amazing."



"The house is toasty"

Zoe Abbotts, from Holsworthy, says switching to ELKAtherm® heating has made a real difference – and not just to the temperature of her home.

She explains: "It's made my life less stressful. I don't have to constantly think about having wood for the fire, or the storage heaters not working and the house being cold when I come in from work.

"It's all there on my app – I can turn the heating on an hour before I leave work, and the house is toasty."



"It just works"

In Tavistock, Louisa Chanter is similarly impressed.

"I like being able to use it from my phone, because I travel quite a lot," she explains.

"When I'm coming back on the train I can turn the heating on and make it any temperature I like, so it's lovely when I come in. I set the time once on each room and it just works. It works from my phone and from my iPad; there's no ugly panels on the walls. It's perfect."

You can hear Jenny, Zoe and Louisa's stories in full, online: just search YouTube for "South West Heating". If you'd like heating information and advice, **call 01209 714600**, **visit southwestheatingsolutions.co.uk**, **or write to us at Freepost SOUTH WEST HEATING SOLUTIONS** (no other address details required, not even a postcode).





No place like home...

Stunning but well hidden, the magnificently grand Strode House sneaks up on you. Chrissy Harris went to look around this big and beautiful home



THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

IT'S EASY TO LOSE YOURSELF in the splendour of Strode House because there are just so many rooms. Through one door, out another, past another sitting room, a couple more bedrooms - and that's just the first wing.

Then there's the orangery, a second kitchen, the depths of the cellar and $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of terraced garden to marvel at.

This place is about as magnificent as they come yet so tucked away that hardly anybody knows it's here.

That's just the way Philip and Heather Olver like it. This lovely, down-to-earth couple, both in their 60s, bought the 11bedroom (11 bedrooms!) Strode House, near Ermington, with their son Gregory, 39, just over two years ago as a family holiday home.

'We once had 14 of us here but if you wanted peace and quiet, there is always somewhere to go'

Although they live in Sussex, both Philip and Heather are qualified 'proper' locals, having grown up in South Devon, before meeting in Dingles department store in Plymouth more than 45 years ago.

"This was just coming back to where I should be," says Heather. "For me, there's no place like Devon."

"Our roots are here and we come down every year. We've never missed a year for the past 45," says Philip, a retired asset management consultant.

'We decided to buy something with our son. We started looking for a five or six-bedroom property. And then we found this place, "he says, laughing as he explains how the couple ended up here, in the historic house that once belonged to Captain Henry Gore Hawker, co-owner of Plymouth Gin (Black Friars Distillery).

Strode House, built in the early 1800s, is a spectacular white building that suddenly appears out of nowhere at the end of a tree-lined driveway. It would be worth installing a theme park-style camera at the gates, just to capture the various expressions of astonishment from unsuspecting visitors (mine would be pretty good).

But being in Strode House is the real surprise. Despite its impressive size, this is a warm, welcoming family home that makes you want to stay in and play hide-and-seek all day.

"Some people will think it's too big for a family, but it's not when you're living in it altogether" says Heather, who loves it when children Gregory and Catherine, 40, son-in-law Alistair, 45, plus grandchildren Maddy, 11, and Rani, nine, come to stay.

"The children come and it's just like Christmas every day. I love it."

"We once had 14 of us here but if you wanted peace and quiet, there is always somewhere to go," says Philip, before Heather adds: "My daughter and I like to sit in the library. We go in there to get away from all the men – it's brilliant!"

Being together while apart is perfectly possible here and it suddenly occurred to Philip, Heather and Gregory (who works for an investment bank and lives in London with girlfriend Tara, 31) that Strode House deserved to be enjoyed by others.

Although the family were initially reluctant to let out their home, they were encouraged by glowing reports from friends of friends who had stayed there.

"I've had so many nice compliments," says Heather. "It's so strange because we hadn't even thought about anything like •



Above: Fabulous furniture

Left: The couple were happy with the kitchen they inherited when they bought the house but have made a few tweaks, including a striking black splashback

Right: A garden on many levels



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A garden on many levels

"I adore the garden," says Heather. "I want to try to improve it while keeping it as it was, with lots of wild areas. I love the lawn and the way it's on so many levels. We also have a wonderful primrose meadow in the spring." Peach trees have been planted which were laden with fruit in the summer. "I couldn't believe my eyes," says Heather. "But it's very warm here. We don't seem to get the cold winds." Special thanks must go to gardener Colin Campbell of Flete Gardens. The couple would also like to thank housekeeper Roger Cole.

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A HOUSE WITH A RICH HISTORY

The area of Strode was the location of the original home of Devon's Strode family. Adam Gervas(e) de Strode is listed in Devon in 1238.

The family's ancestral home was Strode Manor, which was directly across the valley from Strode House. The manor burnt down in the 17th Century and is now a farm.

Philip and Heather have done their research and discovered that Strode House was probably built in the early 1800s.

The couple would love to know who first lived in the house.

It's believed magistrate and Sheriff of Devon, George Strode, wife Mary and their five children lived at Strode House in 1841

Then came Sir William Mitchell, chief proprietor and editor of the Shipping and Mercantile Gazette.

letting it out. Or what it was going to be like or how we were going to do it.

"We wouldn't want to do it too much though because it's our home and it's meant to be for our family and friends."

The couple and their family spend many months of the year at Strode House and allow friends to stay there the rest of the time.

At peak times, the family let out the property – situated in between the coast and Dartmoor - to holidaymakers, usually three generations of a family who want the space to relax and do their own thing in beautiful surroundings.

With the help of a team of local contractors, the Olvers have worked hard to get the main wing of the house looking completely stunning and are having a much-needed break before they start on the second, much older half of the building.

'We didn't quite anticipate how much work would be involved," admits Heather. "It's been hard. Like a full time job, really."

But worth it. "Oh yes. I absolutely love it here," says Heather, welling up, just a little. "It's all so beautifully constructed. To me, this house and these grounds...are perfect. I do feel like that. I can't mince words or pretend. I get quite emotional when I think about it because I think it's glorious." ◆

See ownersdirect.co.uk



There are 11 bedrooms at Strode House and each one has been given its own individual style $\label{eq:control}$





Philip and Heather Olver bought Strode House with their son Gregory just over two years ago as a family holiday home

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Vicky Says...



Take a leaf out of the Scandinavians book and embrace "hygge" this year.

Hygge - pronounced Hue-gah, in essence, means creating a nice warm atmosphere enjoying the good thing in life. Think enjoying a hot drink surrounded by lamps, candles, rugs, cosy throws and fluffy cushions on your comfy sofa.

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A creative partnership

The husband and wife team at Ashton House Design have clocked up 25 years in business together

IT takes more than a little luck to survive in business for some 25 years! Husband and wife teams are proven in business – the skillset that ensures a successful partnership in both marriage and at work is like no other.

Simon Bantock and Caroline Palk do not take any of this for granted, however, and feel blessed to be in a career that they are passionate about. It's a great way of life. In between bringing up their lovely daughters, they live and breathe the world of interior design - visiting the London and Paris shows regularly, poring over magazines and trade publications, and catching up with the latest trends and forecasts at every turn.

'The detail of each individual project, and their ability to source the appropriate products globally, leaves them free to source from wherever and whoever they so wish'

Simon and Caroline's perspective on family life often proves invaluable when considering criteria within the home, and they regularly find themselves involved in family home projects.

Caroline's professionalism has been recognised several times by the BIID (British Institute of Interior Design) with awards that she is extremely proud of. Being part of this pre-eminent professional organisation for interior designers in the UK is of utmost importance – for both the interior designer and client alike – offering recognition of the designer's capabilities, and the reassurance that professional standards are maintained.

Ashburton has proved to be a fantastic location for Ashton House Design. Simon and Caroline put their belief in this town some 25 years ago with townhouse premises. However, business should never stand still.

A move out to a business park on the outskirts of town has served them well for over a decade but the focus of their business has always been project led and a former brewery proved too tempting as the new home for their stylish design studio. Within this entirely refurbished property



 $As hton\, House\, Design\, has\, moved\, into\, a\, former\, brewery, show casing\, their\, best\, furnishings$



Simon and Caroline at work



Browse the fabric library

in the heart of Ashburton, project managed by themselves, they continue to offer an exclusive fabric and wallpaper library that showcases both familiar and rare brands, alongside a selection of furniture and lighting from some of their most talented partners.

Offices on the first floor overlook the charming rooftops and church spires whilst an inviting design studio showcases only the very best of their furniture, furnishings and lighting.

Their appetite for interior design is insatiable. The detail of each individual project, and their ability to source the appropriate products globally, leaves them free to source from wherever and whoever they so wish – as they're never tied to a specific supplier or brand.

The service element of their business is crucial and has been the key to their continued success.

With an impressive back catalogue of projects completed over 25 years – the proof is evident on their website – and with a capable team that blends youth and experience, Ashton House Design is as strong as ever. ◆ ashtonhousedesign.co.uk

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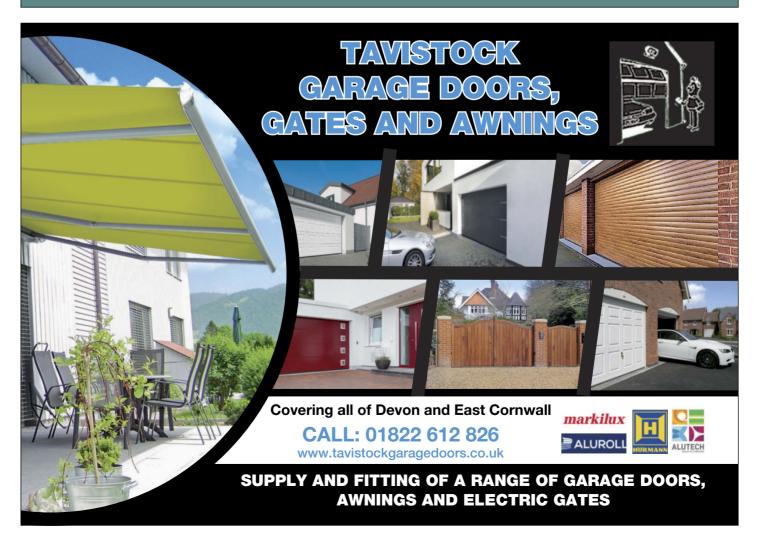


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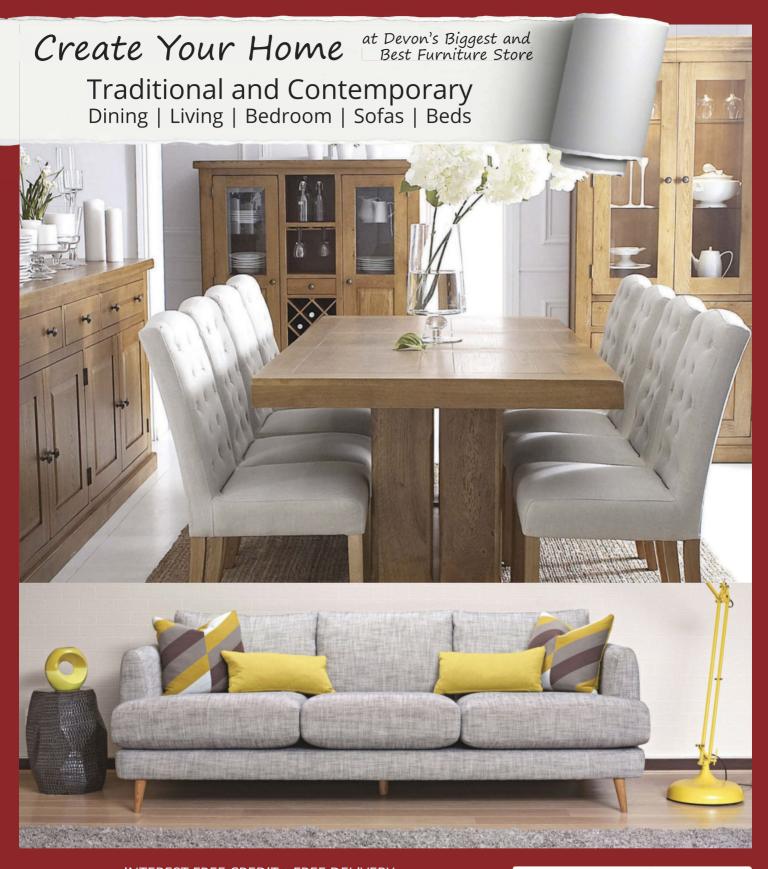
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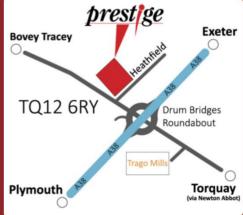


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If so, then the new Southwest Home & Garden Show will be your perfect onestop shop, helping you meet high quality local and national interiors, garden, renewables and self-build products and services, all under one roof.

The event, taking place on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 April 2017 at the popular Westpoint, Exeter, will host over 140 exhibitors all providing an extensive range of products and services related to home interiors, gardens, renewables and self-build.

It aims to become the region's leading home and garden event and will provide the ideal opportunity for visitors who are looking to source local designers, makers and suppliers of kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms, hot tubs, furniture, joinery, flooring, solar panels, architects, timber framing, landscape gardening and much more.

Over 5,000 visitors are expected and they will also find great displays and demos, along with Meet the Expert appointments



Get great advice about your home improvement project

'The new Southwest Home & Garden Show will be your perfect one stop shop'

and not forgetting to take advantage of special offers only available at the show!

To compliment the show there will be a high quality homeware market where visitors can discover and take home cushions, art, ceramics, blankets, rugs to name a few. These are all supplied by local makers that stand out from the crowd.

Furthermore there will also be a quality food and drink market and café where you can sample, taste and purchase some of the finest local artisan food and drink including local gins, craft ales, spices, charcuterie, olives, ice-cream and more. Visitors can also take comfort and relax in the café allowing you to read your brochures or perhaps discuss your project while sipping a cool beverage or nibbling on some delicious food.

If you are interested in attending this great event, the first 2,000 visitors will get free entry by pre-registering via the website. If you are interested in receiving an exhibitor brochure please also visit the website for details. • Southwest Home & Garden Show Saturday 8 & Sunday 9 April 2017 Westpoint, Exeter 01872 888 733 southwesthomeshow.co.uk

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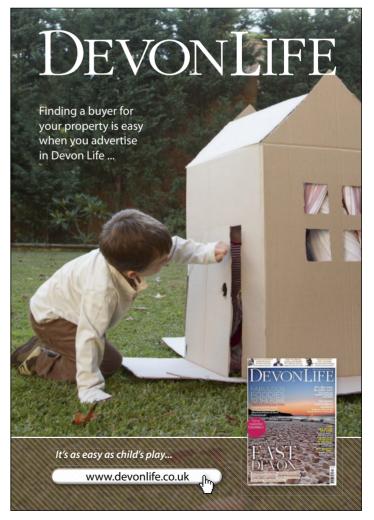




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Germansweek, Devon

This hidden gem is located in a peaceful rural location down a no through road at the top end of Roadford Lake in stunning West Devon. Amongst trees and rolling countryside this lovely home offers all the character of the 17th Century with all the comforts of modern day living. It has 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, exposed beams, wooden floorings and a vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom and comes with its own indoor swimming pool and games room. With a large garden, ample parking and several outbuildings this lovely property, currently a successful holiday let, would also make a fabulous family home. EPC D

Price £675,000

Gorgeous in Galmpton

Our Property of the Month is actually two properties, offering the perfect home and a rental opportunity all in one

THIS BEAUTIFUL south facing property dating from the 16th Century is set over two floors on the edge of the village of Galmpton, a thriving community on the River Dart close to Brixham. Being on the edge of the village it has no near neighbours but is in walking distance of the local shop Galleon Stores and Savills the butchers, both of whom deliver. The local pub Manor Inn is also just down the road.

'The minute I saw the property and location of the cottages for the first time, I was in love'

Port Hill House is full of period features with beamed ceilings, large fireplace with wood burners and solid stone floors in the dining room and living room. The kitchen is a large classic cottage kitchen with the space for a table in the centre. With tiled floor, an Aga and views over the fields, this is a lovely family room. There is also a boot room/utility room and guest WC off the kitchen leading to the back door.

Upstairs there are four bedrooms all with views over the fields and two bathrooms. From this floor there is access to the large rear terraced garden. There is a large level area directly outside the back door and two further terraces with sitting areas dotted around to take advantage of the views and the sun.

The separate cottage, Barnacle Cottage, is a successful holiday let which is popular all year round. Having been refurbished this small two-bedroom cottage is set over two floors with period features and a stable door



Port Hill House and Barnacle Cottage, Galmpton

overlooking fields and a south facing small terrace to the front. The current owner makes a significant income from the holiday letting but it would also lend itself to a granny annex.

The owner best describes what it is like to live in this lovely home: "The minute I saw the property and location of the cottages for the first time, I was in love. Coming down for a weekend from busy, stressed out London to house hunt, I saw the two gorgeous cottages and never looked back.

"Mad? Yes, but I have no regrets. I feel as if I am on permanent vacation here in glorious South Devon and never tire of the fabulous beaches and scenery, coastal paths and walks in the surrounding Dart Valley and along the coast." ◆

FACT FILE

Address: Port Hill House and Barnacle Cottage, Galmpton, Devon, TQ5 0EJ

Location: Galmpton is a village on the River Dart about 3 miles from the fishing village of Brixham and about 6 ½ miles from Totnes.

Price: £599,995

Agent: Chartsedge, 4 The Old Tote Building, Exeter Racecourse, EX6 7XS. Tel. 01392 832446 web: chartsedge.co.uk e-mail: info@chartsege.co.uk

ACCOMMODATION

Port Hill House: living room, dining room, kitchen breakfast room, utility/ cloakroom, four bedrooms, two bathrooms. Barnacle Cottage: Open plan living room, two bedrooms, one bathroom.

Outside: Large sloping garden, garage, large shed, off street parking for two or more cars



Port Hill House and Barnacle Cottage, Galmpton

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The West Country is Stags Country







Kings Nympton, North Devon

1.4 Acres

A beautifully presented Grade II listed period cottage, believed to originate from early 16th Century, set on the edge of the village, with exceptional views. A wealth of character features, kitchen/breakfast room, living room, utility/boot room, shower room, 4 bedrooms and bathroom. Attractive gardens and paddock. Total about 1,40 acres, EPC Exempt, Web Find: 85304

Guide Price £435,000 South Molton 01769 572263







Galmpton, South Devon

A superbly renovated home in a contemporary and colonial style. A beautiful property comprising kitchen/dining room with doors onto raised decked terrace, 2 reception rooms, 4/5 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. Ample parking and large enclosed garden. The property has recently been remodelled and renovated to a very good standard and has partially been clad in New England boarding under a slate roof. EPC Band C. Web Find: 84872

Guide Price £725,000 Totnes Office 01803 865454



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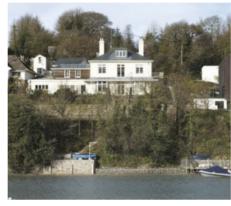














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A warm welcome to our South Hams property supplement

An exciting new venture for both Devon Life and ourselves – designed to showcase a selection of properties and services available at Marchand Petit.

Following 2016, a year in which we undoubtedly lived through 'interesting times', we are all probably looking forward to a less eventful 2017.

Clearly one would have to be brave or foolhardy to predict what will happen, however, one thing is for sure – people will still both want and need to move home this year.

With limited stock available and moving costs increased by higher rates of stamp duty, every deal has become vitally important for buyers and sellers alike. With volumes of house sales not predicted to increase substantially it is more important than ever to ensure that any deal results in a successful conclusion.

Whilst the internet nowadays provides a great deal of information to buyers and sellers alike, a good estate agent will handle the sensitive issues that inevitably arise throughout a transaction, as well as any technical issues that need resolving between parties.

Contrary to the view taken by one of our competitors, that estate agency is a 'retail' business, we at Marchand Petit view the selling of a house as a 'service' business where the needs of our sellers and buyers are of paramount importance – we consider both to be customers. Each property is individual and not a homogenous retail product and each client has individual needs and expectations.

To that end in 2016 we handled the successful sale of approximately 400 homes in the South Hams to the property value of over £200 million.

So if you are looking to sell or rent a property give us a call to discuss your needs and if you are looking to buy a property in the South Hams please remember not all available stock is visible on the internet – please call us to find out why...



Peter Gardner Managing Director

Front cover image: Trowbridge - Emma Lawrenson Split Seeds III Abstract (LWM22) £440, Bluebellgray - Florrie Cereal Bowl £12, Bluebellgray - Florrie Side Plate £9, Bluebellgray - Florrie Dinner Plate £14, Bluebellgray - Florrie Salad Plate £12, LSA International - Flower Jug Vase - 26cm £35, www.amara.com

With £200 million of South Hams property sold in 2016



KnowHow

01803 839 190

01548 831 930

01548 857 588

01548 233 100

01752 829 000

01548 855 599

01548 831 163

01548 855 593

01752 873 311

01548 831 930

01548 844 473

01548 855 590

01803 847 979









Dartmouth

An exceptional architect designed newly built detached house finished to a high specification with quality fixtures and fittings used throughout - 1 reception, 5 bedrooms, 3 en suite, bathroom, shower room. Garden, parking for 3 vehicles.

EPC Rating B. Web Ref DAR160047

£745,000

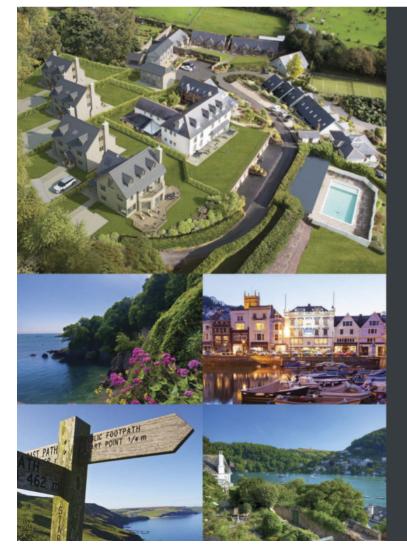
Dartmouth Office













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Marchand Petit is delighted to market a number of luxury cottages, houses and apartments for sale at Hillfield Village.

With a range of newly constructed, refurbished and established properties, there is something

for everyone looking to own a property in the idyllic surroundings of the South Hams.

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We look forward to discussing the many benefits of owning a property at Hillfield Village.

Call: (01803) 839 190

Email: dartmouth@marchandpetit.co.uk Web: www.hillfieldvillage.com



Nr Totnes

A magnificent Grade II* listed 17th century stone house with superb original features, 1 bedroom annexe and large detached barn, set in approximately 1.78 acres in a charming countryside location. No EPC required.

Web Ref TOT140164

Guide Price £1,395,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House











Dittisham

A stunning contemporary waterside property with beautiful river views, water access, 1 bedroom annexe, pool house with heated swimming pool and double garage, located in the heart of Dittisham. EPC Rating D. Web Ref DAR160101

Guide Price £1,800,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House







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Totnes

An outstanding Grade II listed 5 bedroom town house with contemporary high specification finish and technology situated within easy access to the town centre, shops and amenities.

No EPC required. Web Ref TOT160253

Guide Price £595,000

Totnes Office









SPOTLIGHT ON RESIDENTIAL LETTINGS... THE YEAR AHEAD

n the Lettings market where success is traditionally founded on stability, 2016 was defined by change and external uncertainty caused mainly by changes in the buy-to-let market which included, to name a few, stamp duty changes relating to second home ownership, tougher affordability on buy-to-let mortgage products and Brexit.

Now we are in 2017 and further changes await. The headline change is George Osborne's decision to cut mortgage interest tax relief in last year's Summer Budget, which comes into force this April. However, the tax fall out on landlords continues with changes on how wear and tear deductions can also be made. All of this means that becoming a landlord for the first time, or expanding a small portfolio, is more difficult and less appealing. Therefore, expect national buy-to-let mortgage transaction levels to reduce in 2017.

However, in choppy waters people head for safe harbours and at Marchand Petit across our offices in the South Hams, an area with high second home ownership levels, we have seen existing holiday home and second home owners shift their focus to residential lettings in larger numbers. As they look to take advantage of the benefits that a long-term tenant and income brings.

With interest rates set to stay at record lows for the immediate future, property remains an attractive option for any investor with capital and a medium, to long term, view for return.

After a very successful 2016 which, as I write in January, shows no sign of slowing, this view is obviously shared by investors and landlords locally. With demand in the key areas of the South Hams set to continue to outstrip supply, driven mainly by first time buyers staying in rental accommodation for longer periods as raising a deposit remains testing, or they wait on new homes incentives, rent levels look set to remain steady and above the regional average.

Marchand Petit offers a total property solution for home buyers in this lovely region of Devon.

Across our multi-disciplined departments our breadth and depth of experience at local level is second to none. We are the agent of choice for anyone in this area and we will work with you every step of the way to ensure you find the tenant, or property, that matches your requirements.

Mark Hoskin





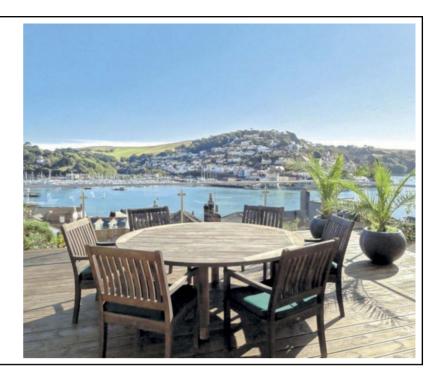
Dartmouth

A beautifully presented townhouse with outstanding river and sea views. Open plan living/dining room, 3 double bedrooms, 1 en suite, study. Large decked terrace and landscaped garden. Garage available by separate negotiation. EPC Rating D. Web Ref DAR160131

Guide Price £650,000

Dartmouth Office







Dartmouth

A Grade II listed period townhouse with delightful views over Dartmouth harbour and out to sea.

Convenient central location. Living room,

3 double bedrooms, 1 en suite. No EPC required.

Web Ref DAR160191

£410,000

Dartmouth Office



Newton Ferrers

A south facing, graciously proportioned, ground floor apartment in an elegant detached residence set in its own secluded grounds only a short walk from Newton Ferrers village centre.

EPC Rating C. Web Ref MOD160119

Guide Price £425,000

Newton Ferrers Office





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Nr Salcombe

A charming 19th century detached thatched cottage that has been extended and upgraded to create 4 bedroom accommodation nestled in a peaceful valley hamlet with easy access to South Sands in Salcombe. EPC Rating D. Web Ref SAL120119

Guide Price £750,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House













A wonderfully light and spacious detached house situated in an elevated position above the town with arguably the finest views in Dartmouth stretching from Noss to Dartmouth Castle and the sea beyond. Double garage, landscaped gardens and only a short distance from the town centre. EPC Rating E. Web Ref MOD150275

Guide Price £1,250,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House







Dartmouth

A superby presented detached house with beautiful river views over Warfleet Creek. Spacious accommodation, garage, sail loft, workshop and store. Ample parking and only a short distance from the town centre. EPC Rating D. Web Ref DAR150074

Guide Price £1,595,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House











Plymstock

A highly appointed and beautifully presented family house occupying a generous level and remarkably private site in the heart of Plymstock. EPC Rating C. Web Ref NEW160047

Guide Price £650,000

Newton Ferrers Office







Dartmouth

A beautifully presented apartment within a Grade II listed property. The accommodation is arranged over two floors with outstanding river and sea views. Impressive living room, kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, 1 en suite. No EPC required. Web Ref DAR100165

Guide Price £475,000

Dartmouth Office







Strete

A spacious detached bungalow with wonderful sea views. Large living/dining room, kitchen, utility, 3 double bedrooms, 2 en suite. Mature garden. Parking. In need of some updating. EPC Rating F. Web Ref DAR150177

£495,000

Dartmouth Office



Dartmouth

A beautifully presented semi-detached house situated in an elevated position with superb estuary views, open plan living/dining room, kitchen, 3 double bedrooms, 2 en suite, garden and garage. EPC Rating D. Web Ref DAR150158

Guide Price £470,000

Dartmouth Office











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Woodleigh

A stunning two storey 4 double bedroom property being one of eight unique and exceptionally designed residences within the exclusive and private 80 acre estate of Wood Barton. Garage and ample parking. Access to a heated indoor swimming pool and outdoor tennis courts. EPC Rating E. Web Ref KIN150426

Guide Price £800,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House









SPOTLIGHT ON NEW HOMES AND LAND IN THE SOUTH HAMS THE YEAR AHEAD

As we sit here in January 2017, the eagerly awaited Government's Housing White Paper is due to hit the press.

It promises to be a "set of radical plans set to change the housing supply". Many snippets have already been leaked, including introduction of more Garden Villages Aid and the funding of local authorities to build starter homes with the magical 28% discount off the open market price. Unfortunately, in many parts of South Devon this may simply not work as the house prices are too high in the first instance for many first time buyers.

Further conjectures have included the planning system, housing supply and tenure mix. The key for housing supply, many believe, lies with the easing of the planning system, where it is believed many plots lie unresolved.

Here in the South Hams, however, we are very optimistic about new homes in 2017, with many exciting new developments coming to market during the year.

Our current hotspots are within the Totnes area, where Baltic Wharf is selling well and where the next phase promises some excellent homes overlooking the River Dart.

Watch this space for details of Trenemans an exciting development in Thurlestone, another hot spot for 2016/17.

On the land front, 2016 was a successful year but we have many developers looking for land, from barn conversions to larger sites, so do contact this office if you have any land opportunities or enquiries. Andrew Biggs, Land and New Homes Manager, 01548 233100. Email andrew@marchandpetit.co.uk. Details of all our developments can be found at www.marchandpetit.co.uk

Andrew Biggs







A beautifully presented detached house situated in a sought after area of Dittisham with stunning, largely southerly views, over River Dart and wooded hills above Greenway. Spacious and light accommodation with delightful gardens, double garage and off-road parking. EPC Rating E. Web Ref DAR160207

Guide Price £1,500,000

Prime Waterfront & Country House







Prime Waterfront & Country House Department

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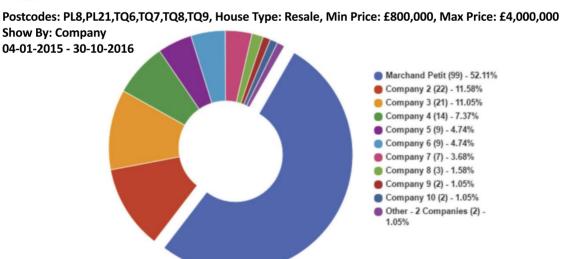
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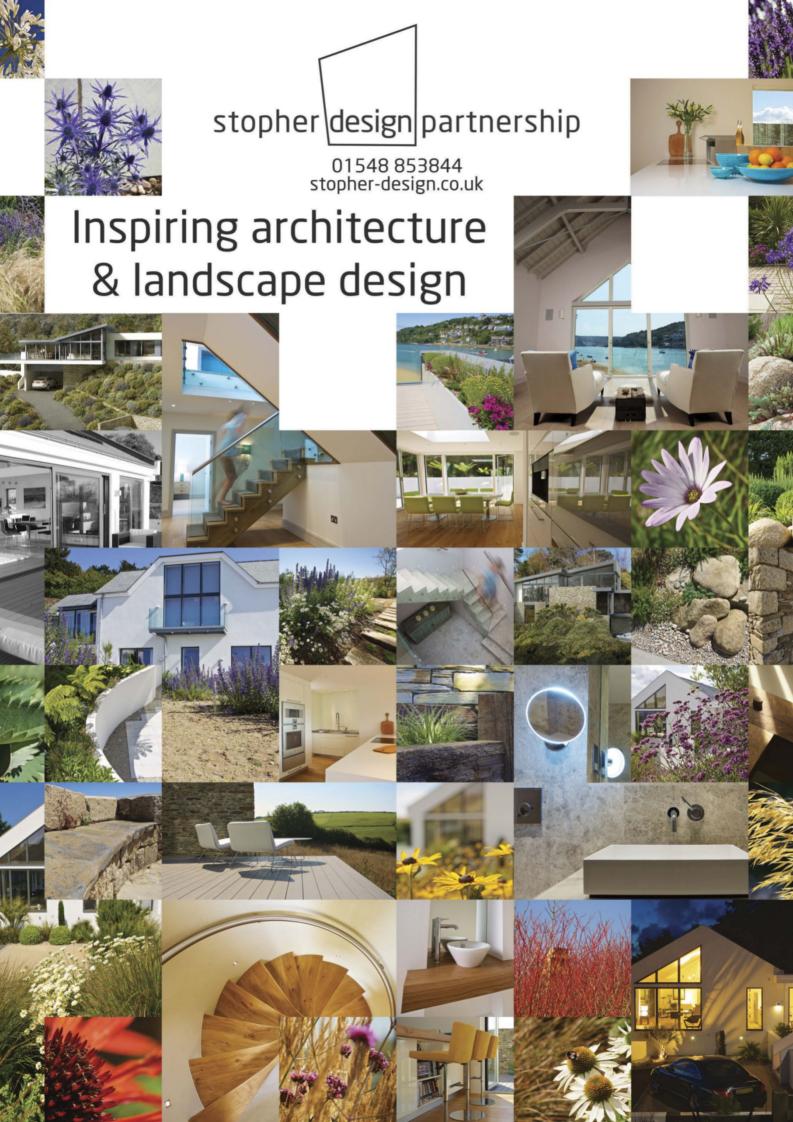


All Listed Properties

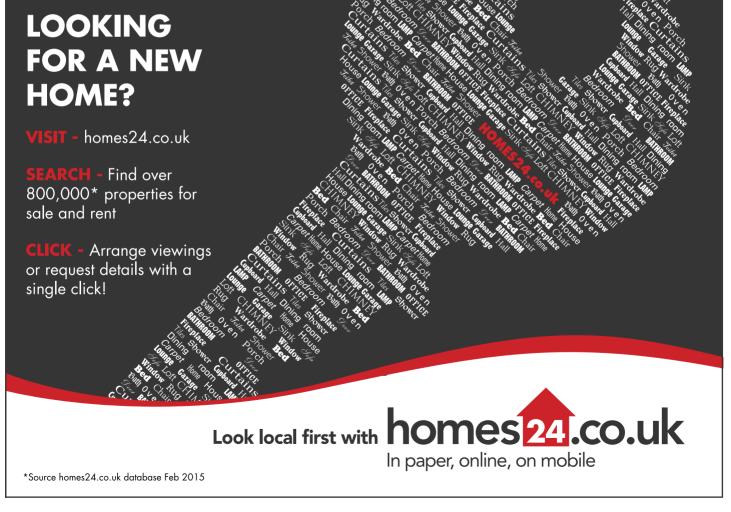


Estate agency data is collected from the internet and is collated and published by Savvyagent. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the data, due to variations in data published by estate agents, this cannot be guaranteed and Savvyagent accept no responsibility for any discrepancies errors or omissions.

There may be other companies/offices not included in this report, as they do not publish their data on the Internet. For further information see www.savvyagent.co.uk







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Branching out

A well known firm of property experts has expanded further in Devon

Country life is the dream, and many people flock to Devon to live it. Nowhere else in the British Isles compares to the county's rolling farmland, dramatic coasts, peaceful estuaries and spectacular surf.

Yet as any city slicker knows, it's not easy to live the dream. People who buy Devon properties are frequently flummoxed by new dilemmas: planning issues surrounding barn conversions, for instance, or how to renegotiate the grazing rights on the land that came with the house. Want a pony? Where will your field shelter go?

An experienced West Country agent is here to help: and with a new office in Mid Devon, they're perfectly positioned to reach countrymen in need all across the county.

Luscombe Maye already has a firmly established base across its seven Devon offices. Now in January 2017, they have now just opened a new one in Exeter. The new office, specialising in rural issues, is in Cheriton Bishop, directly alongside the A30 dual carriageway. It's part of a former pub called The Mulberry Inn, now serving as the headquarters for the Devon Young Farmers (Luscombe Maye contributed £10,000 to the charity's refurbishment project).

"We are really excited to be taking our services into this area," says Luscombe Maye senior partner Stuart Hext. "It's ideally placed, with Dartmoor to the south



Chris Davey (left), Amanda Burden and Stuart Hext of Luscombe Maye in front of their new premises at Cheriton

and the Ruby Country farming belt to the north. We have had a lot of demand in this region, especially planning and landlord and tenant advice, so it's great to have a physical presence there."

Amanda Burden is the head of agriculture and rural planning at Luscombe Maye, where she has been partner in charge of the firm's Totnes office since 2006. A farmer's daughter who grew up on a beef and sheep enterprise before studying at Seale Hayne College, Amanda and her husband now manage a farm and a successful holiday letting business in South Devon. Luscombe Maye is a multi disciplined firm dealing with many different aspects of property. For more information or to contact a member of the team, visit luscombemaye.co.uk or call (01364) 646170.

NEW COASTAL DEPARTMENT

Following a positive trading year up 18 per cent on 2015, multi-disciplinary property company Humberts has announced it will be launching a dedicated, nationwide Waterfront and Coastal department.

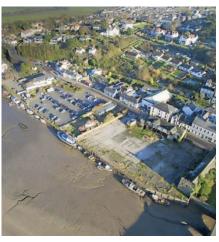
Michael Cornish, an experienced Waterside agent with 40 years in the business has taken on a new role as Head of Waterfront and Coastal at Humberts. He says: "Over the past year alone we've experienced a 25 per cent increase in demand for waterfront homes."

Humberts can help with your property requirements on 01823

LONDON TIE-UP FOR AGENTS

The Experts in Property network of independent estate agencies across the South West is thrilled to have strengthened its presence in London with Hammersmith and Fulham's leading independent estate agency, Lawsons & Daughters joining the group as an affiliate member.

As part of the new partnership, property for sale with all 80 West Country offices in the network will be directly and continuously promoted and presented to potential buyers in the prestigious and very busy high street offices of Lawsons & Daughters.



East-the-Water Wharves has planning permission for 52 homes and 8,213 sq ft of shops

WATERSIDE SITE ON SALE

A prominent waterside site in Bideford which has planning permission for new homes, commercial space, a marina and car parking, has gone on the market.

East-the-Water Wharves is on the east side of the River Torridge on Barnstaple Street and is currently home to a car park and a number of temporary and historic buildings.

The 2.14 acre site already has planning permission for 52 homes and 8,213 sq ft of shops and restaurants and Torridge District Council is now marketing the site to developers who can transform the vision into a reality.

Mark Walter, associate director at JLL in Exeter, says: "The regeneration of this site is crucial for Bideford and has been identified as a once-in-a-lifetime development opportunity to transform the appearance of the town centre.

"This waterfront site has huge potential and we are confident that we will attract a high calibre of developers who are able to take it on and create something really exciting for the town." Offers are invited for the freehold interest of the site with vacant possession. Contact adelle.moore@eu.jll.com for further information.

jackson-stops.co.uk











Kennerleigh

An elegant, early Victorian, former rectory on the edge of a quiet, small, mid Devon village. Entrance hall, 3 reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room, principal suite, 4 further bedrooms and bathroom. Former coach house and stables. Large mature gardens with orchard. Large pond within further informal gardens. Paddock area. About 2.5 acres. EPC: F













Chagford

£370,000 An extended cottage occupying a tucked away location in the centre of Chagford, close to the amenities. 3 bedrooms, open plan kitchen and dining room, sitting room. Private and sheltered garden. Off road parking and a double garage / workshop. Contact Chagford office.







Chagford

A charming, restored, Grade II listed cottage with an inviting range of accommodation, situated in a tiny Dartmoor hamlet, approximately one mile from the centre of the attractive small town of Chagford. Contact Chagford office.







£565,000

Denbury

Beautifully presented attached 3 bedroom Georgian period house with 3 bedroom barn conversion, near the centre of this popular village. Garage, stores, attractive cobbled yard and level walled gardens with views of Denbury Down. EPC's - E & D. Contact Newton Abbot office.







Nr Dean Prior

£895,000

Superbly situated detached period country house enjoying stunning views. Open plan living room, 4 bedrooms. Stone outbuildings, historic clock tower. Exquisite gardens and woodland in miniature parkland setting. About 4 acres. EPC - D. Contact Totnes office.

£265,000



TOWN

Helmores is thrilled to offer for sale a substantial family residence in Crediton, with far reaching town and countryside views, superb large gardens, and plenty of scope for its new owners to create a fine family home in their own style.

UPAUVER was built in the 1930s by Dart & Francis, the well regarded local firm known for its use of quality materials. Original features include solid oak doors, oak flooring and an impressive oak staircase as well as picture rails, fireplaces and a beautiful panelled box bay window in the living room.

The accommodation is spacious with high ceilings, useable square rooms and plenty of cupboard space. Offers over £399,950 are sought. More details from

Helmores, tel: 01363 777999; web: helmores.com



COAST

48 YEALM ROAD is a mature, period, three-bedroom family home which offers prospective buyers a wonderful opportunity to acquire a home in a much sought after location in Newton Ferrers.

This south facing property sits in an elevated position with picturesque water views across the River Yealm.

This property has undergone extensive modernisation throughout including uPVC double glazing and gas central heating, whilst managing to maintain its character and charm.

The house sits in a generous plot, with lovely mature gardens front and back. The property is for sale at a guide price of £625,000 through Luscombe Maye, tel: 01752 872417; web: luscombemaye.com

Town, coast & country Every month we feature our favourite The state for each from the town

Devon home for sale from the town. the coast and the country



COUNTRY

CROSS SYKE AND THE BARN, Loxhore, is a rare opportunity to acquire adaptable accommodation which offers a number of permutations for ongoing use. At present, the owners reside in Cross Syke which is the main original residence built in the 1950s, but refreshed in subsequent years.

The Barn was built in 2006 and is a contemporary two-storey detached property, utilised as ancillary accommodation but offering potential for renting out or holiday letting, with scope to return a minimum of £10,000 per annum, gross.

The setting is simply beautiful and water features include a scenic fish-stocked lake with jetty and exquisite stone bridge crossing the nearby stream which bisects the property, incorporates a waterfall and then runs on alongside the lower garden, joining the River Yeo eventually.

The gardens have been created and nurtured lovingly by the

current owners during their 22-year tenure. Situations such as this are often sought but seldom found and an internal inspection is strongly advised. Offers in excess of £675,000 are sought for the property, which is for sale through Stags, tel: 01271 322833; web: stags.co.uk



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A LOOK AT DEVON PROPERTY

CONTACT njb@recoco.co.uk

01392 433554

Nigel Bishop looks at the opportunities for building or buying a new home in Devon

THIS MONTH:

All new and shiny

Sustainable, eco-friendly, carbon neutral, practicality, economical, minimum maintenance - all commonly used descriptions when listing the remit for a new house - and all come under the heading 'lifestyle', a word so often used generically.

Whilst life appears to get busier everyone wants more leisure time, so in order to achieve that the balance of priorities changes. Home, still the focal point, must not dictate the time spent doing chores but should be the place of peace amidst the frenetic lifestyle of the 21st century.

Architecture is defined by periods in history. No other country has buildings so well preserved defining the history and culture of our society. The 1960s saw the early stages of post-War redevelopment with the beginnings of a contemporary genre emerging that set the path of the architectural style of the early 21st century. Technology Building a has ensured the green new house is exciting, credentials can be addressed and a distinct if somewhat and recognisable daunting to the style will, in future times, be associated with the latter part

angular and geometrical. Building a new house is exciting, if somewhat daunting to

of Elizabeth II's reign - glass,



The Willows is perfect for the growing family and granny can come too!

New thinking

the novice. It is vital professional services are employed and the construction is project managed. The regulations are endless cutting corners is not an option as the end product will prove not to meet expectations and, when selling, any lack of paperwork will hamper the sale. In other words, tick the boxes and you can't go wrong. There is still room for individuality and the creative.

Devon is historically associated in property terms by thatched cottages and Georgian rectories. Sitting comfortably, side by side, the emerging contemporary buildings will soon settle, becoming part of the landscape. Times move ever onwards and the romantic will revert back to the old, listed homes while the young like the clean lines of the contemporary. And so life evolves.

Finding individual building plots is a challenge - with less space, more planning restrictions and more demand than supply, an answer is to look at tired buildings not worthy of updating and redevelop. Nowhere is this

more apparent than Salcombe -the appeal of the water by the London second home owners demanding and affording pristine, energy efficient homes has created a wealth of jobs for the building trade and has turned a sleepy fishing village of the early 1900s to an outpost of the capital.

One opportunity to build a green oak country house, with studio, garaging and 6.8 acres is offered by Strutt and Parker (01392 215631) - Square Bookhams near Dunsford. Sitting in a private valley above the upper River Teign this has to be a unique opportunity. For those wanting the convenience of the town, a new build in Totnes, The Willows, has five bedrooms, four reception rooms and an annexe – perfect for the growing family and granny can come too! Stags Totnes office are the agents (01803 865454)

The cost of building can over capitalise the value in the short term, but the pleasure from building a unique home can be enjoyed for many years and, after all – "it's all about coming home".



novice'

Square Bookhams offers a unique opportunity

266 devonlife.co.uk

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A home for art

Warren Cottage, an evocative Grade II listed home in the South Hams, has been sold to an artist captivated by its clifftop location

MANY RAMBLERS and weekend walkers will recognise this property – it is the much-admired Warren Cottage which sits in an idyllic location on the popular headland walk, at the mouth of the River Yealm estuary.

It was originally built circa 1880-90 for the warrener who managed and supplied the rabbits for Edward Baring, Lord Revelstoke, of Revelstoke Hall in Membland, Noss Mayo. The rabbits were effectively farmed for their meat and fur, along this length of the coastline in the 19th century. Some of the stone walls that were built to keep the rabbits on the warren still remain today along this stretch of the South West Coastal Path.

More romantically, it was also used as one of the three ornamental luncheon pavilions, along the nine-mile carriage driveway that Lord Revelstoke commissioned through his then estate to St Peter's Church.

This was for the ladies to take in the invigorating clifftop air by horse drawn carriage and in preparation to entertain King Edward VII.





Warren Cottage, Noss Mayo

It is now a much-loved family coastal walk along National Trust farmland and it was this rare opportunity to become custodian of a unique, Grade II Listed, dream home that first attracted the new buyer to Warren Cottage.

This evocative cottage has just sold and the new owner, an artist, instantly fell in love with the stone built property. Claire Northmore from Marchand Petit comments: "They were instantly captivated by the romance of the cliff top location and the ever-changing light along the carriage drive.

"It was a pleasure and an honour to sell such an iconic Revelstoke building with such a fascinating provenance. In this case it really was marrying the right buyer up with the right property."

For further information on sought after South Hams property contact Marchand Petit's Newton Ferrers office on 01752

873311. marchandpetit.co.uk.



Sarah-Jane Bingham

MOVES AT SAVILLS

Nick Jones, a director at Savills development team in Exeter, has been appointed as head of office. In addition to running his own department, Nick will take responsibility for overseeing the direction of the Savills business in Exeter. Nick is an experienced development land agent and originally joined Savills in 1993 via its graduate programme.

Sarah-Jane Bingham-Chick takes up the reins as Savills head of residential sales in Exeter, overseeing a team which markets property ranging from prime country estates and coastal homes in the South Hams to city town houses, apartments and new build property. Sarah-Jane has been working in property sales since 1989.



Nick Jones

DARTMOUTH APARTMENTS ARE READY TO MOVE INTO

Designed by an award-winning architect and developer, SAILS offers five spacious, two-bedroom apartments and one stunning three-bedroom penthouse, in the heart Dartmouth with views towards the harbour and the Royal Naval College.

All six apartments are sizeable, light and airy, with sleek open plan living areas. The specification is luxurious and highly energy efficient including underfloor heating.

The contemporary kitchens are supplied by Pyram of France. The bathrooms feature Domus tiles, Duravit sanitaryware, ladder towel rails and recessed cabinets. The



The SAILS development offers views towards Dartmouth harbour

bedrooms, which include wardrobes, are carpeted, with the remainder of the apartment featuring Kahrs Artisan wood flooring. Even blinds are provided, meaning they are ready to move in to from the moment you collect your keys.

The upper floors are serviced by a lift and each has a utility space, a private balcony as well as a secure parking space and storage pod.

Prices from £735,000-£1.5m. Completions from February 2017. More details from Jackson-Stops & Staff, Exeter, tel: 01392 214222; web: jackson-stops. co.uk

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If you want a spring cottage break, Devon is full of out-of-season gems, says Elizabeth Heather from Classic Cottages

ENJOYING a balmier climate than much of the country, Devon benefits from an earlier, warmer spring. For those emerging from winter hibernation, it provides the perfect setting for a refreshing getaway ahead of summer and the chance for couples and families to regroup and catch up.

With the landscape shaking off its winter blues, Devon is awash with colour and buzzing with activity from country to coast. Although some may be tempted to overlook this time of year in favour of summer months, a spring getaway can provide a much needed pause. With fewer crowds and a blanketing calm, why not escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life and take a chance on this stunning part of the world?

If you think of Devon in spring and Easter, the beach may not be the first image you conjure. But think again as with this time of year often comes remarkably mild weather and brilliant sunshine. Holiday cottages like Spring Tide near Kingsbridge and Mewstone View in Wembury showcase this perfectly, offering stunning views of the sea from warm, cosy nests. Packed with little (and large) luxuries, it'd be easy to stay snuggled up gazing at the view, but haul yourself outside if you can. Devon's spectacular coastline is a wanderer's paradise so savour the scenery before summer crowds descend.



The Garden House is a beautiful holiday cottage near Beaworthy

EXPERT HELP

Classic Cottages are the holiday cottage specialists for the South West. Originally founded in 1977, Classic Cottages have spent the last 40 years paving the way within the industry, combining the highest level of service with passion and local expertise. With all of Classic's cottages meeting exacting standards, we want every guest to sit back, relax and say 'wow' as soon as they step into a holiday cottage.

It's not just beaches that offer out-of-season gems. Devon's countryside is famed for its beauty, and spring is a time when it truly comes into its own. Teeming with new life, baby animals can be spotted taking up residence in fields and woodlands with cautious parents by their side, and gardens and hedgerows burst into full bloom and a cacophony of colour. See how many buds, birds and bees you can spot.

If you'd like to take one step closer to nature, The Garden House is a beautiful holiday cottage near Beaworthy which lends itself perfectly to discovering Devon in spring and Easter. Sat within the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve amongst acres of meadows, woods and with its own private lake, this eco-friendly cottage is a haven for nature-lovers. Soak in the surroundings and take a break in fresh, clean air, before heading back inside to curl up by the wood-burner.

Even a short break can give you the time you need to reconnect and recharge your batteries. Whether you would like a solo escape, some time with your partner or to gather the entire family around, enjoy all the magic that comes with spring in Devon in your very own home-from-home. Unwind, make memories and discover all that's unforgettable about this enchanting county. • classic.co.uk

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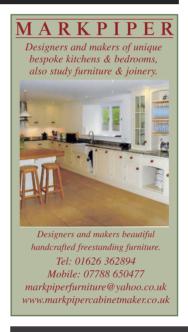
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editorial

EDITOR

Andy Cooper 07785 629293 andy.cooper@archant.co.uk

DEPUTY EDITOR

Owen Jones 07785 629245 owen.jones@archant.co.uk

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Catherine Courtenay 07584 311454 catherine.courtenay@ archant.co.uk

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Alexandra Hurley 01392888413 07921108902 alexandra.hurley@archant.co.uk

DESIGNER

Michael Langton

advertising

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Anna Atkinson 07738 311380 anna.atkinson@archant.co.uk

TELESALES MANAGER

Cheryl Humphrey 01803 860760 cheryl.humphrey@archant. co.uk

ADVERTISEMENT ACCOUNT MANAGERS

Michelle Piggott 07918 696498 michelle.piggott@archant.co.uk

Liz Oakley 01803 860923 liz.oakley@archant.co.uk

Leigh-Anne Biggs 01803 860759 leigh-anne.biggs@archant.co.uk

Stacey Wathes 07785 616297 stacey.wathes@archant.co.uk

> **BUSINESS AND** PROFESSIONAL SALES MANAGER Jessica Rimmer 07584 503054

jessica.rimmer@archant.co.uk

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Amanda McKeown 07584 311460 amanda.mckeown@archant.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES

MANAGER

Rachel Rees 01803 860764 rachel.rees@archant.co.uk

NATIONAL SALES

Richard Evans 07501481711

richard.evans@archant.co.uk

retail circulation

RETAIL CIRCULATION MANAGER

Phil Elcome 07834104846

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SINGLE COPY SALES

01858 438840 For full information see subscriptionsave.co.uk

marketing & administration

Please direct events and sponsorship enquiries to the

MARKETING MANAGER

Rachel Haime 01803 860751

rachel.haime@archant.co.uk

MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Daisy Cooke 01803 860927

daisv.cooke@archant.co.uk

SALES SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR

Alison Steere 01803 860778 alison.steere@archant.co.uk

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, ARCHANT MAGAZINES

Peter Timperley 07785 616266 peter.timperley@ archant.co.uk

GROUP EDITOR

Andy Cooper 07785 629293

andy.cooper@archant.co.uk

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QUICKE OFF THE MARK

This month our columnist **Mary Quicke** is taken to task about her own insensitivity

"YOU'VE no idea how they're feeling. Be nice." "Say that again?"

"You have absolutely no idea how anyone else is feeling. Just be nice," my friend repeated. I had just described how I had put my foot in it. I'd carelessly said: "If I drank that much coffee I'd be demented" when I'd seen someone make yet another coffee. I'd heard from a couple of people the distress I'd caused. The person was feeling a bit delicate and thought I was making disparaging remarks about their mental state.

I get bug-eyed and speedy on one cup of coffee and anxious to the point of needing to lie down somewhere quiet if I were ever to risk three cups. That's just me. Some people drink coffee as a relaxing night-time drink. You just can't tell how things strike other people.

Back to my friend who had been a little delicate. We are all weird about mental and emotional ill health, as if there was something shameful about it. There's no better meaning of the word disease: dis - ease, lack of ease, the absence of that lovely peace of mind and sense of happiness and fulfillment that makes life so worth living.

Lose it with anxiety, depression,

unhappiness, insomnia, grief, losing your mojo, whatever you want to call it, is bad enough. The fear of it happening again or persisting makes it ten times worse. Then there is the shame and humiliation of admitting your state to anyone. On top of that, other people's distribution of the control of the c

that, other people's distress is difficult to take: too close to the mark of what scares us.

I went on an amazing course where as an exercise we had to imagine all the things we are afraid of with our eyes shut. Quite soon lots of people were whimpering with remembered terrors. After a little while, as we all were encouraged to feel more fearful, it struck one, then another, then soon

'I get bug-eyed and speedy on one cup of coffee and anxious to the point of needing to lie down somewhere quiet if I were ever to risk three cups'



Mindful of mind matters

the whole roomful of people that everyone was terrified of everyone else, and we were all laughing our heads off, the whole superstructure of fear evaporating at the absurdity of it.

Walking home through city streets later that evening I was alarmed by the sound of footsteps coming up behind me. I then noticed the stiffening of the shoulders of a large man as my footsteps came up behind him. Suddenly the street felt like a safe place, fellow human beings walking along, each carrying a world of fear, everyone wanting to be safe.

Our animal brains scare, despair, fear, give up. Sometimes stresses build up that overwhelm us. I've had disabling anxiety in the past. The most jovial man I know, renowned for his sunny nature, said: "I had the stuffing knocked out of me by the Brexit vote, like a switch. I had several months when I couldn't lift myself." Churchill famously suffered from 'black dog'.

One in four people will experience a mental health problem each year. A GP friend reveals: "Lots of the patients who walk into my consulting room would have seen a vicar in times gone past; unhappiness is their main problem." Almost everyone will have difficulties over a lifetime.

The Australians have a movement, Reach Out, which encourages you to ask how people are (and listen to the answers). That doesn't always work, some people go quiet and uncommunicative when things aren't working, with the fear of not being good enough that haunts us all if we're truthful about it.

So back to my friend, hearing my tale of foot-in-mouth disease (I'm prone to that). As he said:

"You don't know how they are feeling. Just be nice."

And next time I'm impatient, frustrated, in a hurry, self-important, a smartypants, tired, self-absorbed and thinking about something else, no better thing to bring me down to earth. I really cannot know what the other person is thinking, dealing with or experiencing. Get interested in how they really are. Get out of my own head. It's a very boring place. And just be nice.

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