

10 November 2009

Let's celebrate our voluntary services

A special event is taking place this week to celebrate the contribution that voluntary services make to the local community.

A group of 20 voluntary organisations will be attending the event, 'A Strong Voluntary Sector, a Strong Community' which has been organised by North Devon Council and North Devon Voluntary Services. The event will also outline the support that has been given to the voluntary sector by North Devon Council both financially and practically.

Two of the groups attending will receive cheques after applying for funding through the North Devon Council community councillor grant scheme.

Bishops Tawton Pre School received community councillor grants from their local ward members David Butt and David Luggar for over £400. They also achieved grant funding from Devon County Council and the Parish Council. On top of that, North Devon Council's Funding Officer provided advice and support and as a result the group has applied successfully for a Grassroots Grant and other grants over the last four months raising over £5,000. The funding has allowed the group to move on from considering closing to offering extended hours, introducing extra sessions, lunch club, integration into Bishops Tawton Primary School, introducing a toddler group, employing staff, advertising, new website, much needed new equipment, gardening facilities and being able to look forward to a more positive future. Julie Tramine Bishops Tawton Chairwoman stated that without this funding the Pre School would not have survived, which would have been detrimental to the community and surrounding areas, a big Thankyou to all that helped our Pre School.

Ilfracombe in Bloom will also receive their cheque for grants donated to them by their five local councillors, Paul Crabb, Paul Yabsley, Mike Edmunds, Bob Darell and Colin Wright, amounting to £3,000

Councillor Dick Jones, Lead Member for Community and Leisure, says: "Local voluntary and community groups make a huge difference to North Devon's communities. The Council recognises and supports voluntary activity and provides Community Councillor Grants to support groups at a local level. Its a great way to contribute to the vibrancy of the communities of North Devon, and to support the efforts of people at a local level. There are still grants available, so please contact the Community & Leisure Team for more information."

If a voluntary organisation or group needs assistance to find funding, North Devon Council can help and advise. For further information contact Caroline Leaver, Funding Officer, Community and Leisure Services on **01271 388264** or e mail caroline.leaver@northdevon.gov.uk on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

For more information contact

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Ref: NDC PR 09-0

Media Invitation

The media is invited to attend the event on **Thursday 12 November at 12.30pm** at the Castle Centre, Castle Street, Barnstaple to speak to Cllr Dick Jones and key members of the voluntary sector. Can you please contact the Communications Team by telephone **01271 388278** or e mail holly.webbe@northdevon.gov.uk to confirm your attendance.