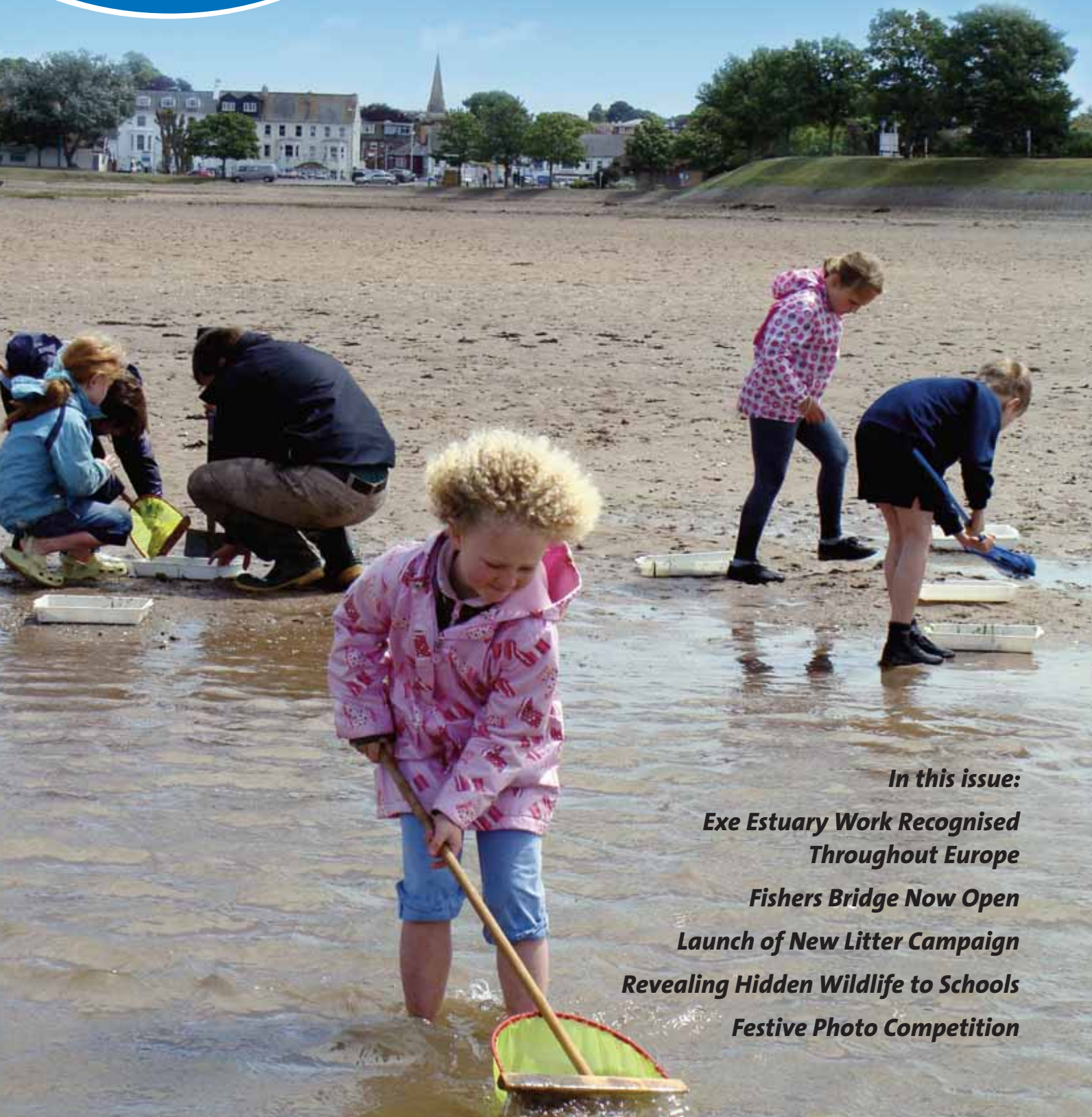




# Exe Press

Newsletter of the EXE Estuary Partnership

ISSUE 26 • AUTUMN 2011



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*Exe Estuary Work Recognised  
Throughout Europe*

*Fishers Bridge Now Open*

*Launch of New Litter Campaign*

*Revealing Hidden Wildlife to Schools*

*Festive Photo Competition*

For the latest estuary-wide information, news and events visit [www.exe-estuary.org](http://www.exe-estuary.org)



# Nature and Sports Euro'Meet

The Exe Estuary Partnership was invited to present some of our work at a European conference in Annecy, France during October. The conference, 'Nature and Sports Euro'Meet', is hosted by the French Government and focuses on sharing best practice in managing recreational sports in sensitive, natural environments.

500 participants attended the event from 19 countries, 16 of which are members of the European Union. We presented the benefits of coming together as a Partnership to provide a joint, cohesive approach for the benefit of the estuary and the local communities, businesses and users who rely on the area as a resource or for enjoyment. We also outlined the work that has been carried out for the Exe Estuary Disturbance Study. This study determines the extent and nature of disturbance to birds on the estuary from water-based recreation. With the popularity of recreation on the Exe increasing, there is a need to understand the effect of such activities on the wintering birds that use the estuary as a resting and feeding site during their long migratory journeys, as it can lead to mass mortality of flocks.

The Disturbance Study used a new and innovative approach, working closely with local user groups and using GPS units to explore where different activities take place. By combining this information with existing bird data, the area of intertidal habitat lost to birds from different activities could be estimated. Using these findings, we can now work with local user/recreational groups to manage disturbance from various activities on the Exe.

We received extremely positive feedback from the conference, with other European countries keen to adopt a similar approach on their sites. Other case studies at the conference indicate that the UK are leaders in this type of approach within Europe.

Outcomes from the conference that will be taken to the European Commission include:

- Promote Partnership working
- Encourage local recreational users to be involved in the development of environmental management measures
- Share experiences, lessons learnt and methods of best practice within Europe
- Creation of a European network of site managers and recreation groups
- Improve communication through the development of a multilingual online Forum
- Favour environmental education through outdoor sports
- Integrate policies relating to sports and to the environment into the common strategic framework of the European Commission
- Elaborate a European guide on the management of outdoor sports in Natura 2000 zones

More information about the 'Nature and Sports Euro'Meet' conference can be found at [www.nature-sports.eu](http://www.nature-sports.eu)

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Front cover photo: Stephanie Clark

# Exe Estuary Trail - East Side Update

The Fishers Bridge in Topsham is now open!



Nigel Cheffers-Heard, Bridge Inn

This completes another missing link in the Exe Estuary Trail and effectively means that an accessible largely off road route is complete between Exeter and Exmouth. The Bridge was designed by Devon County Council's Engineering Design Group and the project has been constructed by Dawnus ([www.dawnus.co.uk](http://www.dawnus.co.uk)). The project was a true community partnership with support from the public and local Councillors, with The Bridge Inn and Darts Farm contributing land, and finance coming from Devon County Council and Sustrans.

The Bridge was lowered in on Wednesday 7th of September and to celebrate this landmark achievement the Bridge Inn held a party with free ales and a Hog Roast donated by Darts Farm.

In addition a new toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists has been installed by Devon County Council.

**Zsolt Schuller, Sustainable Travel Strategic Officer**  
**Devon County Council**



Michael Dart (Darts Farm) and Nigel Cheffers-Heard (Bridge Inn) on the left, both donated the land on which to build the bridge. Steve Spicer and Nick Bott (Engineers, Devon CC) on right

# A Welcoming Sign on the Trail

A magnificent new display frame has now been installed next to Starcross Railway Station, welcoming visitors to the village and keeping them well informed about the Exe Estuary and the multitude of facilities available. This project was jointly funded by the Exe Estuary Partnership and Starcross Parish Council.

Take a walk along the Exe Estuary Trail and you may notice that all our signage has now been updated. With new snippets of information dotted along the trail, visitors are enticed to find out something new about our beautiful Exe.

**Stephanie Clark, Exe Estuary Officer**



# An Autumnal Clean of the Exe for our Wintering Birds

The Exe Estuary Autumn Clean Up turned out to be another successful event! Despite the wet weather, volunteers demonstrated how much they care for this internationally important site by turning up in droves, with 130 volunteers on the day! Local Councillors also turned up to give their support to this good cause, including Cllr Eileen Wragg and Cllr Steve Gazzard. It turned out that luck was on our side with the rain clearing up just minutes before we headed out on the Local Nature Reserve and the sun even shone through the clouds to see us through the two hours that we spent on the clean up.

The great work that volunteers carry out during these clean ups year after year is proving to have a very positive effect on the health of the estuary, with many local people and businesses noticing a reduction of rubbish on the Exe. Despite the low levels of litter, volunteers still managed to hunt down enough rubbish to fill a skip!

The more unusual items found on the estuary included a chair, walking stick, windscreen surround, suit jacket, chimney pot... even a kitchen sink! It was great to see that many potentially dangerous items were cleared, including asbestos, a boat part that was leaking oil and countless pieces of glass. Volunteers were even able to separate recyclables from the rubbish collected. The large number of volunteers that turned up meant that we could carry out a survey of the litter for the Beachwatch Big Weekend, which will be used by the Marine Conservation Society to influence government, industry and the public in tackling marine litter at its source.

A big thank you goes to Paul Craven and his assistant from Exmouth Marina Ltd for the invaluable help from his tractor and trailer in bringing the heavy items of rubbish back to shore. Also thanks to Leese's Skip Hire who offered discounted skip hire for the event.

As a thank you, all volunteers were invited aboard a free cruise and guided tour of the Exe from Stuart Line Cruises with a free buffet courtesy of the Environment Agency.

The event was captured beautifully by Dave McHutchison at Deemac Photography, all photos can be viewed on his website on the 'Miscellaneous' page at [www.deemacphotos.com](http://www.deemacphotos.com). With the volunteers immersed in the task at hand, the photos very nicely illustrate just how hard they all worked to clean the estuary. With the estuary spick and span, locals can take pride in and enjoy our Local Nature Reserve, safe in the knowledge that the wintering birds shall be visiting the area soon, to use our estuary as an important resting and feeding site during their long migratory journeys.

The Exe Estuary Partnership will be involved in more litter projects around the estuary in the near future. Read on to discover how we're involved in a new litter campaign...



All photos by Deemc Photography

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# New 'Litter Free Coast and Sea' Campaign Launched!



The Dorset and East Devon Marine and Beach Litter Group have launched a new campaign to reduce the amount of litter in our marine environment and along the beaches of Dorset and East Devon. As a part of this campaign, the Exe Estuary Partnership will be encouraging users and groups who are local to the estuary to be involved in actively taking care of our beautiful coastline. Research shows that 48% of the litter found on Dorset and East Devon's beaches is created by the public, therefore 'Litter Free Coast and Sea' seeks to:

- Raise awareness of the negative impacts of marine and beach litter on the local marine and coastal environment, coastal communities and industries such as fishing, shipping and power generation.
- Promote practical action to keep Dorset and East Devon's marine and coastal environment free of litter.

## How can I get involved?

- Support and spread the word about the campaign on Twitter (@LitterFreeCoast) and Facebook.
- Set up a marine and beach litter community project – we are inviting local schools, community and youth groups to apply for funding to carry out a marine and beach litter inspired projects.
- Tell us how marine and beach litter affects you – we are collecting quotes from local residents and industry workers on how marine and beach litter affects them to show the real impact felt locally.

This campaign is supported and funded by the Jurassic Coast Trust, the Dorset and East Devon Sustainable Development Funds and The Crown Estate.

Find out more at: [www.dorsetforyou.com/marineandbeachlitter](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/marineandbeachlitter)

Or contact Matilda Bark, Litter Free Coast and Sea Officer for more information

Tel: 01305 224833

Email: [m.bark@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:m.bark@dorsetcc.gov.uk)



# The Outdoor Classroom



St Peter's School,  
by David Roberts

During the warmer months, the Exe Estuary Partnership helped local schools make the most of the Exe with free educational trips on the estuary. Schools were able to choose from two exciting experiences, both allowing children to participate in discussions and activities to learn about this incredible environment.

Groups that visited the Local Nature Reserve in Exmouth took part in the Great Shell Hunt, before searching for fat wriggly worms in the mud and then taking nets to the shallow waters to see what creatures lay beneath the surface. Classes learned what makes an estuary so special and how these creatures learn to live in this changing environment.

We paired up with the RSPB for the trips to Exminster Nature Reserve, allowing classes to discover the differences in the creatures found within the estuary and the canal and how they are adapted to live in each habitat. Children explored the waterside bushes to learn about the variety of insects that live there, including the beautiful Damselfly!

Local schools will be invited to book onto next year's free educational trips in early spring. Since these sessions prove to be very popular, schools are advised to book early to avoid disappointment.



Clyst St Mary Primary School,  
by Stephanie Clark

If you would like to discover the hidden wildlife of the estuary for yourself, we are currently creating a colourful new Estuary I.D. Guide that will be advertised through the Exe Press and available to download from our website by the end of this year.

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# Exe Faces - Partner Profile

As a contributory Partner, Teignbridge District Council is represented on the Exe Estuary Management Partnership's Steering Group by Cllr Ted Hockin as Vice Chair



An 'Exe' man through and through, Cllr Hockin brings a wealth of experience to the collective management of the estuary, particularly in regard to listening to the views of residents and the needs and aspirations of the commercial and tourism sectors.

- Born in Exeter, educated at Exeter School, Cllr Hockin moved to Dawlish as a teenager
- He built his first shop at Dawlish Warren in 1959 and has been based around Dawlish Warren and the Exe Estuary ever since
- He was elected to Teignbridge District Council first when it was formed in 1974
- Was a long standing member of Dawlish Town Council until this year when he stood down.
- Has been President of the Rotary Club of Dawlish
- Chairman of the Dawlish Chamber of Trade and the Dawlish Warren Beach Traders Association

*'Having lived and worked in the area you realise that Exe has such a superb mix of habitats, people and activities, and it is extremely useful to have a platform like the Partnership where we are able to share our concerns, plans and opportunities to enhance and conserve this fantastic resource'.*

## Have your say on the management of Lower Halsdon farm

Lower Halsdon is a 114 acre estuary side farm gifted to the National Trust by Mr Stanley Long to protect the land from residential building.

An important 'green space' for Exmouth, it is bordered by the Exe Valley cycleway. The area has great potential for the people of Exmouth to enjoy open countryside, it is also an important area for birds, especially wintering waders and wildfowl from the estuary.

The National Trust holds Lower Halsdon for the benefit of the nation. Some of the ways we deliver public benefit include providing public access, maintaining and improving conservation management and protecting landscapes.

In addition to reflecting our wider responsibilities it is vital that our work meets the needs of local people. To achieve this, we need your help in shaping the future use and management of Lower Halsdon.

In particular we want to consider;

- How public access (Paths and cycle routes) could be improved.
- Opportunities to improve the management of the area to benefit wildlife and safeguard the landscape.
- Achieve any improvements in a way which is sustainable for the environment and the farm holding.

### What should you do?

Visit <http://lowerhalsdonfarm.com> and complete our feedback form, come to our drop in session at Exmouth Townhall on 24 November 4.30pm – 8.30pm, or contact us directly on 01297 680507.

# Managing the Estuary's Flood Defences into the Future

The Environment Agency is leading the Exe Estuary Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy in partnership with local Councils, Network Rail and Natural England.

The Strategy will provide a long term plan for tidal flood and coastal erosion investment around the estuary and along the coast between Straight Point and Holcombe. It will also recommend where we should create new inter-tidal wildlife habitats to compensate for losses of habitat caused by rising sea levels. Decisions and recommendations detailed in the final Strategy will strongly influence what projects can be progressed and funded in the future.

As advised in the last issue of Exepress, we convened our Steering Group in July to review where any improved or realigned defences might be needed in the future.

However, since then revised national advice on dealing with climate change has been issued, based on the latest information from UK Climate Projections <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk>.

The advice is available as product code GEHO0711BTZU-E-E at <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk>.

## Environment Agency Project

### Dawlish Warren Coastal Defence Repairs

#### Why are the works being done?

Due to the significant loss of sand from the dune face, the defences are now exposed and more susceptible to damage. The loss of sand between groyne 8 and 10 has exposed a 200m section of concrete blocks. Without adequate covering, this section is considered to be a particularly vulnerable part of the defence during storm conditions and needs to be repaired.

#### When will the works start and for how long?

The works will start on 16th September 2011 and will take up to 8 weeks to complete, depending on the weather.

#### What are the works?

The repair works will involve placing and anchoring new plastic covered wire mesh baskets (gabion baskets) filled with stones to form a flexible and permeable form of erosion control. These baskets will be tied into new baskets along the toe of the defence.

The works will also include building a new concrete covered gabion basket ramp with a 1 in 4 slope onto the beach at groyne 8. Although not suitable for disabled access, the ramp will allow access for construction plant and pedestrians over the steep dune ridge.

We are incorporating this advice into our work, because it includes lower estimates for long term sea level rise. These estimates affect when we might need new defences and the amount and timing of any managed realignment of defences that might be requested at Lower Clyst or Powderham banks as identified in the South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan. We will complete this analysis by December 2011.

To accommodate this additional work we have moved our consultation on any draft proposals to autumn 2012. We will continue to seek to balance the sometimes competing interests of protecting communities and the unique environment of the estuary.

We will shortly update the web page at:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/121321.aspx>

**Should you wish to discuss any concerns you have about this Strategy please contact Steve Rendell at following email address [steve.rendell@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:steve.rendell@environment-agency.gov.uk)**

#### Where are the works being done?

The new ramp and repair works to the flood defences are between groyne 8 (NGR SX9880179250) and groyne 10 (NGR SX9891379408)

#### How can I help?

For health & safety reasons there will be restricted access in the works area when contractors are on site so please find an alternative route and observe any restrictions. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

#### How can I get more information?

A copy of the construction design drawings can be viewed at the Dawlish Warren Visitors Centre during opening hours (2pm to 5pm Saturdays and Sundays) or at the Environment Agency offices, Exminster House, Miller Way, Exminster EX6 8AS.

Or if you would like to discuss further, please contact

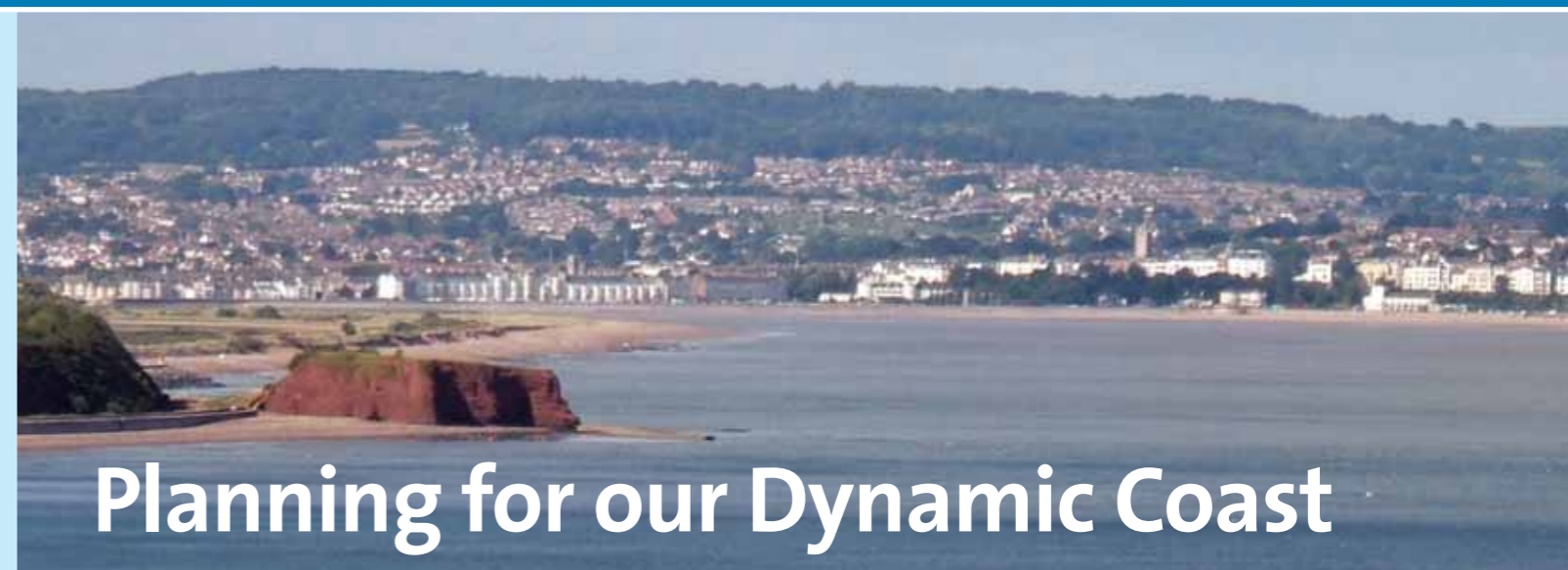
**Martin Davies**

**Environment Agency Project Manager**

**01392 316268**

**[martin.davies1@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:martin.davies1@environment-agency.gov.uk)**

Thank You.



## Planning for our Dynamic Coast

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for South Devon and Dorset, including the Exe Estuary area, has recently been published setting out the strategic policies on how we will plan for and react to coastal change over 20, 50 and even 100 year periods. The plan is available to view through the website of the Teignbridge District Council (TDC) led, South Devon and Dorset Coastal Authorities Group at [www.SDADCAG.org](http://www.SDADCAG.org). This is the culmination of a three year scientific and technical process which has involved several rounds of public and professional stakeholder engagement, including 18 events in a variety of formats around the Exe Estuary.

Within the SMP the Exe Estuary is one of the more complex areas given the range of conservation designations, existing defences and transport infrastructure and the projected influences of climate change on the habitats and amenity resources within this unique area. The interaction between all these factors necessitated further analysis before final adoption, including an Imperative Reasons of Outstanding Public Interest case which had to be considered at Ministerial level.

Two of the most dynamic sites are at Dawlish Warren and Exmouth Beach. The TDC led SW Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme has recorded beach levels being lowered by up to 1.2m over a three year period and the dune face being eroded by up to 22m. Whilst over in

Exmouth the figures may not be quite so dramatic the channel has been changing, material from the mid beach has been lost and the angle of the top of the beach is steepening.

The SMP is the key national decision making instrument for the development of physical schemes (defences) on the coast, and the Exe section was informed by a local Coastal Management Study in 2008. Further detailed analysis and economic justifications are currently being developed through the Environment Agency's Exe Estuary Strategy, being undertaken by an alliance firms Atkins and Halcrows (see separate article in this issue). In parallel with the Strategy, TDC are also undertaking a modelling and Technical Appraisal Study. This aims to guide a recharge and recycling scheme (the winning, placement and management of significant volumes of sands onto the beaches) for Dawlish Warren and Exmouth. This was recommended by the original Study and meets the first 20 year policies within the SMP, working with natural systems whilst maintaining the defence functions of our beaches.

The fact that all these works have attracted national funding perhaps reinforces our local view that these features and the health of the estuary are important at all levels.

**Graeme Smith – TDC Estuaries and Coastal Officer 01626 215748**

## Living with a Changing Coast

Local communities can now be involved with coastal climate change through a new European project called LiCCo, which stands for "Living with a Changing Coast". The Exe Estuary Partnership will aim to improve engagement with communities of the Exe Estuary affected by the impacts of coastal erosion and flooding due to climate change.

The cogs of the new LiCCo project are now beginning to turn, following a successful recruitment campaign with five new staff now

recruited by the Environment Agency and a further position being recruited by the National Trust.

An event will be held on 8th-9th November involving all Partners within the project, which will identify the first steps of the process. We will keep you updated as the LiCCo project progresses through this newsletter.

**Stephanie Clark, Exe Estuary Officer**

# Patrolling the Summer Estuary

The Exe Harbour patrol has had a busy year in 2011 having been on the water since May.

The volunteer crew have handled themselves very professionally especially when it has come to aggressive individuals. Thankfully it appears that most boaters using the Exe want a happy and safe river and seemed to support the Patrol Boat crew.

Education of Estuary users is the patrol boats primary goal but also trying to put across the ethos of mutual respect for other users. This is critical when it comes to the more energetic water pastimes such as Personal Water Craft.

Andy Phillips the Patrol Boat manager said: "Most people are aware of the 10 knot speed limit but we would ask that each boat owner is aware of what they leave behind in their wake! Often a boat can create a considerable wake for its size. This can cause issues for children on the waters' edge, people launching from slipways, people embarking passenger boats, wildlife, and even the river banks themselves.

It would be nice to think that everyone out on the river would help educate less aware or visiting users of what could be considered to be acceptable or polite behaviour. We hope in time that this is the case.



Those who ignore the rules and are arrogant enough to not care about the consequences, please beware".

Exeter City Council's Parking & Waterways Manager, Steve Carnell, added "I'm very grateful to the Patrol Boat crew for their commitment in helping maintain safety and harmony amongst the many different groups of estuary users."



## Helping Exmouth play to its strengths

EXMOUTH is another step nearer seeing vital regeneration projects taking shape, following completion of the latest stage in creating a design blueprint for the town centre and seafront. EDDC and Devon County Council instructed LDA Design planning consultants to prepare a masterplan for Exmouth Town Centre and the Seafront.

An 11-week public consultation on their findings ended in September.

LDA took the best ideas from earlier reviews and held a number of workshops to pin down the community's aims for Exmouth and create a vision for the town. What came through loud and clear was that Exmouth has four major assets:

- The town centre
- The estuary
- The marina/harbour
- The seafront.

All these assets could benefit from being strengthened in their own right, but also need to be better linked so they can support each other. The various projects – large and small – identified by LDA would need a mixture of public sector funding and private sector investment.

Three Priority Regeneration Projects LDA feel would make the biggest contribution towards achieving the vision for Exmouth are:

**1. The Estuaryside transformation, with a better transport interchange, realigned highway, investment in public spaces and assets such as the leisure centre, and strengthening links between the estuaryside and town centre. LDA say the most suitable site for a town centre supermarket is the rugby club training ground, plus other housing and leisure-based retail development.**

**2. The new London Inn quarter, providing retail space, better car parking, and possibly a hotel to create a more comprehensive shopping centre.**

**3. The Elizabeth Hall site. This, say LDA, offers the perfect opportunity to strengthen the linkage between the seafront and the town via Bath Road, establishing a real landmark with an active frontage onto Bath Road and the sea front. With the public consultation on the draft Masterplan now complete, students at Exmouth Community College gave their views as part of a Citizenship session. The next steps are to amend the report to reflect public comments; then debate it at EDDC's Cabinet before adopting it as part of the new Local Plan.**

### Action

Councillor Tim Wood, EDDC's Member Champion for Exmouth, commented: "Having attended several of the consultation sessions, my impression is that people want the talking to stop and the action to start. They want to see some of the things that have been discussed over the years actually happening; they want us to get on with it".

### New business

Work on the £3 million jointly-funded enhancement scheme at the Strand is progressing well and attracting new business to the area.

As this newsletter went to press, work on the Jurassic Coast interpretation project at Orcombe Point, which is being funded by Devon County Council and designed by consultants Bright 3-D, is expected to start soon.

Meanwhile, work has re-started on the seafront bowling centre and this is scheduled to be completed in the New Year.

## A Summer on the Edge

It's been a busy summer for kitesurfing, with Exmouth consistently providing some of the best conditions in the country for beginners through to professional riders. As always Edge Watersports has been working hard to educate new and regular kitesurfers to be considerate and safe towards other beach users and wildlife. It is this time of year in Autumn, from September to December, where the duck pond regulations are in force, and for those not in the know, there is a line of yellow buoys, to the east of which (Exmouth side), watersports are not permitted.

For local riders, it has also been a productive summer, with Edge Watersports owner Steph Bridge winning the World Championships for the 4th time and coming third in a recent World tour event in Mauritius. As well as a top level racer and business owner, Steph is also mum to the bridglets; 3 boys aged 14, 13, & 10 who are world class riders at such a young age picking up podium results regularly at national and international events. The youngest, Tommy, has picked up several high profile sponsorship deals this year and won the under 14 European Championships. Edge Watersports instructor Ned Taylor, winner of the 2010 British kitesurfing tour, achieved 2nd place on the tour this year including winning the Windfest in Poole.



John Bilderback

With such a high standard of riders and such good conditions this year, it has been great to put Exmouth on the watersports map! For latest information keep an eye on [www.edgewaterports.com](http://www.edgewaterports.com) and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.





## Autumn Antics on the RSPB Reserves

This time of year is always a very busy time on the reserves and this year has been no exception. As soon as the birds have finished breeding and the water levels have started to recede we make plans on how best to complete the essential work that needs to be undertaken before the winter visitors arrive.

Managing the vegetation is crucial to maintain the reserves in the condition needed for both winter and spring. Rush is an invasive species on wet grassland and as it forms large tussocks it prevents and shades out the growth of the finer grasses. Many birds do not like large tussocks of vegetation and the development of rush growth can be detrimental. This year we have managed to treat, cut and remove large areas of rush, which will help keep this invasive species at

bay. This will improve conditions particularly for birds like breeding lapwing – who like to see the approach of predators, and for wintering godwit, who too favour open areas.

Once removed trials are being undertaken on the rush to see whether this material can be used for the creation of briquettes for burning. The RSPB are keen to develop this work in an attempt to try and reduce their usage of fossil fuels and make their reserve operations more sustainable. So far they have looked into composting of reserve management arisings, production of pellets and now briquettes. The latter offer the option of being used in both domestic and industrial situations and do not need specialist boilers. The trials were uninitiated

last year and rush was successfully combined with woodchip from RSPB Aylesbeare reserve to produce good quality briquettes. The main limiting factor is the moisture content of the material as briquetting machines can only cope with 20% moisture at the most. This year initial trials are looking good and the material from this year has tested at 17% moisture, which is very pleasing. As part of a European project we are working with Site Managers from Poland who have already partly solved the problem and they manage their marshes for wetland birds by converting their cut material into pellets which are used in their local community. So what this space there may be briquettes from your local reserve on sale soon...

**Sally Mills, RSPB**

## Visitor Engagement on the Exe Estuary Reserves

As winter approaches our regular human visitors to the Exe Estuary reserves start to get very excited, for the avian visitors we have been waiting for all summer start to return. Autumn and winter provide the 'wildlife spectacle' we all wait for, not long to go now though, Avocets, Black Tailed Godwits and Ospreys have already arrived on the estuary.

Looking back we have had a wonderful summer with many people of all ages coming to enjoy the reserves. Groups such as Exminster healthy walks and the Westbank Young Carers have had a great time getting to know the marshes, the young carers in particular had a lot of fun picking blackberries and getting close to the creepy crawlies with nets and magnifying glasses. Throughout the summer we have engaged with visitors at the Turf Hotel, on the edge of Exminster Marshes, using telescopes to point out all the action on the estuary from the pub garden. We have also provided lots of opportunities for visitors to get to know some of the other wildlife found on the reserves, with regular 'bugs and butterflies' mornings and 'bat and moth' evenings, showing that RSPB reserves have more than just Birds to excite our visitors.

During September we launched our new Wildlife Explorers club for young people between the ages of 5-12. This club meets once a month on one of the Exe Estuary reserves, and aims to provide children with fun and inspiring opportunities to get up close and personal with nature. The group is open to members and non members of the RSPB and we have a few places remaining. To book your place or to find out more contact Gemma on 01392 824614.

We are currently looking for volunteers to work with our community engagement team, which involves helping visitors to understand our wildlife better and have a fantastic time on the reserves. This could be pointing out birds from our hide at Bowling Green Marsh, assisting on one of our regular wildlife walks or helping children during a more 'hands on' activity. An expert bird knowledge is not required for any of these roles, just an enthusiasm for nature and a few hours a month to spare. To find out more contact Gemma on 01392 824614.

To find out about the range of walks and activities for all ages this winter go to [www.rspb.org.uk/events](http://www.rspb.org.uk/events) or telephone 01392 432691 for more information.

# The Avocet150 Sustainable Transport Fayre

The Sustainable Transport Fayre was an integral part of the Avocet150 celebrations, greeting the procession of dignitaries from the Special Train en route to the reception at the town hall. It also provided a focal point to promote the work of the Exe Estuary Partnership, ALRUG and other local and national organisations with interests in sustainable modes of transport and sustainable lifestyles in general. Funding to promote the event was kindly provided by DCC's Travelwise project.

There was lots to see, with steam engines, vintage vehicles and Victorian dress. Guided by Town Crier, Roger Bourgein, the procession got to The Strand Gardens in fine weather and, following a musical introduction from Exmouth Town Band, was officially opened by Chairman of Devon County Council. Crowds were then treated to performances from Exmouth's Shanty Men, Billycocks folk duo and morris dancing groups Great Western Morris, Shropshire Bedlams and Martha Roden's Tuppenny Dish.



ALRUG's hard working Chairman, Tony Day, with wife Viv, in Shanty dress

Sadly, soon after the official opening speech, the skies swelled into a dark grey mass and the promised rain began to fall, in typical British bank holiday style! The shower quickly progressed into a torrential down pour and the crowds scattered, running for cover under the Exe Estuary Partnership gazebo!

Good news followed the celebrations, with notification that the Avocet150 project had been nominated for the National Community Rail Awards. In late September Chairman Tony Day and several other members of the organising committee attended the award ceremony in Sheffield on one of First Great Western's 158s (which included a scenic rail tour of inner city Birmingham and extended train watching opportunities) and included a night at the Hilton and a gala dinner in Sheffield City Hall. Avocet150 came second in its category, which was true recognition of the efforts contributed by all involved. More information can be found at:

<http://www.acorp.uk.com/2011%20Awards%20winners.html>



ALRUG's Sarah Ward and an example of Victorian bathing suit dress

## A Summer on the River Exe Café

Our first summer aboard Exmouth's "River Exe Cafe" has flown by in a bit of a whirlwind! With the outstanding estuary views and passing activities on the water, we had a fantastic first season with great support from everyone. Unfortunately we do have to close by October because the estuary is home to many rare birds protected by Natural England. We will be back at the beginning of April ready and raring to go for our first full season, with just a few changes on board for you to try out. As you can imagine the logistics of transporting everything including water by boat up to the cafe is time consuming but we do our bit for the environment using very local produce and recycling all

our glass/cardboard and plastics and collect any rain water to use on board, we want everyone to enjoy the beautiful estuary for years to come.

Thanks again for your support and see you next year.

**Louise Foa, River Exe Café**  
**Tel: 07761 116103**  
**Email: riverexecafe@hotmail.com**  
**Web: www.riverexecafe.com**



# POWDERHAM CASTLE

Autumn at Powderham Castle saw the trees bursting with shades of crimson and yellow and the Estate's herd of around 600 fallow deer in the surrounding deer park in the throws of the rutting season.

Now is the perfect time to buy someone special a season ticket so they can make the most of everything on offer when the Castle and grounds open again on 1 April 2012. Although the Castle has now been put to bed, there are a few special events over the winter. Here are some to celebrate the early festive season:

### Friday 18 to Sunday 20 November - Cooper Antiques Fair

A wonderful selection of antiques to admire and buy. For more information visit [www.cooperevents.com](http://www.cooperevents.com) 11am to 5pm. Admission £5

### Sat 3 & Sun 4, Sat 10 & Sun 11, Sat 17 & Sun 18 December - Festive Shopping Weekends at The Country Store

Escape the hassle of the high street and join us on the weekends leading up to Christmas. Enjoy choirs singing, mulled wine, mince pies and children's activities. For more information call 01626 891639

### Tuesday 6 December - Christmas Concert in the Music Room

The Choir of Exeter Cathedral will be holding a concert of Advent and Christmas music in the stunning domed Music Room. For more information and to book tickets call 01626 890243 (Mon to Fri office hours) Concert starts 7.30pm. Tickets £14

**Powderham Castle is in Kenton near Exeter EX6 8JQ**  
**For more information call 01626 890243 or visit [www.powderham.co.uk](http://www.powderham.co.uk)**





# Christmas Cracker!

Exmouth's Christmas Cracker in the Strand Gardens on Saturday 3rd December from 10.00 am – 8.00 pm will be a Feast for the Senses with a 'Pop Medieval theme' involving much revelry, music and dance. Expect to see Jugglers, minstrels, living statues, ribald Jesters and a fire breathing dragon.

At the heart of the event will be the Christmas market offering a sumptuous banquet for hungry revellers and delicious hot, spiced wine tasters. Our local charities will be entertaining with fun, games and many surprises

Extreme Fun, an Exmouth based company are introducing their new Ice rink, snow dome and grotto and mingling throughout the day will be stilt walkers, knights, ladies and three real camels!

Any applications for stalls at the event should be made to Kim Roper on 0778 653 8632. All other queries should be directed to Suzanne Birkett at the Town Hall on 01395 276167.



## Festive Photo Competition

Attention to all budding photographers around the Exe! The Exe Estuary Partnership are asking for your festive photos to be sent in to us to compete for the front cover of our Christmas edition of Exe Press.

The topic for the photos is 'A Christmas on the Exe' and should showcase the beauty of the estuary in our frostier months. The deadline for the competition is the end of November, so get your woolly hats on and start snapping away at the stunning scenery around the estuary. The photo should be portrait style in order to fit the front cover and needs to be of a good quality, the size needs to be at least 3500 x 2500 pixels.

**All entries should be emailed to the Exe Estuary Officer, Stephanie Clark on [exeestua@devon.gov.uk](mailto:exeestua@devon.gov.uk) by 30th November.**

Good luck!