

Devon Churches Rural Forum

Newsletter No.2

Harvest 2017

What your local CVS can do for you

Each district in Devon has a Council for Voluntary Service (CVS). These exist to support the voluntary sector through help with fund raising, developing a new project, finding and managing volunteers, offering relevant training and workshops and hosting forums for people to come together and share information. Hilary Burr, CEO of North Devon Voluntary Services, explains further ...

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to tell individual churches about the work of Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS) both because I think we have a lot to offer you, and also because we value your local knowledge and commitment to the communities you serve.

I work at North Devon Voluntary Services (NDVS) but there is a separate organisation in each district council (contact details

below). Six of us are partners of Devon Voluntary Action (DeVA), to enable us to share ideas and good practice, and also to have a louder voice when talking about the voluntary sector with public bodies.

Your organisation is entitled to at least three hours of FREE support (it will be more than that in some districts). If you are fund-raising, we can help you find appropriate funds to

"Each CVS works slightly differently but for all of us our primary purpose is to support voluntary sector organisations – that's registered charities, community groups, clubs, societies, faith organisations, social enterprises."

Harvest 2017

"Up Horn, Down Corn"

At the time of writing, the harvest is only about 70% complete, and in a "catchy" season we continue to pray for fine weather over the next few weeks. Indications so far suggest cereal yields may be down due to the very dry spring, but grass crops have been good in both quantity and quality.

Livestock prices have increased or held well and the milk price is now closer to the cost of production. TB continues to be a major heartache for our dairy farmers. You can find our full harvest farming report [here](#). This has been compiled with insights from Joanne Jones (Farming Community Network), Andy Jerrard (Methodist Rural Support Worker), David Moore (dairy farmer and Church Warden) and Rev'd David Ursell (organic farmer and minister) – to whom many thanks. You will also find the report from the Agricultural Christian Fellowship "[Harvest 2017 – Making Farming Real](#)" on the same page. We hope you find them both helpful for the harvest festival season.



apply for, and advise you about all the work you need to do before you start writing an application. Failure to provide robust evidence of the need for a project is the most common reason for applications to be turned down, and we can show you how to go about collecting that evidence. We are happy to review any application before you submit it.

We hold workshops on all aspects of fundraising which might be useful to you. Here in North Devon we hold a Fundraisers' Forum, so that people can pick up useful tips and information. Most CVSs produce a regular funding newsletter with details of grant-making trusts, new sources of funding, deadlines for applications and so on.

We also offer workshops in partnership working, recruiting and supporting volunteers, setting up a new project, dementia awareness and much more. All training can be offered on a bespoke basis as well as through our workshop programme.

We bring together community groups and voluntary organisations in Health and Wellbeing Forums to spread good practice and help people work together. This also helps us identify gaps in services, and to think collectively about how we might fill those gaps. The pressure on public spending,

growing numbers of older people and a reported increase in feelings of isolation all make that task more complicated and important. I think this is an area where we could work together more effectively; you reach into every community and have a deep knowledge of what happens and who the key people are.

Another important role for us is representing the voluntary sector and advocating for the contribution it makes to all our lives. We can use the experiences and concerns of organisations working with vulnerable people to inform policy and make sure that their views are taken into account when plans – such as the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plan – are drawn up.

I do hope this article will persuade you to forge closer links with your local CVS, and take advantage of the knowledge and expertise you will find there.

Further details of contacts and workshops from all our CVSs in Devon, together with those of Devon Communities Together (our Community Council for Devon) can be found on the [Community Support Organisations and Training](#) pages on our website (Ed.)

News of Events and Conferences

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More info and links for all the events below [here](#)

European Rural Parliament comes to Somerset - 6th September

The one day event will consider the research project 'Sustaining rural services and infrastructure' that ACRE has been leading on behalf of the Rural European Parliament.

Education Sunday "Gathered in my Name" - 10th September

Creationtide - 1 September to 4 October

'Creationtide', or the 'Season of Creation', is the period dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life. This year EcoChurch SouthWest is encouraging church members to [sign up](#) to receive daily Creationtide resources for celebration, reflection and action. Under the theme 'Inspiring Earth', participants will be sent a message every day with a biblical passage, prayer or reflection, questions and local stories of "Creation Care".

Devon Communities Together - Rural Futures Conference 2017 - 28th September - How will Devon Fare in the Global Economy? For more details including speakers and subjects [click here](#)

'All Together Now: bringing generations together' - what it means to be an inter-generational Church.

A one day conference streamed live on Tuesday 10 October 10-3 pm at Littleham Village Hall

Day Conference on Resource Churches in Rural Areas

11am – 4pm Tuesday 28 November 2017 at the Church Army, Wilson Carlile Centre, Sheffield.

The National Rural Officer with the Fresh Expressions Rural Hub are organising a day for those already working or interested in resource churches in rural areas.

If you have details of any events or training opportunities please let us know so we can share via the website and newsletter – as always via info@devonchurchesruralforum.org.uk

Growing the Rural Church Project - News from Marian Carson

Growing the Rural Church has developed additional webpages which can be viewed [here](#). New to the site are videos and case studies showcasing the work of GtRC so far. There is also

guidance and resources on working with your local community to care for your historic church and meet community needs at the same time. More content will be added as learning from the project develops.

Explore Churches

A new website from the National Churches Trust showcasing churches and chapels open to the public, even for limited times. You can submit information and photographs for your church [here](#)

Loneliness and Social Isolation

In our first newsletter, we highlighted the issue of Loneliness and Social Isolation in our communities and some of the projects around Devon working to help people find friends and fellowship. You can find news of the churches June conference on the subject [here](#)



One of the easiest ways we can help is to enable those in

other agencies, such as Social Services and GP practices, who are supporting the elderly and lonely, to know about the activities we already offer, such as Community Lunch Clubs, coffee mornings, groups for the bereaved, craft afternoons and more, so that they can put people, who we might not already know, in touch with these opportunities for love and friendship.

We know this is something the other agencies would value and, working with Devon County Council, we have an opportunity to include all our activities onto the ["Pinpoint" website](#) which is searchable by location and type of activity.

Joining a Lunch Club with the opportunity to make new friends could offer someone a lifeline – and it's something we already offer. If you can possibly help with this work, please [email us](#) details of your activity, including day/time/venue and a contact telephone number or email, or fill in the form [here](#) and we will add both to our DCRF website, and pass onto DCC for uploading to Pinpoint.

The Bright Field Community

*“commit to:
meet together monthly;
eat together;
pray together;
use Scripture in contemplative ways;
listen to God and one another;
encourage one another in vulnerability, faithfulness and living
with that which cannot be resolved;
reflect theologically with the help of academic theologians;
share experience; and engage with contemporary issues in rural
ministry*

*Through this we hope to raise awareness, advocate for rural
ministry and for our colleagues, foster healthy church
communities and offer support with appropriate training.”*

You can read about the Bright Field Community’s Re-
imagining Ministry day in May (mentioned in our last
newsletter) [here](#) and if you are interested in exploring setting
up a group in your locality, please do email us and we can put
you in touch.

Rural Research

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Read the latest research
report from the Church of
England "Shaping strategies
for mission and growth in
rural multi-church groups"
[here](#)

Germinate

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Latest Germinate Newsletter
– full of useful resources,
ideas, dates – can be
accessed [here](#) or sign up to
receive your own copy [here](#)



*Devon Churches Rural Forum is an ecumenical group supporting Devon’s rural
churches and the communities they serve through networking, sharing knowledge,
ideas & encouragement.*

*We hope you have found this newsletter helpful. Please circulate it widely among your
networks, and if anyone would like to receive an email copy direct, please ask them to [email us](#)
with the word “newsletter” in the subject line. Our next newsletter will be sent January 2018.*

*Our next Forum Meeting will be on 16th November at 2.30 pm in Tedburn St Mary when our
main subject will be “Models of Rural Ministry”. If you would like to attend this meeting, or
join the Forum, please email the secretary at the email below.*

You can find the notes and papers for previous Forum meetings [here](#)

Please use our website - send in your stories, ideas, photos – we would love to share them.

Chair: Archdeacon of Barnstaple The Ven. Dr Mark Butchers

Secretary and editor: Rev’d Penny Dobbin

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