

Axminster Division Report 9th June 2022

Holiday Activities & Food Fund 2022

The Holiday Activities & Food Programme for Summer is now published on the DCC web site, where there are 61 approved providers across Devon delivering 44000 places across Devon for children on Benefit Related Free School Meals and they all include a hot meal. See <https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/family-support/haf-programme>

The aim of the scheme is to support children to eat more healthily, be more active over the school holidays and have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition as well as be more engaged with school and other local services.

The children who take part will enjoy fun and enriching activities in a safe and sociable environment and have the opportunity to develop new skills or knowledge and try out new experiences. This could include physical activities such as football, table tennis or cricket; creative activities, for example, putting on a play, junk modelling or drumming workshops or other experiences like a nature walk or visiting a farm.

At least one meal per day will be included and the children will improve their knowledge and awareness of healthy eating. The scheme aims to help families develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting.

There is an extended criteria so 15% of the fund can be used for children outside of the Free School Meals criteria.

The fund is for children aged 5-16 across Devon and £1.8 million pounds is allocated from the Department for Education to deliver this project.

Fostering in Devon

Part of the services at Devon County Council operates is the County wide fostering service, which is often and quite unintentional overlooked by many people, unless they have some sort of involvement with Fostering. DCC needs more foster carers across Devon for the 800 plus children in the Councils care. They are particularly keen to hear from people with the knowledge and skills to care for teenagers and young people with complex and challenging needs. All foster carers receive exceptional support and training as well as competitive rates of pay. Fostering is a big commitment

for any household, but we're confident that the right people will find the rewards worth it. If you think or anyone you know has the

skills and compassion needed, please get in touch for an informal, in confidence chat at 0345 155 1077 or foster@devon.gov.uk

Below is an example of how Mainstream fostering works

This is the most common form of fostering and means giving a child or young person a safe place to stay, perhaps for a night or two whilst their family are helped to resolve their problems, through to a longer-term or even permanent arrangement.

You can also be asked to offer on-going support to a family or another foster carer by looking after a child on a regular basis, say one or two weekends a month. If you have the space, you can look after brothers and sisters who would otherwise be separated.

In some cases, the child will wish to stay in touch with their birth family, you will be providing the safe and stable environment which makes this possible.

Some foster carers provide round-the-clock care, helping children with the most challenging behaviour to find a safe haven, a supportive family, and a place in society. This level of foster care comes with additional support, training and higher rates of pay.

There are times when you may be asked to provide respite care.

Respite care helps ease situations where a parent has a long-term illness, it can give families time to repair relationships before a permanent breakdown occurs, or it can provide support to another foster carer as required.

Post Covid Economic Recovery

The Economy looking forward For Devon the future is a potentially mixed picture, with ongoing Covid-19 impacts on the economy, rises in the cost of living and the invasion of Ukraine creating global uncertainty, particularly in energy markets

There has, however, been some recent good news over the past two years, some of which are in the wider Exeter area 'sub region' not far from us. Below are a few highlights in a wider Devon context where the positive economic effect is likely to be felt County wide as we continue to recover

- Irish owned Exeter Aerospace taking over Flybe's aircraft maintenance facility at Exeter Airport and immediately advertising for 100 aircraft mechanics, engineers and aviation professionals
- Designation of Plymouth and South Devon as one of eight Freeport sites. Plymouth and South Devon Freeport is to begin operating in 2022 and has the potential to generate 3,500 jobs and add £400 million GVA into the local economy. The Freeport contains three main sites Langage Energy Park, Sherford Employment Zone and South Yard in Devonport, areas where businesses will benefit from more generous tax reliefs, customs benefits and wider government support
- Government infrastructure funding including £60m upgrading the A361 North Devon Link Road, improvements to the A303 route into Devon, £40m of funding reinstating passenger services on the Okehampton to Exeter line (implemented ahead of time and under budget), and £38m of funding to upgrading the A382 between the A38 and Newton Abbot
- Further £5m of development partnership funding over 3 years towards re-opening stations in Cullompton and Wellington in Somerset to help reconnect local communities and support regional growth with potential for the projects to be completed during 2025
- The sector specific Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme (AGOSS) was extended 6 months to 31 March 2022 with Domestic air passenger duty reduced from £13 to £6.50. Exeter airport has fully restarted operations and currently expects about 500,000 passengers in 2022 compared to 1m in 2019 before the pandemic

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