

**Annual Report
of the
Devon Towns Forum
2008**

Working with the Communities of Devon

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Chairman's Report 2008

Once again it is my great pleasure, as Chairman of the Devon Towns Forum, to welcome you all to our Annual General Meeting and Reception for 2008. I am delighted to welcome those of you who are meeting us for the first time and of course the many old friends and distinguished colleagues with whom it has been our pleasure to have worked over the past twelve months.

Many of you will know that earlier this year it was decided that the Market and Coastal Towns Association would cease its operations in June at the completion of the MCTi Programme for Devon. It would be remiss of me not to record, at the outset of this evening's proceedings, our sincere thanks and appreciation for James Hassett and his staff for the way in which they undertook their work and supported ours; thank you.

Many of you, I am sure, will have shared our concern following that announcement about the continuation of support for our Market Town Partnerships. I am therefore pleased, and not a little relieved, to report that the Devon Towns Forum in common with other Market Town Fora across the South West is to continue; indeed a new Regional Network of Market Town Fora has been established to facilitate this and we are eager to play our part in taking Community led Planning at the Market Town level forward. A brief account of the new Network is included with this report for your information on p.8.

With the support of the South West Regional Development Agency and Devon County Council I believe we are well placed to continue, not only our tried-and-tested activities, but also to meet today's challenges as part of a family of organisations and agencies working with a common purpose; that of supporting vibrant cohesive and confident communities.

With well over a thousand people from over thirty town partnerships having now benefited directly from the Forum's services, I am pleased to report that this year the forum has provided several highly successful events including: two Creative Coast Events, a Sustainable Communities and Community Asset Transfer Seminar and Sponsorship for Seven Training Workshops supporting the introduction of the Communities in Action Database.

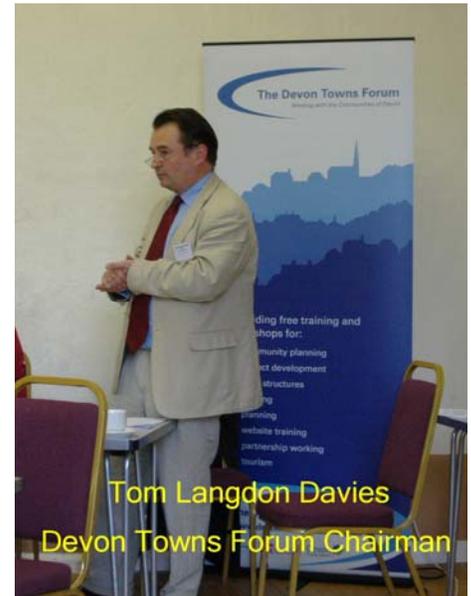
Our work with the South West Acre Network has also been highly rewarding with the development of a Regional Quality Framework for Community led Plans now being widely adopted. Similarly, our support for the newly formed Creative Coasts Network, together with our work on the future of Community led Planning with Action for Market Towns and the Carnegie UK Trust has been extremely productive.

As we prepare to welcome new members to the Forum's Management Board we have regrettably to say goodbye and thank you to others. May I first place on record the Forum's appreciation for the steadfast support and wise counsel of Andrew Lightfoot who has supported the Forum from its beginnings as our Devon County Representative also to Bill Ridley our Southern Area Representative, a much valued and longstanding member of the Forum, thank you both.

As we begin the next phase of activity we welcome Roger Grainger as our new County Representative. Roger's experience and expertise will help the Forum work with more diverse Partnerships and explore new opportunities for improving links with other organisations such as the Senior Councils, Devon's Local Strategic Partnerships and supporting the potential development of Market Town Community Engagement Hubs.

A particular priority for the Forum over the coming year will be its support for Community Engagement. We look forward to working ever closer with our many partners not least; Devon County Council, the Devon Rural Network, the Devon Strategic Partnership, the Community Council of Devon and the Devon Association of Parish and Town Councils, to name but a few of the organisations with whom we work on a regular basis; the list is considerable, but you get the picture. In conclusion I would like to thank our Board Members and our Facilitator for their contributions throughout the year and gratefully acknowledge the support of the MCTA / SWRDA and Devon County Council.

Tom Langdon Davies



Elections to the Management Board of the Devon Towns Forum

The Chairman will announce each candidate for election to the DTF Board in turn as follows:

Persons entitled to vote include: all existing DTF board members, nominees, chairmen or the representatives of community partnerships present.

Nominee for North Devon Area (Torridge)	Jane Mills	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for North Devon Area (North)	Vacancy	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for East Devon Area	Vernon Whitlock	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for Southern Devon Area	Brian Lowe	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for Western Devon Area	Christopher Kirwin	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for Mid Devon Area	Dr. Fern Clarke	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		

The DTF Facilitator will announce the candidates for the offices of Vice Chairman and Chairman in turn as follows. Only elected board members may vote or stand for the offices of Vice Chairman and Chairman.

Nominee for Vice Chairman	Bob Buxton	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		
Nominee for Chairman	Tom Langdon Davies	Proposed, Second and Majority Vote
Yes/No		
Other nominee/s ?		Proposed, Second, and Majority Vote
Yes /No		

Information for nominees, the responsibilities of Board Members and Candidate Profiles are available on pages 7 and 8

The Chairman will ask the board to ratify the following proposals

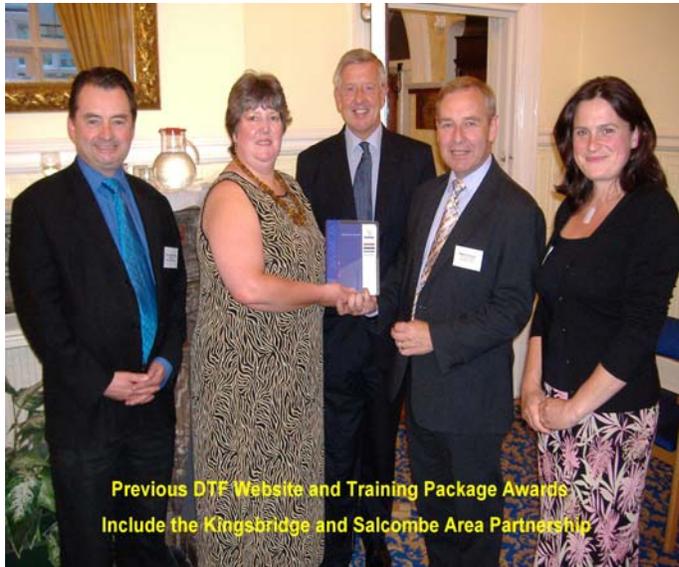
1. The Board to approve the revised Devon Towns Forum Business Plan 2008 – 2011 (App 3 page 16 -19)
2. The Board to approve the revised Devon Towns Forum Constitution (App 4 page 20 – 23)
3. The Board to approve the budget for the Devon Towns Forum for years 2008-2011 (App 3 page 18)
4. The Board to approve the Budget to 31 March 2008 (App 5 page 23)

(All documents previously circulated to DTF Board and Prospective Board members)

Devon Towns Forum Website and Training Package Awards

The Chairman will announce the winners of the DTF Website and Training Package and Kate Doodson of South West Chambers On line will present the awards.

The Devon Towns Forum have regularly awarded Community Partnership that can demonstrate a need for a Website to better communicate and promote their work with the award of free Website and Training Packages. The Award is worth over £600 and covers the cost of a top speck South West Chambers On-line Website, plus an individual initial training session, the first year's maintenance fees worth £90 and ongoing support from SW Chambers. To make the websites even more effective the DTF also provide regular free training workshops for all partnership webmasters.



Previous DTF Website and Training Package Awards
Include the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Area Partnership

Website and Training Support:

In addition to the support offered to previous winners of DTF Website Awards such as the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Area Partnership pictured here, the DTF have plans to extend their successful programme of support for Partnership Websites, I.T Training and Marketing Skills. This is will also include improved opportunities for partnerships to link with Chambers of Commerce. Awarding more South West Chambers On-line Website and Training packages will feature throughout the coming year and hopefully beyond. This years Website Awards will be announced at the Annual General Meeting for 2008 and will be presented by Kate Doodson of South West Chambers On-line pictured right.

The Chairman will introduce our Guest Speakers

1. **Stephen Wright MBE DMS Regional Director of the South West Acre Network will give a presentation on the work of SWAN which the Forum has been delighted to support. Please see appendix 1 on page 14 for a brief biography of Stephen.**
2. **Guest Speaker will speak on behalf of Devon County Council (Speaker to be confirmed)**

Nominations, Eligibility, Responsibilities of Board Members

Office	2008 Nominations Received	Status
Northern Area Representative (Torrige)	Jane Mills	Standing for re-election
Northern Area Representative (Northern)	Vacancy	New Vacancy
Eastern Area Representative	Cllr. Vernon Whitlock	Standing for re-election
Southern Area Representative	Brian Lowe	Standing for Vacancy
Western Area Representative	Christopher Kirwin	Standing for re-election
Mid Devon Area Representative	Dr Fern Clarke	New Vacancy
Vice Chairman	Cllr. Bob Buxton	Standing for re-election
Chairman	Tom Langdon Davies	Standing for re-election

Eligibility and Conditions: Nominees for Board membership must be able to act as a recognised representative of a Community Partnership, although not necessarily its Chairman, be actively engaged in Community led Planning and aware and supportive of the aims and purposes of the Devon Towns Forum.

The Offices of Chairman and Vice Chairman are available only to existing board members that have served not less than one year on the DTF Management Board.

Elections to the Board will be a simple majority vote by show of hands at the Annual General Meeting. This will be followed by elections to the office of Chairman and Vice Chairman by a majority vote of the management board members present. Offices are for a term of one year; existing members are able to stand for re-election.

Board members are expected to: Attend 4 board meetings per year (normally held in Exeter). Promote the work of the DTF and its partners. Support and attend DTF events when possible. Support the Chairman with oversight of DTF undertakings in accordance with its Business Plan. Act as an area or district representative supporting inter partnership working and communications between the local area partnerships, the LSP and agencies. A small budget may be available to assist Area Representative Board Members at the discretion of the Chairman or delegated authority to support partnership working.

Travel Expenses

Elected Board Members will be entitled to a travel allowance at the rate of 40ppm for their attendance at board meetings or other approved journeys undertaken at the specific request of the Chairman or delegated authority.

Board Members Area Representation is as follows:

Northern Area Partnerships: Lynton & Lynmouth, Ilfracombe, Barnstaple, South Molton,
Northern Area (Torrige) Torrington, Holsworthy, Bideford, Westward Ho! Northam, Appledore,

Western Area Partnerships: Hatherleigh, Okehampton, Tavistock, Tamar Valley, Launceston (Part)

Eastern Area Partnerships: Honiton, Seaton, Sidmouth, Axminster, Exmouth

Southern Area Partnerships: Dawlish, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot, Ivybridge, Totnes, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth.

Mid Devon Area Partnerships: Crediton, Tiverton, Cullompton, Exeter.

Devon County Representative: This is an automatic non-elected seat on the Forums Management Board.

Candidate Profiles

Cllr. Bob Buxton: Standing for re-election as Vice Chairman on the DTF Board

Bob is currently a District Councillor on East Devon District Council, Vice Chairman of the Devon Towns Forum, Chairman of Honiton MCTi, Chairman of Honiton Development Trust and Vice President of Honiton Chamber of Commerce and was voted Honiton Citizen of the Year 2007. Bob has been a regular attendee at DTF and the previous Devon Chairs Forum from its inception in 2001. Bob has a strong background in business and is currently working in the Tourism Sector with extensive retail experience and local knowledge. Bob is a keen sportsman and recognises the importance of good communication and is keen to support the Forum and foster good community relationships.

Tom Langdon Davies: Standing for re-election as Chairman of the DTF Board

Tom Langdon-Davies is currently chairman of the Devon Towns Forum, and was the vice chairman of the Market and Coastal Towns Association until June this year. Tom was the chairman of the Devon Rural Renaissance Action Group leading up to the successful bid to enable the Devon non objective two areas to get funding and join up with Devon Renaissance after their highly successful first year. Tom has twenty years commercial experience at Director and Chairman Level in the food industry where he created an internationally recognised brand and has worked in the oil industry overseas. He has coached on a cutting edge international leadership development course and is a co-founder of BDM Business Coaching, where he enjoys coaching high flyers in both the public and private sectors to achieve more and suffer less. Tom has a keen interest in Environmental Issues and in his spare time has worked with the Samaritans.

Cllr. Vernon Whitlock: Standing for re-election as the Eastern Area Representative

Vernon is currently Chairman of Honiton Town Council, Town Mayor and a member of the Honiton Development Trust. Vernon was also the Vice Chairman of Honiton MCTi producing its Strategic Plan in 2006. Vernon remains involved and in particular with a leading project to build a Community Complex for Honiton. Vernon also works as a Learning and Development officer with Devon County Council and joined the Board of the Devon Towns Forum in July 2006. Vernon is committed to supporting the work of the Forum and feels that it plays a key role in providing Community Partnerships with the essential contacts and training necessary to assist them in their work. Vernon believes that the training, networking and sharing of expertise facilitated by Forum has greatly benefited many communities.

Jane Mills: Standing for re-election as the Northern Area Representative (Torridge)

Jane is a business woman living and working in Fremington in the Torridge District. Jane is also the Clerk for Fremington Parish Council. Although not a Market Town Fremington is one of the largest parishes with some 11,000 inhabitants and with close proximity to Barnstaple in the North and Bideford to the south is ideally situated to represent the area. Jane has been a keen supporter of Forum events and training opportunities. Jane also attended and supported the Bridges event held in South Molton and is keen to develop links with other partnerships in the area.

Vacancy: for election as the Northern Devon Area (Northern Towns) on the DTF Board

Christopher Kirwin: Standing for re-election as the Western Area Representative

Christopher joined the DTF board a year ago as the Western Area Representative and has been involved with the Tavistock MCTI almost from the outset and has been the Chairman of TAVI MCTi, now know as TaVi the Tavistock and Villages Initiative since January 2003. Christopher is also Chairman of the Tavistock Music & Arts Festival Ltd. and Company Secretary of the Tavistock Youth Cafe Ltd., both companies that were set up following initial funding by TAVI/Tavistock MCTI. Christopher is also Vice Chairman of Tavistock Forward, Chairman of the West Devon Joint Partnership (of market Towns) and has been a keen supporter of Devon Towns Forum events.

Brian Lowe: Standing for election as the Southern Area Representative on the DTF Board

Brian has been involved in Market Town Planning since the early days of the MCTi Programme and as Chairman of the Kingsbridge and Salcome Area Partnership was a regular attendee of the then Devon Chairs Forum. Since then Brian has remained actively involved with KASAP and a keen supporter of the Devon Towns Forum. Brian brings considerable experience and knowledge of Market Town Planning and Community Engagement to the role of DTF Board member.

Dr. Fern Clarke: Standing for election as the Mid Devon Area Representative

Fern is currently the representative for three Mid Devon MCTi groups: Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton on the Mid Devon Local Strategic partnership. Fern has been a keen supporter and attendee of DTF events and meetings. From March 2005 to February 2007, Fern was the Community Co-ordinator for the Exe Valley Plan the Community Strategic Plan for the Tiverton area published in February 2007. Fern was formerly a teacher in Tiverton and then a lecturer at Exeter University. She is currently active on the management of Tiverton Civic Society and Devon Conservation Forum, and is a lay representative on the management structures of the Diocese of Exeter. She is a firm supporter of the importance of community strategic planning in articulating and achieving the aspirations of local community groups, civic and ecclesiastical, and in the need to identify the training needs of these groups to enable them to achieve their goals.

A brief description of the new SW Market & Coastal Towns Network

Following the announcement that the Market and Coastal Towns Association will cease its Community led Planning activities in June 2008 the South West Regional Development Agency has confirmed that it will continue funding each of the Market Town Fora operating across the South West, including the Devon Towns Forum, for a further three years to 2011. This funding is intended to allow each Market Town Fora to continue their respective activities, but with an emphasis on partnership engagement with LSP's and other agencies with responsibility for Community led Planning and Engagement.

To facilitate this a new Regional Management Board will be established made up of representatives from each of the seven Market Town Fora. This will provide a continuing regional dimension to Market Town level Community led Planning. The aim is not to replicate the remit of the MCTA but within the limits of budget and resources to preserve the outcomes of the MCTi programme, such as the MCTi brand, associated Community Plans and Quality Standards etc. The new board will work with SWRDA to administer the overall budget and to provide appropriate influence and strategic engagement with each of the sub regional Fora undertaking a range of agreed activities designed to support Market Town level Community led Planning.

Devon Towns Forum Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the forums services now extend to well over a thousand people that have directly used from the Forums services, either at events, or within their particular Partnerships. The Forums area of benefit embraces every Town and its hinterland across the County of Devon.

The Forum has built up excellent inter-partnership relationships. The Forum has also supported and integrated its work with other organisations, agencies and local authorities as can be seen in the following table of beneficiaries.

Table of Direct Beneficiaries of DTF Events

No.	Event Title	Event Date	Number of Beneficiaries/ Attendees	Event Type and Notes
1	Cross partnership Community Planning Networking Conference	2 July 2004	94	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
2	Culture and Tourism Conference	9 May 2005	88	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
3	Sustainable Energy and Technologies Conference	12 July 2005	65	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
4	Webmaster Workshop	29 July 2005	6	IT Training Workshop for DTF Community Groups Website Webmasters
5	Legal Entities, Organisational Structures/ Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees Seminar	9 Nov 2005	68	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
6	Power Point IT Training Workshop	3 Mar 2006	8	IT Training Workshop for DTF Community Group Members
7	Involving Communities in Planning Conference	21 Mar 2006	90	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
8	Better Communications Workshop	26 June 2006	9	IT Training Workshop for DTF Community Group Members
9	Project Development and Funding Seminar	27 June 2006	81	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers.
10	Devon Renaissance and DRN Funding Master Class 1	4 Oct 2006	21	Involved Community Group members plus Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
11	Webmaster Refresher Workshop	6 Oct 2006	7	IT Training Workshop for DTF Community Groups Website Webmasters
12	The Bridges Project Event	19 Oct 2006	50	DTF Supported Community Planning Event in North Devon
13	Devon Renaissance and DRN Funding master Class 2	4 Dec 2006	35	Involved Community Group members plus Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
14	Making a Difference Gala Conference	12 Dec 2006	85	Involving: Community Planning, Group Members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers, Expert and High level Speakers e.g. BBC TV

15	Community Engagement Workshop 1	12 Mar 2007	17	Facilitated Workshop Involving Carnegie UK Trust Partners in West Devon LSP and County
16	Community Engagement Workshop 2	3 April 2007	26	Facilitated Workshop Involving Carnegie UK Trust Partners in West Devon and Across the County
17	Community Engagement in Practice Seminar	14 June 2007	39	Involving Community Organisations and Group members plus Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
18	Creative Coasts Seminar	20 Nov 2007	60	Involving Community Organisations and Group members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
19	Communities in Action Database Workshops X 7	18 th to 27 th Feb 2008	100+	Involving Community Organisations and Group members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
20	Sustainable Communities and Community Asset Transfer Seminar	9 th April 2008	50	Involving Community Organisations and Group members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
21	Creative Coasts 2	24 th April 2008	25	Involving Community Organisations and Group members, Councillors, LA and Agency Officers,
			1,024	Total Direct Beneficiaries of DTF events and Services

DTF External Training Sponsorship Beneficiaries

Course	Date	Number Sponsored
CIB Certificated Funding Advisors 4 Day Course (Chipenham)	2006	5
CIB Certificated Funding Advisors 4 Day Course (Exeter)	2006	3
CIB Certificated Funding Advisors 4 Day Course (Yeovil)	2007	2
SWCO on-site Web Training Sessions	2005 - 2007	5
Bursary for Training for Trainers Course	2007	1
Creating Excellence Improving Partnerships	March April 2008	1
Common Purpose CPD Course	2008	1

DTF Sponsored Websites and IT Training Packages

Beneficiary Community Groups	Date
Honiton MCTi	2005
Lynton & Lynmouth MCTi	2005
Okehampton MCTi / Devon Heartlands	2005
Kingsbridge & Salcombe MCTi	2006
Dartmouth & District MCTi	2006

Other DTF Activities:

- Quarterly Board Meetings, Annual General Meeting and production of reports
- Presentations of our work made to the West Midlands Market Town Forum, Exeter University, Gloucester Parish Planning Network and the Carnegie UK Trust at their Community Planning Partners meeting in April 2008.
- Maintenance and enlargement of the DTF Website, information and photo archive
- Regular Communication of News and Press releases
- Working in partnership with the South West Acre Network (SWAN) on Community led Plans Steering Group developing Quality Framework and Regional Models for Community led Planning
- Providing Support and Funding for the Community led Plans database Project led by the DSP
- Supporting important Action Research for the Carnegie UK Trust on the theme of engaging rural communities in ongoing Community led Planning
- Regular reporting of local and regional events and meetings through DTF and DRN Newsletter.
- The Forum is currently providing support for Partnership Working across the County to promote engagement between the Community Partnerships and the different Local Strategic Partnerships.

The DTF also actively support the following partner activities:

- SWAN Community Led Plans Steering Group (ongoing)
- SW Market & Coastal Towns Network (2008 onwards)
- Community Plans Database Project Steering Group (ongoing)
- The Devon Strategic Partnership (DSP) plus Sustainable Communities Steering Groups
- Members of the Devon Economic Partnership (DEP) (ongoing)
- Partners in Common Ground (now Stronger Communities Group) and the Neighbourhood Action Support Network organised by Devon County Council DSP to address issues of inclusion and deprivation. (ongoing)
- Partners and hosts for the Creative Coats initiative 2008 (ongoing)
- Partners in the Carnegie UK Trust Rural Action Research Project. (ongoing)
- Members of Devon Rural Network (ongoing)
- The DRN VCS Action Group (ongoing)
- The DRN Consultation Response Action Group (ongoing)
- Participation in Housing Appraisal Groups (ongoing)
- Devon Renaissance Project Appraisals (ongoing)
- Devon Renaissance Community Boost Fund Management Board 2008
- Supporting the development of Senior Councils (ongoing)

N.B Indirect beneficiaries, i.e. members of Community Partnerships, other groups, organisations, and County Fora have not been included in the above as although they number in many hundreds and it is not possible to identify them individually.

All reports and other Forum documentation can be viewed or downloaded from the Forum website at www.devontownsforum.org.uk or by contacting the Forum Co-ordinator on 01805 624874 or e-mail to info@devontownsforum.org.uk

Some of our recent activities and events



Special Guests and Presenters at the Creative Coasts Event
L-R Jamie Evans, Tom Langdon Davies, Dr Mark Horton,
Cllr. Joy Whipps, John Workersien and Angela King

Creative Coasts

November 2007 saw the first Creative Coasts Seminar with Special guest **Mark Horton of BBC TV's 'Coast' Series**. Mark and guests provided some serious food for thought as delegates discussed the Government's recent inquiry into Coastal Towns and brought their own perspective and experience to bear. A report followed the event outlining future actions; amongst which was a call for a Network to take the issues forward. The DTF is now hosting the Network and many of the delegates attending the Creative Coast events have now joined. Visit www.devontownsforum.org.uk for more details

Communities in Action Database:

Having made a significant investment in the Communities in Action Database project by sponsoring seven training workshops during February 2008, the DTF are keen to continue their support and will be looking at how best to train Community Partnership members to keep their projects and plans in the public eye. The database project led by the Devon Strategic Partnership and partners is the first database of its kind in the country and is an essential tool for managing the output of Community led Planning.



Matt Bell demonstrates the Community Plans Database at the West Devon 'Communities in Action' Database Workshop Sponsored by the Devon Towns Forum

Sustainable Communities and Community Asset Transfer Seminar:



Hazel Stuteley OBE inspires delegates at the DTF Community Assets Event

A well known Community Regeneration Practitioner Hazel Stuteley OBE addressed over 50 delegates at a DTF Seminar in April 2008. Hazel stressed what an empowered community can do to make their town more sustainable. Delegates also heard from Karen Bridgford, of Devon County Councils, who is an expert on the Quirk Report and Community Asset Transfer. Acquiring an asset can be a lifeline to many community groups, but it can be a liability too! So, the message is, do your homework and get good advice. The Seminar was held in Okehampton where the community and the Development Trust and partners are looking at the potential for developing a redundant building as a Learning Resource Centre. Delegates came from all over Devon to take part in this inspirational Seminar with encouragement from Hazel and practical advice from Karen they will be better prepared to consider their future plans.

Future Planned Activities for the Devon Towns Forum include:

A Creative Coasts Network:

Following the highly successful Creative Coasts events the DTF is to help support a Creative Coasts Network. The Forum will host future events and provide a web based hub for the network to post information and share progress on a wide range of coastal issues. Creative Coasts is a partnership initiative of Devon County Council, the Devon Association of Parish Councils, Exmouth Town Council the Devon Towns Forum and others. Watch out for future Creative Coasts Events!

New Portfolio Holders:

In future where a board member has a connection, skill or interest in a particular issue they may be appointed as Portfolio Holders for that issue. We think this will make the most of the skills and connections of our board members and improve the flow of information and dialogue on a range of issues such as the economy, climate change and coastal issues etc.

Continued Partnership Support:

The DTF believe engagement between the agencies and Market Town Partnerships is essential for the future of Community led Planning and achieving actively engaged communities. DTF board members are appointed as Area Representatives to support cross-partnership working and engagement with Local Strategic Partnerships and the agencies. The DTF will provide funding to DTF board members to help with travel to local meetings and other associated costs. DTF area representatives may engage themselves with an LSP on behalf of the partnerships in their area, or provide support for one chosen by others. The purpose of the exercise is to keep the partnerships connected and support engagement.

Improved Partnership Working:

Many established Market Town Partnerships are now moving into a delivery phase and are developing into different and diverse entities such as, Development Trusts, Community Interest Companies and Property Trusts. Others will want to pursue a single issue or project such as Climate Change or the development of a Community Enterprise. Responding to this change, the DTF recognise that it should offer its services to an ever wider range of users. To do this effectively the DTF will need to work ever closer with our strategic partners and partner organisations as part of a cohesive response to the demands of effective Community led Planning. Plans for improving communication and liaison between those involved in all aspects of Community led Planning and Engagement are being developed and the DTF is ready to play its part.

Our Regional Focus:

In common with the other Market Town Fora in the South West Region, the Devon Towns Forum will be actively supporting the newly formed **South West Market and Coastal Towns Network**. This will include contributing to the overall administration of the Network and its Website, but also supporting an Annual Conference and maintaining Influence through a Regional Dimension to the work of market Town level Community led Planning. The Devon Towns Forum is also keen to support the progress of other Regional initiatives such as the Community led Plans Framework led by SWAN and the Action Research for the Carnegie UK Trust on the future of Community led Planning and Engagement.

To find out more about the Devon Towns Forum visit www.devontownsforum.org.uk or, telephone 01805 624874

Appendix 1.

Brief Biography for

STEPHEN W WRIGHT MBE DMS

Regional Director of SWAN –
The South West ACRE Network



Stephen Wright is currently the Regional Director of SWAN – the South West ACRE Network of Rural Community Councils. This embraces all seven RCCs in the South west Region, although they go under various names such as Community Action, Community First etc.

He has worked in the Voluntary and Community Sector for nearly thirty years, previously with the Devon Trust of Nature Conservation, the Community Council of Staffordshire and until June 2006, for 22 and half years as Director of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council. He has also played a very active role in Parish and Town Councils, having been County Secretary to the Associations in both Staffordshire and Gloucestershire, and with two other colleagues, the instigator of what has now become the Nationally recognised qualification for Parish and Town Council Clerks for which he received his MBE in 1999. He admits to a healthy passion for the first tier of Local Government, in what he prefers to understand as “Three tier Authorities” or where there is a Unitary, then two tiers!

Currently, he sits on the South West Regional Assembly as one of four elected members from the Voluntary and Community Sector in the Region, having recently stood successfully for re-election. As such he is a member of the Regional Planning Committee. Stephen is also a Board member of the South West Forum for the VCS (which he helped found in the 1990's) and of RISE the Regional Infrastructure for Social Enterprise, which grew out of an RCC initiative under round 2 of the Single Regeneration Budget programme, the first ever AL VCS SRB Project in the country.

Awarded the MBE in 1999 for services to the rural communities and Parish and Town Councils in Gloucestershire, and elected an Honorary Fellow of what is now the University of Gloucestershire in 1993. In 2005 he was elected as one of only three Honorary Fellows of the International Rural Network. He has lectured at the University of Arizona, USA; Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan (twice); and has spoken at National and International Conferences on Community empowerment.

For 11 years he presented a live, hour long Sunday morning programme “Gloucestershire Country Matters” on BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

Appendix 2

Business Plan Overview

DRAFT 20/5/08

For the Period 1st July 2008 to 30th June 2011

For the attention of: The Executive Director of the MCTA and or Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum on behalf of the South West Regional Development Agency, Devon County Council and the Chairman and Members of the Devon Towns Forum:

Overview:

The Devon Towns Forum succeeded the MCTi Chairs Forum in 2005. Since then it has operated under the terms of a Service Level Agreement with the Market & Coastal Towns Association and Devon County Council.

Following the announcement that the Market and Coastal Towns Association would cease its activities in June 2008 the South West Regional Development Agency confirmed its intention to continue funding each of the Market Town Fora operating across the South West. This includes funding for the Devon Towns Forum, for a further three years to 30 June 2011.

A new Regional body entitled the **SW Market and Coastal Towns Network** is to be established and funded by the SWRDA made up of each Market Town Fora operating in the South West. Funding from SWRDA is intended to help support the individual Fora deliver certain key outputs see 1.1 to 1.3 of the Business Plan.

Over the past three years the Devon Towns Forum has established a reputation as a hands-on 'value for money' provider of high quality services to those engaged in both MCTi and non MCTi Community led Planning. Significant factors in the Forums success have been its low operating costs, efficiency, innovation and the support of its Funding Partners.

Beneficiaries of the Forums services now extend to well over a thousand individuals and more than 30 Market Town Partnerships and partner organisations involved in Community led Planning across Devon. The Forum's activities, although always community-led, are designed to complement and support the aims and objectives of our strategic partners.

Government guidance suggests greater involvement and engagement between communities, elected representatives, local government and the agencies is required if we are to ensure people can contribute to decisions affecting their community. Therefore a key aim of the DTF will be to support partnership engagement; in particular to harness the benefits arising from Community led Planning especially in terms of Place Shaping, Spatial Planning, Local Development Frameworks and the development and delivery of Local Area Agreements.

Many Community Partnerships are now developing into new entities and there is a need for the DTF to support a wider and more diverse range of partnerships and enterprises. The DTF also recognise and welcome the need to work ever closer with our partners in the post MCTi period if we are to successfully capture the capacity, expertise and good will within our communities. The following Business Plan sets out the Devon Towns Forum core activities, key objectives and measurable outputs and is presented as the basis on which a new Service Level Agreement is sought for the period 1st July 2008 to 30 June 2011

Key Objectives

Addressing SWRDA and DCC Output Requirements:

The Key Objectives and Outputs for this period have been designed to satisfy both the Forum's proven and proposed activities and to meet its funders' requirements. The indicative budget at 6.1 below shows how the SWRDA funding @ c £23k per annum and Devon County Council's funding contributions will be applied to meet the required activity and outputs.

The rate of draw down of SWRDA funding may vary throughout the budget period but will not exceed the agreed £70K over the three year period 1st July 2008 to 30th June 2011. Devon County Council has indicated that they are unable to commit to funding for more than one year commencing 1st July 2008 to 30 June 2009. Any DCC funding beyond that will be the subject of separate negotiations with DCC based on a continuation of the Forum's services and any additions thereto.

1. Key Objectives:

- 1.1 **Regional Influencing:** To provide regional influence and representation through an inclusive forum for the Market Town areas of Devon, including their hinterland. ;
- 1.2 **Links to Local Strategic Partnerships:** To facilitate engagement with District and County level Local Strategic Partnerships to offer a representative voice for advice, guidance and influence where appropriate;
- 1.3 **Sharing Good Practice:** To identify, share and promote learning and good practice by providing opportunities for the exchange of information between towns and their hinterland, to meet, share good practice and learn for future planning and development;
- 1.4 To develop the capacity of the Forum and its members to support the process of Community Engagement and all aspects of Community led Planning; primarily at the Market Town Level.
- 1.5 To provide networking opportunities through events, conferences, seminars, training workshops and meetings primarily within the county of Devon, and to act as a communication channel to other sub-regional bodies:
- 1.6 To preserve the MCTi and MCTA brand and its associated outputs such as MCTi Community Action Plans and Quality Standards.

2. The DTF's Measurable Outputs for 2008 to 2011 are as follows:

- 2.1 **Quarterly:** Provision of up to 4 key events/ workshops/ seminars, or conferences per year to support best practice, networking, sharing information and expertise. Subjects will be related to the needs of the membership and partners
- 2.2 **Quarterly:** Hold not less than 4 meetings of the management board per year for the better performance of the Forum
- 2.3 **Quarterly:** Report Forum Participation in training programmes and partners activities
- 2.4 **Quarterly:** Monitor Outputs and provide Progress Reports to accompany quarterly claims to funding bodies

- 2.5 Weekly:** Maintain database of user beneficiaries and strategic partners
- 2.6 Weekly:** Maintain Website and information resource base
- 2.7 Daily:** Provide Facilitation necessary to deliver the Forum's Services
- 2.8 Daily:** Maintain a responsive networking resource and point of contact for all Market and Coastal Town level Community led Planning Partnerships including for individuals and organisations
- 2.10 Annually:** Prepare and submit an annual report to be presented at the AGM
- 2.11 Annually:** Hold an Annual General Meeting and Elections to the Offices of the DTF

3. The Key impacts will be:

- 3.1** Increased engagement between Community led Planning Partnerships, at the Market Town level, and Local Strategic Partnerships
- 3.2** Increased influence at District, County and Regional levels
- 3.3** Promotion of best practice in the ongoing development of social, cultural, economic and environmental regeneration through community led planning and community engagement
- 3.4** Increased skills, capacity and empowerment of members of the Forum and their community partnerships
- 3.5** Preservation and integration of MCTi and MCTA brand, outputs and Community Capacity
- 3.6** Greater strategic benefit arising from shared thinking and co-operative working in future models for Community led Planning
- 3.7** Consistency in the provision of advice and information to communities

4. Principles:

Operation of the Devon Towns Forum should accord with the following principles:

- 4.1** The DTF should be inclusive and offer its services to any group or partnership undertaking any form of Community led Planning or Engagement Activity primarily at the Market Town Level that has been approved by the forum board.
- 4.2** It should continue to network, lobby, campaign, build capacity and develop best practice.
- 4.3** It should support and promote links with Local Strategic Partnerships and other Agencies,
- 4.4** It should provide appropriate events, training and workshops at no direct cost to its users.
- 4.5** It should be community led and offer good value to its funding or contributing partners
- 4.6** It should be capable of producing measurable outcomes, be self-monitoring and meet its objectives

5. DTF Budget:

- 5.1** Funding for the overall DTF Work Plan will be provided by SWRDA and Devon County Council. Other funding partners may also be sought from time to time.
- 5.2** A SWRDA budget for the operation of the DTF for the period 1st July 2008 to 30th June

2011 has been agreed at £70K; primarily to address Key objectives 1.1 to 1.3 on page one of this document.

- 5.3 A further contribution for the operation of the DTF for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 has been agreed by DCC at £6K; thereafter DCC's funding contributions will be negotiated year by year.
- 5.4 Funding provided by SWRDA will be managed by the Gloucestershire Market Town Forum as the Accountable Body for SWRDA funding only.
- 5.5 DCC will continue to act as the DTF's overall Accountable Body drawing down monies from GMTF for SWRDA and DCC as per quarterly claims prepared by the Facilitator and approved by the DTF board and DCC

6. Indicative Operating Costs and Budget:

6.1 The indicative operating costs and budget have been revised to reflect the requirements of the 2008 – 2011 Business Plan and SWRDA and DCC's preferred areas of activity. The Table gives an indication of the distribution of spending for each of the next three years. Please note that the draw down and spend of available budget may vary from quarter to quarter but will not exceed the agreed level of funding.

Budget Head For Years 1,2 & 3 2008 - 2011	SWRDA	DCC	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4
1. Events, Workshops & Training	5,000.00		1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00
2. LSP's Engagement Activity	7,000.00		1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00
3. Meetings Expenses	400.00		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
4. Web Maintenance	1,100.00		275.00	275.00	275.00	275.00
5. Phone, Post, & Consumables	1,000.00		250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
6. Member Partnership Expenses	2,000.00		500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
7. Equipment.	476.00		119.00	119.00	119.00	119.00
8. Facilitation & Service Delivery	6,324.00	6,000.00	3,081.00	3,081.00	3,081.00	3,081.00
Sub Total SWRDA =	23, 300.00					
Sub Total DCC =	6,000.00					
Total Budget for Year	<u>29,300.00</u>					

7. Contextual Relationships for the DTF:

7.1 **County Context:** The DTF recognises that at both the County and District level future boundary changes will have a bearing on how the DTF works and with whom. The DTF's position is that it will support engagement with and between its Market and Coastal Town Partnership members and whatever local engagement framework exist e.g. Local Strategic Partnerships or Market Town Hubs or Boards as envisaged by Devon County Council. The DTF will also actively work with all other organisations and agencies contributing to Community led Planning where appropriate.

7.2 **Regional Context:** With the loss of the MCTA the regional remit for Market and Coastal Town Community led Planning and in particular the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Programme will rest with the new

Regional **SW Market and Coastal towns Network** of which the DTF is a part. The DTF recognise that the Network will be important in terms of maintaining a regional perspective and influence in Market Town level Community led Planning. The DTF in common with other **SW MCTN** fora members will seek to work co-operatively with all regional partner agencies and organisations.

7.3 National Context: The DTF is keen to promote greater inclusivity and support for communities consistent with the aims of current national government policies that encourage support for community involvement in Community led Planning, Engagement and Regeneration activity. The DTF supports the principals of modernising government through active partnership working, the development of Local Strategic Partnerships and other strategies as a means of achieving meaningful Community Engagement.

8. Strategic Partners:

8.1 There are a large number of organisations involved in Community Led Planning and rural regeneration. The DTF will engage with and complement the work of its Strategic Partners including:

- MCTI Association (from July 2008 SWRDA and the Gloucestershire MTF)
- SW MCTN
- SWRDA
- GOSWE
- SWRA
- SWAN
- Devon County Council
- Devon Strategic Partnership
- Community Council of Devon
- Devon Association of Parish Councils
- The Devon Consortium
- Commission for Rural Communities
- The Devon Rural Network
- The Carnegie UK Trust
- Action for Market Towns
- The County's District Local Strategic Partnerships
- Development Trusts Association
- District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils
- SW Chambers on Line and Devon Chambers of Trade (Business Link)

9. Proposal:

9.1 The proposals set out in this Business Plan 2008 - 2011 in conjunction with the Terms of Reference or Constitution having been approved by the DTF Board at its Annual General Meeting of the 9th July 2008 will be the basis of any new Service Level Agreement in favour of the Devon Towns Forum.

Appendix 4

CONSTITUTION of the Devon Towns Forum

DRAFT 20/5/08

1. Name and Legal Status:

- 1.1 The name of the organization shall be the *Devon Towns Forum* also referred to hereafter as the *DTF or Forum*;
- 1.2 The status of the DTF will be that of simple un-constituted voluntary organisation;
- 1.3 Without independent legal status the DTF will use the services of Devon County Council as its Accountable Body for the formal administration of its funds;
- 1.3 If the DTF Board decide to change or alter these arrangements a decision will need to be taken, following consultation with partners, as to the most appropriate legal entity, or model for the Devon Towns Forum to adopt in the light of its agreed role and remit.

2. Area of Benefit:

- 2.1 The area covered by the DTF shall be the County of Devon and any other area deemed appropriate by the management board including that of its regional remit as part of the *SW Market & Coastal Towns Network*.

3. Purpose:

- 3.1 To provide a non profit making, inclusive forum for all Market and Coastal Town Community Partnerships and their hinterland undertaking any Community led Planning primarily within the County of Devon and to act as a communication channel to regional and sub-regional bodies.

4. Objectives:

- 4.1 The objectives are those set out in Key Objectives (Section1) of the DTF Business Plan 2008-2011.

5. Membership:

- 5.1 Members of the DTF will be the users of its services including any individuals or organisation expressing an interest in working with the Forum. Membership is primarily intended for representatives of Market and Coastal Towns and communities generally larger than single villages, including their hinterland engaged in, or considering undertaking a recognised form of Community led Planning, Engagement or Regeneration Activity;

- 5.1.1 DTF service users will be invited to register their community partnerships and representatives as members/ users of the Forum. Once registered the nominated representatives will be entitled to receive information and services from the DTF and to attend its meetings and events. Members, who are nominated by their community partnership as a recognised representatives of that partnership, may also be nominated for election to the DTF's management board;

- 5.2 **Membership Fees:** There are no membership fees for users of the DTF's services;

- 5.3 **Membership and Users Eligibility:** Eligibility for membership of the 'DTF' i.e. entitlement to use any of the services and activities offered by the DTF will be entirely at the discretion of the DTF's Management Board at all times;

- 5.4 **Equalities:** The DTF will seek to ensure that all sections of the community have their views represented and that it operates openly and inclusively.

6. The Forum Management Board:

- 6.1 The DTF Management Board will be made up as follows:
- 6.2 A number not exceeding 6 voluntary community partnership members elected to the

DTF board to provide liaison and representation between local community partnerships and the Local Strategic Partnership for a particular district or other agreed geographical area;

6.3 A number of co-opted (non elected) representatives from the funding /contributing agencies not exceeding 40% of the Management Board at any time;

6.4 The required quorum for the management board will be three Community Board Members and one Statutory Representative Member;

6.5 Any board member of the DTF may be removed from office if they have acted improperly, not taken part in the work of the DTF or have failed to attend 4 successive board meetings without accepted cause, or in exceptional circumstances, the Chairman overrides this clause.

7. Responsibilities of Management Board members:

7.1 Board members are expected to attend all board meetings and to oversee and agree all DTF activities and personnel. However, responsibility for the day-to-day management of personnel will rest with the Chairman, otherwise Vice Chairman;

7.2 The Chairman and or Vice Chairman will, unless delegated, report to and consult with the funding partners for the operation and development of the forum;

7.3 To ensure all meetings, services, activities and undertakings of the forum and its staff are undertaken in accordance with the stated objectives, principles and outputs;

7.4 To be responsible for oversight of the forums budget and their disbursement, and the proper record keeping thereof as required by the DTF's Accountable Body currently Devon County Council;

7.5 To promote the interests and aims of the DTF and that of its partners, members and users at all times.

8. Elections:

8.1 Election to the offices of DTF board take place at the AGM and are for a term of one year with no restriction on individuals standing for re-election;

8.2 The Offices of Chairman and Vice Chairman are restricted to existing members of the DTF board that have served not less than one year as community board members;

8.2 Election of the Chairman and vice Chairman will be by vote of existing board members preceding the election of Community Board Members at the AGM each year;

8.3 Election of Community Representatives to the DTF board will be by majority vote of eligible members present i.e. recognised users of the DTF at the Annual General Meeting, or Extra Ordinary Meeting if quorate, or by means of postal or electronic voting as may be agreed in advance.

9. Meetings:

9.1 There will be 4 meetings of the DTF Management Board per annum including an Annual General Meeting;

9.2 In addition to the above extra ordinary meeting/s may be called as required;

9.3 There will also be up to four events, conferences or training workshops per annum It will be within the discretion of the Management Board to incorporate any of the above meetings with the events to meet the exigencies of the forum.

10. Communications:

10.1 DTF Minutes and Agenda will be circulated electronically or as appropriate to

Board Members and Contributing Partners;

- 10.2 DTF agendas, minutes, reports and other documentation will be posted on the DTF website in addition to information that is sent to members electronically to inform of the partnerships of events, services and news;
- 10.3 All telephone and e-mail communications relating to the operation of the Forum will be undertaken by the Facilitator as authorised by the Forum Chairman;
- 10.4 A Forum Website will be maintained by the forums Facilitator as an additionally sub-contracted activity;
- 10.5 All external communications and statements must be approved by the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Board, or delegated person e.g. the DTF Facilitator;

11. Board Members Expenses:

- 11.1 A mileage allowance be available to Board Members for attendance at up to 4 Management Board Meetings plus any EGM's;
- 11.2 A mileage allowance may also be applied to any other official journey undertaken by the Forums agent, or board member with the prior agreement of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Management Board, or Facilitator when delegated so to do;
- 11.3 Re-imbursment for attendance at DTF 'events' unless specifically approved will be the responsibility of the individual attending and will not normally be met by the DTF;
- 11.4 The Management Board reserves the right to consider making a 'discretionary allowance' in exceptional circumstances and to help meet particular needs;
- 11.5 Board members with Area Representative or Portfolio Holder responsibilities may have access to a small budget to support certain local inter-partnership, engagement and representation activity between partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships. This is intended to meet the additional cost of travel, meetings, and related expenses where no other source of funding is available for that purpose and where such activity and expenditure has been specifically agreed in advance with the Facilitator acting on Behalf of the Chairman and shall be entirely at the discretion of the Chairman.

12 Secretariat Personnel:

- 12.1 The DTF will contract the services of a part time, self employed, facilitator at a rate commensurate with the requirements of the specified services as may be agreed from time to time. This is currently equivalent to SO2 F Grade SP 34 at 15 hours per week;
- 12.2 To achieve maximum value of the working hours available the Facilitator will provide remote (home) working on a flexible basis applied to meet demand at peak times, attendance at meetings and other specified activities.

13. Location of Meetings:

- 13.1 The venue for meetings will be decided by the Management Board to meet the needs of the Forum, but is initially likely to continue the now established practice of meeting at County Hall in Exeter.

14. Changes to Constitution:

- 14.1 Changes to the Constitution may be made by majority vote of eligible members at the AGM or an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) called to consider any proposal to amend this Constitution;
- 14.2 Any proposal to amend this Constitution must be made in writing to the Chairman C/o the Facilitator not less than twenty-eight days before the date of the AGM or EGM, at which the amendment is to be considered;

14.3 Any amendment will require the approval of a quorum of Forum members present at the meeting and the Chairman who shall have a casting vote.

15. Dissolution

15.1 Dissolution of the Devon Towns Forum must be approved by the full Management Board.

End.

Appendix 5

Devon Towns Forum Budget Report to 31 March 2008

Budget Head	Budget April 2007 to Mar 2008	Spent up to 31 Mar 2008	Bal @ 31 Mar 2008	C= Committed or E = Estimated for 1 April to 30 June 2008 (3 mths)
1. Web development & Equ.	800.00	548.06	251.94	E 500
2. Members & Board Training	800.00	1,175.00	- 375.00	E 0
3. Communications, Tel, Post, Sundries	1,500.00	879.59	620.41	E 300.00
4. Web Maintenance	1,100.00	611.63	488.37	C 500.00
5. Meetings expenses Rm Hire	600.00	395.80	204.20	E 100.00
6. Essential Permitted Exp's Inc Travel	5,885.00 (inc 3385.00 DCC)	2070.03 -1674.89 DCC not c/f to 2008	2140.08	E 600.00
7. Events & workshops	16,120.00	13,433.09	2686.91	E 500.00 CC2 Event E 2,000 Web W/S
8. Service Delivery	10,105.00 (inc 3600.00 DCC)	11,675.04	- 1,618.74	C 3,081.93
9. Additional Partnership Working	5,000.00	780.20	4,219.80	E 1,000.00
<u>Totals =</u>	41,910.00 MCTA+DCC - 1723.59 DCC reclaim <u>= 40,186.41</u>	<u>- 31,568.44</u>	<u>= 8,617.97</u>	<u>E 8,581.93</u>
			+ Reserves c £16,300.00	

New SWRDA funding applies from 1 July 2008 See forward budget in DTF Business plan 2008 - 2011.

If you would like to know more about the Devon Towns Forum or have any comments or suggestions please send them marked for the attention of the Chairman to:

The Devon Towns Forum, PO Box 25, Torrington, Devon. EX38 7JY or send by e-mail to info@devontownsforum.org.uk

Tel: 01805 624874



Visit www.devontownsforum.org.uk for free events, information, news and special offers