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APRIL/MAY 2014 ISSUE 30

reconnect

the green living magazine for Exeter, Plymouth and South Devon



Our 5th birthday issue!

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How to advertise...

THE DEADLINE

The deadline for the June/July issue is Friday, May 2 - but call us now and let's get the ball rolling!

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1/8-page - £93; 1/4-page - £148;
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Let's fix this thing



Cover images

This issue's cover includes all our covers from the last five years. And don't forget, you can read all our back issues, right back to Issue 1, on our website - visit www.reconnectonline.co.uk. Just click on the right of the page to make it turn...



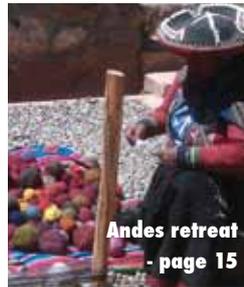
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Welcome...

to the April/May issue of Reconnect.
 As you might have noticed from the cover, this is our fifth birthday issue (no, we can't believe it either) and I can't begin to thank everyone who has made it all possible - readers, advertisers, all of you. Thank you and here's to another five years!
 We had planned a special feature looking back over the last five years of the mag, but ironically it got squeezed out by all the other stuff that's going on in this humming, buzzing issue - which is exactly how it should be!

The pages are stuffed with wondrous things as always but I did want to give a special mention to the piece on horse-logging at The Hillyfield (page 22).

And I'd like to leave you with this quote from Kit Vaughan, director of CARE's Poverty, Environment and Climate Change Network: "A horse is renewable energy: energy from the sun, to plants, translates into usable energy. Fuel will double in price in the next five years; this should make us rethink how we live, produce food and use energy. We can act now with foresight towards a sustainable economy and horses have a key role to play."

Martin

The small print

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ECO ETHOS

Reconnect is written, designed, printed and distributed locally, using materials from sustainable sources. It is printed using vegetable-based inks and biodegradable fount solution. The paper is 75 per cent post-consumer waste and 25 per cent virgin fibre (from a sustainable source), chlorine-free and FSC Certified (www.fsc-uk.org). All by-products of the production and printing processes are recycled. Please recycle this magazine by passing it on to someone else after you've read it

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Green Fuse Bereavement Services

picture: Juliette Mills

Are you a therapist, teacher or careworker?
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Independent, award-winning funeral directors of Totnes and South Devon.

Funerals - and more - Heart and Soul



Canzart colour

THE colourful work of 15 local artists can be seen in an exhibition in Totnes from April 13-19.

Elements of Colour at The Gallery in Birdwood House, brings together the work of the Canzart collective, set up 12 years ago by contemporary artists living and working on Dartmoor in West Devon and East Cornwall.

Email James Burton james@lewisburton.com or call 07596 257744.

Malawi stoves

CONCERN Universal, a charity that improves lives in Malawi by providing stoves for cooking, will have a stand at the Exeter Festival of Food and Drink, April 24-27, after comedian Marcus Brigstocke presents the Radio 4 appeal on their behalf on April 13. Visit www.concern-universal.orh.

New home co-op

BOWDEN House Community, on the outskirts of Totnes, is setting up a housing co-operative and looking for new members to buy into newly converted studio-style rooms and share community resources and land. Visit www.bowdenhouse.co.uk to find out more.

Jazz guitarist gig

INTERNATIONAL jazz guitarist Jim Mullen (ex-Average White Band) will play at The Bread and Roses, a community-run pub and arts hub in Ebrington Street, Plymouth, on April 29 at 7pm. Tickets £5 on the door or from Really Good Records. Call 01752 659861.

Dads' days out

DANGEROUS Dads, the Totnes-based social group for dads and their young children, will go on a wild walk in Totnes on Saturday April 26 (1-4pm) and go rockpooling in Salcombe on Saturday May 17 (1-4pm). Call Ian on 01803 840990 or 077317 95160 for details.

Dyslexia support

ARE you dyslexic, or suspect you might be? Exeter-based company Cinnabar is offering free support and advice for members on the second Wednesday of every month at Exeter City Council offices. The service is free but by appointment only – call 01392 357501 and visit www.cinnabarbiz.co.uk.

Give Taiko a try

FANCY trying Taiko drumming?

Look out for a Taiko drumming taster workshop for beginners (14+) in the Roland Levinsky Building, in Plymouth Uni, from 10.30am-12.30pm on two Sundays, April 13 and 20.

And for a more regular Taiko session, try 7-8.15pm on Mondays from April 21, at the Ariel Centre in Totnes.

The Plymouth taster is £20 and the weekly sessions just £8. Find out more at hj@taikojourney.com.

Right: Kids enjoying Taiko.



Groups talk matters of death

FOR some months now, South Devon funeral directors Green Fuse have been running a group for therapists from all disciplines in their Buckfastleigh meeting hall, sitting on sofas with a hot drink and a fire going, talking about death, dying and bereavement.

And so popular has it been that they are now looking to start two new groups, one for teachers and another for care workers.

"These groups are not supervision or bereavement groups as such," explained Green Fuse's Jane Morrell, "but they provide a warm, welcoming and non-judgemental forum where people learn to talk easily and with confidence about challenging life events. They are peer groups with expert support."

They are particularly interested in starting a group for infant, primary and secondary school teachers.

"A local children's nurse was very enthusiastic about the idea and told me: 'As much as you don't think of children being affected by death, many children are. Whether the death is of a sibling, a parent, grandparent, friend or even a pet,

the event will massively affect the child's social life and their ability in school. It is so useful for teachers to be able to spot the children who need further help because they are often not immediately obvious."

Jane and her partner Simon Smith are both graduates of the Institute of Psychosynthesis.

Simon said: "So often we find that when these subjects are opened up in a group extraordinary stories emerge. Yes, there is sadness but there can also be a lot of laughter as well - and a great deal of learning and support from one another."

Bereavement counsellor Joyce McGrath, a regular member of the therapists' group, said: "I find being part of a group of people to be a valuable source of both inspiration and support.

"Through the sharing of our experiences, both personal and work-related, I have gained fresh perspectives and new energy for my role. The group provides a new circle of belonging."

To find out more, call Green Fuse on 01803 840779.

Land share

IF you are looking for shares in an allotment in the Heavitree area of Exeter, we could have just the contact you need.

A Reconnect reader is hoping to find someone to share the workload of a large plot and preferably can manage some of the heavy lifting.

They must come with an organic agenda for growing and also have a respect for wildlife.

A share of the joys of gardening and of course a share of the fruit and veg are the rewards.

Contact Pete at Reconnect and he will pass on your details: adverts@reconnectonline.co.uk or call 01392 346342.

● And if you too have growing space to share, let us know.

New growth among the yurts

AFTER a successful first season, Cat Middle and Doug Lane are preparing for the next stage in the development of the High Nature Centre in East Portlemouth.

The centre features yurts in their own circular glades, surrounded by a bank of young trees and wild flowers – the couple have planted more than 2000 native hedgerow trees and over 30 different species of wild flower.

This Summer, the centre will open up to day visitors, offering arts and crafts sessions and guided tours of the site.

Cat and Doug are also focusing on health and wellbeing, growing and processing nutritious and medicinal produce, including juicing and dehydrating fruits, healing herbs and vegetables.

Says Cat: "There will also be the opportunity to explore - the surrounding landscape with coastal walks, kayaking and nature trails, and the inner-landscape through meditation

and mindfulness workshops."

There are plans to continue increasing the bio-diversity on the land by creating more wildlife habitats and introducing a fresh water eco-system.

The centre welcomes volunteers between April-October, and they are currently looking for people to help with the design and construction of an 18m diameter roundhouse.

Visit www.high-nature.co.uk or email contact@high-nature.co.uk.

A yurt at the High Nature centre and, below, the cosy interior.



Help for budding business

EVERY new business needs all the help it can get – not just the obvious financial kind.

And businesses that put emphasis on sustainability and community sometimes need additional support.

The Local Entrepreneur Forum is an annual one-day event in Totnes that encourages links between local businesses and the people who want to support them.

The main event of the day, scheduled this year for Tuesday May 13, is the Green Dragons Den, where new and would-be business people pitch to an audience of investors and 'in-kind' supporters.

As well as financial help (and supporters are encouraged to offer any contribution they can, no matter how small), assistance comes in many other forms – last year that included offers of premises, fruit trees and a promotional film.

This year, Reconnect is donating free promotion in the magazine for one or more new businesses.

Editor Martin Foster said: "We are so impressed by the enthusiasm and creativity of would-be local entrepreneurs. We always do what we can to help them spread the word through the magazine, so we decided to get more actively involved in the forum this year. We urge other local businesses and individuals to do the same – it can make such a difference to a new business to know they have the support of the community."



The School Farm project in Dartington was last year given 25 fruit trees, two tonnes of mulch and use of a horse paddock.

The REconomy Centre, the Totnes-based business support group, is home to the Local Entrepreneur Forum project and is particularly keen this year to encourage young people to take the plunge into local business.

"More and more local young people are considering starting their own businesses," says REconomy's Jay Tompt, "especially when jobs can be hard to come by. They have the ideas and the enthusiasm but they do sometimes need a little help and support to make it happen."

The 2014 Local Entrepreneur Forum will be held in Totnes Civic Hall on May 13, 10am-4pm. To find out more, or to make an advance offer of goods or services, email Jay Tompt at info@reconomycentre.org.

facebook.com/rleft

3rd Annual Local Entrepreneur Forum

May 13, 2014, Civic Hall, Totnes

We can all be investors in our local economy. Start-ups need cash, but lots of other support, too; skills, mentors, networks, childcare, hugs.

"When people started pledging their support, I was blown away."

- Laura, School Farm CSA, LEF 2013

Join your neighbours, bring your hugs and your cash, and let's support our local entrepreneurs.

BOOK NOW!

<http://tinyurl.com/lef2014>

Totnes REconomy Project

Working for a strong, local economy

City support hub for ex-military

A NEW facility to help anyone who has left the armed forces readjust to civilian life opens in Exeter on April 11.

The Devon & Exeter Armed Forces Community Support Hub - jointly run by the St Loyes Foundation, the Royal British Legion and the charity SSAFA - is a dedicated space where former military personnel and their families can get help, advice and support.

Among the services on offer is a range of vocational training courses as well as careers advice, mentoring and coaching to help clients find work that suits their particular skills, talents and interests.

Lifecoach Jeff Sleeman has been involved in a pilot project to provide coaching for the programme and is working closely with Transitions coordinator Richard Rochester to ensure clients are given the best possible opportunity to find work that really suits them.

Says Jeff: "In the past, people



Jeff Sleeman, left, with the armed forces support project manager Richard Rochester.

coming out of the armed forces have often applied for the first job going without really giving very much consideration to what they would really like to do or what they are best suited for. The coaching programme is designed to help them through what is often a difficult process and into work that makes the most of their talents and which they find enjoyable and fulfilling."

The Hub opens on April 11 at Beaufort House, New North Road, Exeter. Call 01392 255428 for more information.

Yurt Camping 2014

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Sharing skills for richer life

SOME decent weather (or at least a break in all the nasty stuff) has got people up and busy – something that is reflected by Transition Town Totnes's Skillshare calendar.

The Skillshare project is just that – a free sharing of skills. You simply contact TTT and offer to run a workshop and they publicise it. All free.

Check out the TTT website for details of Skillshare workshops (and lots more besides) at www.transitiontowntotnes.org/events.

Or email organiser Sophia to offer your skills or ask to go on her mailing list - sophia@transitiontowntotnes.org.

Be abundant

ARE you making a good income but feel you are selling your soul in the process? Or are you frustrated because the law-of-attraction won't work for you?



Thrivecraft's Maggie Kay, above, keen to share her know-how, has designed one of her Thrivecraft workshops on the theme.

Say Yes to Abundance: How to Create Money with Heart and Soul will be held on May 17/18 at the Totnes Natural Health Centre. The cost is £149 with some concessions available and is limited to 25 participants. Call Maggie on 07905 628905 or visit www.maggiekaywisdom.com.



Bicton College has launched a new heritage and ornamental tree service with the removal of a horse chestnut tree in Lypstone. Bicton College Tree Services is based in East Budleigh - call 01395 562398. Below: college principal David Henley who volunteered to be a Student for a Day.

Principal enjoys day of student life

BICTON College Principal David Henley enjoyed a taste of student life and at the same time helped raise the profile of the Fairtrade movement.

David volunteered to be a Student for a Day, trading places with a range of students across a selection of subject areas and took part in rifle drills with the Military Academy, tree felling with the arboriculture team, equine feeding and grooming in the stables, attended a student council meeting and reviewed portfolio work with agriculture apprentices on Home Farm.

Said David: It is important to raise awareness of Fairtrade Fortnight, particularly at Bicton College, as our students must understand the impact of fair treatment, prices and sustainability in agriculture locally, throughout the UK and worldwide."

He added: "This experience has also been beneficial to me personally, as I was able to get to know more of the students and get an in-depth understanding of what they do so well on a daily basis."

The college recently welcomed the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Rt Hon Owen



Paterson MP and the local MP for East Devon, Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP to open the new animal husbandry school.

A £2.8 million grant from the Skills Funding Agency made the build possible. The school is working with The Rare Breeds Survival Trust to introduce rare breeds into the curriculum.

Embercombe gets it together in partnership

A CLUE to one of the key themes of this magazine is in its title. And Embercombe, the social enterprise on Haldon Hill just outside Exeter, has been taking this to heart, entering into a record number of partnerships this year.

Bristol-based arts and environmental organisation Imayla is joining forces with them to offer Getting Out There, training in working outdoors with children, young people and families.

Lifebeat is a dynamic organisation running camps for young people aged 13-17 and Embercombe is delighted there's one running on their site. It's hosting the Social Entrepreneurs-in-training at On Purpose (their training programme offers £20k/yr to successful applicants – and they are recruiting now!) and executives from UK Sport are coming in the Summer with Leaders Quest.

WWF International is joining forces with the Embercombe team to offer its Heart of Leadership programme for business leaders and The Training Partnership is linking with Embercombe and bringing their 63 European partners with them...the possibilities are endless, says a spokesperson for Embercombe.

If your organisation shares Embercombe's mission of touching hearts, stimulating minds and inspiring committed action for a truly sustainable world, the new MD there, Dominic Acland, would love to hear from you.

Visit www.embercombe.co.uk to find out more.

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Local artists journey near and far

THERE are wallfuls of wonder to be seen at the Harbour House in Kingsbridge over the next couple of months.

Local artists are exploring the theme 'Near and Far' in the open exhibition currently running (until April 21).

Then, on April 26, Maggie Smith, Sam Gingell and Sarah Marcus present their fourth group show at the gallery with personal interpretations of the local landscape in painting, printmaking, pastels and mixed media.

Artist and curator Karen Lorenz invited photographer Phil Pierce and sculptors Phil Wakeham and Kari Furre to join her for The Imaginary Body, which runs from May 13-18.

And from May 20 until June 1, Cherry Lyons, Wendy Chudley and Jenni Pentecost aim to capture "the very essence of the rich diversity of our coast and landscape" with their finished work and sketchbooks.

Find out more at www.harbourhouse.org.uk, or call 01548 854708.



The Surya Festival near Falmouth.

Yoga fest for families

Whether you're a beginner in Yoga or a lifelong Yogi, the Surya Festival near Falmouth will give you a warm welcome.

The small four-day family-friendly festival, which runs from May 23 to 28, is set in a beautiful sheltered valley with idyllic camping using renewable energy.

The festival has solar and wood-fired showers, spring water on tap and plenty of clean composting loos.

Activities include diverse yoga traditions, meditation, Kirtan, relaxing therapies and creative workshops.

Plenty of children's workshops are geared to all ages. There's a wholefood cafe, wood-fired sauna and campfires. Find out more at www.surya.org.uk.

● More festival news on pages 20/21.



Zimbabwean musician Chartwell Dutiuro will lead the Exmoor family camp.

Music on the moor

FAMILIES will be gathering in an Exmoor valley from August 19-24 to enjoy making music together.

Family Music Camp is open to families with children of all ages and musical abilities.

One of the organisers, Zoe Kenyon, said: "There will be daily workshops involving lots of singing, mbira-playing, dance, rhythmic games, harmony, songwriting and storytelling, as well as drumming, simple instrument making, and anything else musical, creative and fun that we can come up with!"

The camp will be led by world-renowned Zimbabwean musician Chartwell Dutiuro and professional vocal leader Claire Anstee, with guest tutors including Denise Rowe, who specialises in pan-African dance.

"All of our teachers have worked extensively with children and adults in schools, festivals and camps throughout the UK," says Zoe.

Locally sourced vegetarian meals are included and much of the food is grown at the venue, Coombe Farm, a 100-acre valley of woodland and semi-wilderness – "a haven for wildlife and humans!"

Email familymusiccamp@gmail.com, visit the Family Music Camp Devon Facebook page, or call Claire on 01398 332781.

Creation of her last days

DANCING With Cancer is the story of Diane Brueton, from the traumatic diagnosis of terminal bowel cancer in August 2007, and the devastating prognosis of only a few months to live, to Diana's final graceful acceptance that she would die soon.

But those months became years as Diana began a journey of meditation, healing, alternative therapies, art and creativity that was to last four and a half years.

Dancing With Cancer, now available in paperback, is available from all good bookshops and online from Amazon. Visit www.dancingwithcancer.co.uk.

Folk afloat

PHIL Beer, the multi-instrumental wizard from award-winning English roots band Show of Hands, is changing tack this Summer – and inviting sailing and music enthusiasts (and novices) to join him on a series of five-day cruises in West Country waters and beyond. The Folk Boat cruises are £700 and run throughout June and August. Visit www.philbeer.co.uk/sailing.

Buddhist visit

CHAMTRUL Rinpoche, said to be the reincarnation of a great master and scholar from the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, will visit Totnes and give three teachings at the Golden Buddha Centre on June 12 (7-9pm), June 13 (7-9pm) and June 14/15 (9.30am-5pm both days). Visit www.chamtrulrinpoche.com.

Eve walks UK

EVE Carnall will leave Totnes on April 18 to walk the length of the country on The Buzz Tour, visiting people and projects who want "culture change, not climate change". Find out more at www.buzztour.org.

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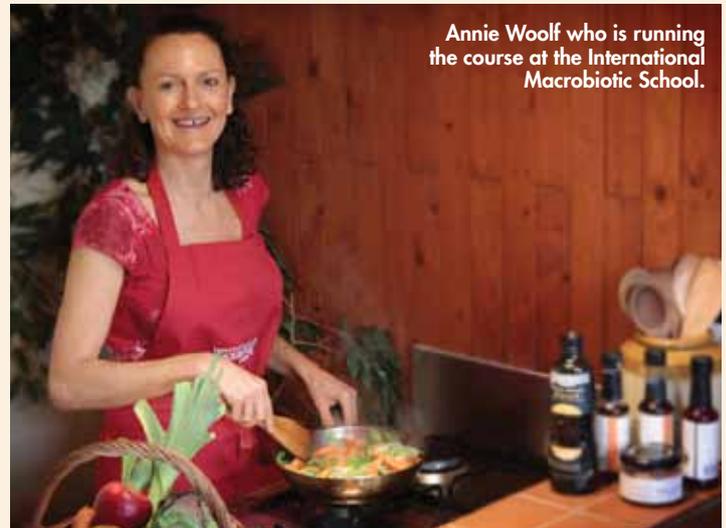
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Local produce

WELCOME to our regular foodie celebration of all things local, seasonal, organic or veggie. If you have something to say, get in touch - editor@reconnectonline.co.uk.



Annie Woolf who is running the course at the International Macrobiotic School.

Learning to cook for health

THE power of food can be the key to many health issues and learning how to cook is an important step in that process.

Over the past 11 years the International Macrobiotic School near Totnes has taught students of all ages ways to transform their health by learning healthier ways of cooking.

Oliver Cowmeadow, who runs the school, says the healthiest way to eat is based on whole grains, primarily vegetarian sources of protein like pulses and beans, and a wide variety of vegetables, along with fruit, seeds, nuts, sea vegetables and natural seasonings.

He said: "At our school we specialise in turning this dietary plan into delicious meals everyone can easily make at home. We use the oriental principles of yin and yang and the Five Elements to create balanced and healthy dishes

and meals and adapt advice to each person's unique state of health."

The school is staging a Love Health, Love Cooking course with recipes for soups, main courses and sugar and dairy-free desserts to create a sustainable healthier way of eating.

It will be mostly hands-on cooking in small groups - maximum six - in a purpose-built teaching kitchen and the course will be run by Annie Woolf.

Run on Saturday mornings or as a three-day weekend, the next course is May 9-11. The school is also running a five-day Looking After Your Health Course from June 25-29.

Said Oliver: "Many people who have attended this course have transformed long-held health problems and found a bright new future in their lives."

Visit www.macroschool.co.uk or contact martin@macroschool.co.uk.



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Golden yolks at the end of the rainbow in one of Laydilay's fields. And below, their latest new arrivals.

Proud of their hen welfare

WE'RE happy to continue this issue's birthday theme with news that South Devon organic egg producers Laydilay are celebrating their tenth anniversary this month.

From humble beginnings back in 2004, when they first moved 69 hens into a rented orchard in Buckfastleigh, Mandy and Andy Johnson have grown a thriving operation that now includes 1800 hens, 500 chicks and three new human members of the Laydilay team.

They are marking their first decade with new packaging which they feel better reflects how they feel about the hens and their business.

"We are proud of how we look after our hens and really wanted to

try and showcase the animal that makes our business thrive," said Mandy. "It is not an easy profession by any means - this awful Winter was a case in point - but we strive to put the hen first and hope she will pay us back in kind."

Laydilay currently have some 18-month-old hens for sale for just £2.50 each.

Said Mandy: "We are loath to sell them as they have been one of our best flocks but we have some young hens bringing up the rear that need their living quarters."

As well as organic eggs, Laydilay also make and sell meringues, mayonnaise and macaroons.

Visit www.laydilay.co.uk.



The Deliciously Conscious Cookbook

Indulgent gluten-free, vegan and lower sugar recipes for the health-conscious foodie

BY
BELINDA CONNOLLY

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Local produce

New goodies on Mim's stall

THINGS are going well for Mim's Emporium, the speciality foods stall in Newton Abbot's Market Food Hall.

Even since we announced their arrival in the last issue of Reconnect, they have expanded their range of organic foods and introduced lots of new gluten-free lines. They also now stock Viridian supplements and A.Vogel products (including their Animal Essences).

Said one half of the Mim's team, Su Stewart: "We offer 10% off bulk purchases of our own range of nuts, seeds, dried fruit and grains when you buy 1kg or more of any product line.

"And we have also introduced a loyalty scheme, Mim's Merits. Every time you spend £10 or more you get a stamp on your card – collect five stamps and you get £5 to spend in the shop."

Mim's Emporium is Stall 5 in the Newton Abbot Market Food Hall and online at www.mimsemporium.co.uk.



Three days for foodies

A NEW decade has started for the Exeter Festival of Food and Drink which runs for three days from Friday April 25 in Exeter Castle and Northernhay Gardens.

The event, which celebrates the outstanding food and drinks of the South West, was first held in 2004 and has gone from strength to strength. This year's event features 100 regional producers, top chefs, workshops, live music and food-themed activities for all the family.

Among those exhibiting will be the Topsham-based Good Game, which specialises in locally-sourced meat products all made by hand using traditional methods.

Their meats are cured using traditional air-drying techniques using no nitrates or curing agents – simply salt and clean fresh air of the Exe Estuary.

Visit www.good-game.co.uk.

'Free-from' but WITH flavour

MANY of us are continually on the hunt for recipes that allow us to create wonderful gluten-free, low-sugar, dairy-free or vegan meals – without compromising on flavour.

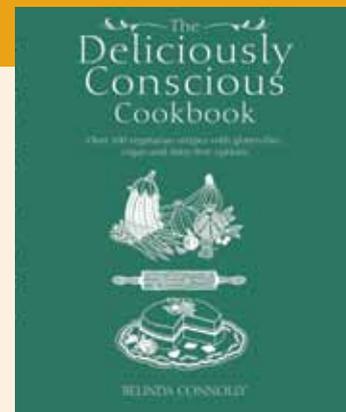
Now a local cook and food writer, who has also made her mark across the world, has brought together some of her finest dishes in a new book.

The Deliciously Conscious Cookbook is bursting with exciting vegetarian recipes that offer clever combinations and informative options for anyone wanting to eliminate common ingredients from their diet.

It is written by Belinda Connolly, the acclaimed artist-cook who has travelled the world as a private superchef, catering for celebrities and royalty (yes, including Princess Diana and the Duchess of Cornwall), but who is better known in Totnes as a stallholder on Totnes market, where she sells amazing savouries and cakes, and is author of the Totnes Market Cookbook. Reconnect readers might also know her as a psychophonetics practitioner.



Belinda Connolly



Published by Hay House, The Deliciously Conscious Cookbook includes a mouth-watering collection of wholesome savoury treats, divine desserts and luscious cakes.

Said Belinda: "My aim was to create a collection of sensual delights where food lovers of all persuasions will find much to enjoy, regardless of their dietary requirements."

The official launch of the book will be held at the Taste of the West Foodfair at The Shops in Dartington, May 3-June 1. For private launch details and other info, visit www.belindaconnolly.com.

The Deliciously Conscious Cookbook, £14.99, will be available at local bookshops and online booksellers from May 26.



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Seasonal eating

THE fresh, vigorous growth of Spring can be seen all around us - and in our diets too. But new beginnings often also mean sad endings...

AS we flow into Spring from a very mild and soggy Winter here in Devon, we can begin to see and feel the sap rising and new growth starting outside in nature as well as in ourselves.

Fresh new Spring growth feels exciting, vigorous and stimulating and this is the time to start putting our Winter meditations, pondering and dreaming into action.

In the garden we see this expressed in fast growing Spring greens and one of my favourite is spinach, which is nutritious delicious and really versatile. Here is how I use it in my kitchen:

- Added into smoothies to give extra alkalising raw power;
- As baby leaves in salads for even more raw power;
- Added by the handful into one-pot meals, particularly curries;
- Cooked with mushrooms to make a tasty baked potato filling;
- Popped in with all manner of cooked food – add it at the last minute so it just wilts from the heat.

And probably my favourite use for spinach is in a frittata - see the recipe below. The combination of eggs, potatoes and spinach makes it a complete Springtime meal and it is perfect with fresh new lettuce or kale.

Finally I have some news to share. They say 'All good things must come to an end' and this is my final article for Reconnect. I have had a fab time sharing my passion for seasonal living and eating over the last few years but, just as there is new growth starting out in nature, so I have exciting new projects to pursue and grow.



Frittata? Ta!

I am working hard at the moment creating online workbooks and e-courses around my passion for nutrition, the five elements and seasonal living, all based on the face-to-face courses I have taught over the years. I will also continue to facilitate the really popular 'Reboot' and 'Journey' days alongside kinesiologist Sarah-Jayne Hayden-Binder.

I really hope you will stay in touch so I can keep you up to date with what I'm up to. Here are the best ways you can do that: Subscribe to my free seasonal newsletter, which is packed with tips and recipes for living, eating and cooking with the season – you can sign-up on www.facebook.com/naturalfoodschooll or via my website, www.naturalfoodschooll.co.uk. I'll even send you some goodies, including a printable A4 'Staying healthy with the Seasons' chart.

Or simply 'like' the Natural Food school on Facebook where I post daily. I really look forward to hearing from you soon.

Potato and spinach frittata

Ingredients: 400g spinach leaves, 3 tbsp olive oil, 1 large onion, finely sliced, 2 large potatoes, peeled and finely sliced, 10 eggs.

Method: Tip the spinach into a large colander and slowly pour over a kettleful of boiling water. Then cool under cold water. Squeeze all the liquid out of the spinach and set aside. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan and gently cook the onion and potato for about 10 minutes until the potato is soft. While the onion is cooking, beat the eggs together in a large bowl and season with salt and pepper. Heat grill to high. Stir the spinach into the potatoes, pour in the eggs and cook, stirring occasionally, until nearly set, then flash the omelette under the grill to set the top. Ease the omelette on to a plate, flip over back into the pan, and finish cooking it on the underside and turn out onto a board. Serve cut into wedges and enjoy!

Reconnect's Seasonal Eating is written by Carol Lee, who runs workshops and courses in nutrition, health and wellbeing. Call her on 01363 82794 or visit www.naturalfoodschooll.co.uk. You can also join her on Facebook for seasonal tips, recipes and nutritional information www.facebook.co/naturalfoodschooll



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Local energy

The ECOE directors - looking forward to their Big Community Energy Weekend on May 17 and 18

COMMUNITY energy projects are the perfect example of people taking control of that valuable resource. They invite members of the community to invest, use that money to create renewable energy projects within the community - and then give the investors a good return (and invest in new community projects) using the money it makes. And that's it. What's not to like? Even the Government says it supports them (but don't let that put you off) - see right. What's more, we already have projects right across Reconnectland. This time we're focusing on those in Exeter, Totnes and Plymouth but this is a subject we will be returning to in future issues...

Giant leaps forward for TRESOC projects

IT'S been a case of one step back, several giant leaps forward for Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC). After putting so much time and work into a proposed wind turbine scheme, their developer partner withdrew rather than get involved in a lengthy planning battle. However, their other community energy projects are racing ahead.

TRESOC's solar PV systems on Follaton Community Hall and Leatside Surgery have been generating electricity and lowering the facilities' bills since last year.

In a new working partnership with South Devon Rural Housing Association (SDRHA), TRESOC will install solar PV on all of SDRHA's suitable properties, providing a source of free electricity for tenants during daylight hours or heated water when tenants are not at home during the day.

Ian Bright, TRESOC MD, said: "Although not all roofs will meet the criteria, and therefore not all SDRHA tenants will benefit directly, local community investment will enable SDRHA to use its own resources to further improve the energy efficiency of its entire housing stock. Feed In Tariff payments will provide a return to potentially thousands of TRESOC members in the local community, adding further benefit to the local economy."

TRESOC have secured an agreement for a £500,000 community investment in the hydro project at Totnes Weir, and further investment for hydropower on the Rivers Teign and Dart. With more solar schemes in the pipeline, this adds up to a package of consented local renewable energy projects with a combined value of more than £1.5 million.

But to continue their work and "unlock the potential" for community-owned energy they need investment from the local community. TRESOC's 2014 Share Issue should be in full swing when this magazine is on the shelves.

Anyone can join TRESOC for as little as £20, giving them a voice within the organisation - and a healthy return on their investment. Visit www.tresoc.co.uk or call 01803 867431 to find out more.



Big weekend for ECOE

EXETER Community Energy (ECHOE) was formed in 2013 by eight local people brought together by Transition Exeter's energy group with the modest aim of "changing the way the city produces, uses and thinks about energy."

ECHOE's initial solar power project, a 100kW PV installation in Exeter, will provide an income for projects addressing fuel poverty and climate change, as well as investment in further renewable energy projects.

May 17 and 18 is ECOE's Big Community Energy Weekend, which will include an energy fair and a green open homes event across Exeter and beyond where households will open their doors to the public. It is hoped that this will coincide with the launch of the community share offer for the solar project, if agreements about roofs are finalised in time.

On the Saturday Montgomery School, one of the country's most energy efficient public buildings, will host the energy fair, with

suppliers exhibiting their products and energy experts on hand to give advice and run workshops. On the Sunday there will be a tour of the impressive eco-build facilities at Bicton Earth, near Otterton.

ECHOE Director Gill Wyatt said: "Our Big Community Energy Weekend will show community energy at work, which is inspirational because of its huge potential from its wide-ranging influence. It benefits natural resource depletion and climate change, it strengthens the local economy and it helps communities become more resilient through community ownership and active participation."

ECHOE is looking for green homeowner's who are willing to open their homes for two hours or half a day and volunteers to help organise the event. Email info@ecoe.org.uk or call Gill on 07806 623311 or Joe on 07890 591890. Visit www.ecoe.org.uk or find them on Facebook and Twitter. Visit www.ecoe.org.uk.

Strategy for community

PUTTING communities in control of the energy is at the centre of a new government strategy.

Those behind the proposals unveiled in January this year believe community control can help maintain energy security and help tackle climate change.

The Community Energy Strategy also aims to help people save money on their energy bills; and have wider social and economic benefits.

As well as starting and running community energy generation projects, communities will also be encouraged to help keep energy affordable through coming together to purchase energy.

This may be through collective switching schemes, where a group of people get together to negotiate a better energy tariff from their supplier, or a bulk purchasing scheme such as a heating oil club.

Funding for the Green Deal Communities Scheme has increased from £20 million to £80 million and a new £100,000 community energy saving competition is expected to stimulate communities to develop innovative approaches to saving energy and money.

Visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-energy-strategy.

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PV planned for more than 20 city roofs

PLYMOUTH Energy Community is a members' co-operative and was set up in 2013 to give the people of Plymouth "the power to transform how they buy, use and even generate power in the city."

It has now set up another co-operative, PEC Renewables Ltd, to install free solar panels on over 20 schools and community buildings across the city - the first installation will happen during the Easter holidays.

The project was kickstarted with a £500,000 loan from Plymouth City Council's investment fund and PEC now hopes to raise a further £500,000 by selling community shares. They

are priced at £1 with a minimum investment of £50 and a maximum investment of £20,000 and offer a return of up to 6% to investors who may also qualify for tax relief through the Government's Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS). Surplus funds will be reinvested in local projects addressing fuel poverty and climate change.

So far response has been impressive - nearly £100,000 of shares were bought in the first two weeks.

To find out more about PEC and the solar share offer (anyone in the UK can invest) visit www.plymouthenergycommunity.com or call 01752 477550.



One of the E-cocars on a shopping trip.

Community takes it hire

WE all know the arguments against car ownership.

Environmental damage is a major factor for many, but we're willing to bet the financial impact is high on everyone's list; and it's not just the cost of running the thing. As well as buying it, insuring it, taxing it, fuelling it and maintaining it, there's also The Elephant In The Drive - depreciation.

When we're not even using it (which for most of us is probably over 90 per cent of the time), it's just sitting there losing you money.

But what's the option? Without a car, how can we do that out-of-town shopping trip? Or pop to the beach with the kids on Sunday afternoon? Or visiting grandma in Plympton?

If you live in the Totnes area, the answer could be to join the E-cocars co-operative car club, which allows you to use a car just when you need it.

And they've recently added two new cars to their fleet (a Toyota Yaris electric hybrid and a VW Golf hatchback), thanks to Devon County Council funding obtained through Government-supported community project, Totnes On The Move.

So if you only need occasional use of a car (go on, be honest - and if you're only paying for it when you need it, you'll probably need it even less), you could save big money.

Once you've paid a one-time joining fee of £25, an illustrated guide and smartcard are yours (more on that in a mo). Then, hiring a car starts at just £3.25 an hour, plus 18p a mile for fuel, which you only put in if the tank is low using the car's own fuelcard.

The details of each journey are logged by the car's clever onboard computer. Charges for trips on your debit/credit card are made monthly and appear on an itemised invoice. There are also special deals, like the maximum weekend rate of £30 and a weekend

rate of £20 a day - see the website for the full pricing details.

Cars can be booked online using your PC, Mac, smartphone or tablet, or if you want to be more spontaneous, you can use your smartcard to unlock it and then use the onboard computer to make, or change a booking - and then drive away.

The big argument for car ownership is, of course, convenience, so E-cocars have done everything they can to make their cars easily accessible. Until recently they had just the two cars parked up at Totnes railway station (where they still have one), but they now also have one parked in Bridgetown and one on Fore Street.

And yes, it does take up one of the town's valuable on-street parking spaces, but just think of the parking spaces it frees up by discouraging ownership. E-cocars has more than 40 members, residents who support the local economy on a regular basis; and it encourages people to think, and shop, locally.

There's also a new E-cocar looking for a home in the Totnes area, so get in touch if you think it should be in your neighbourhood. They'd also like to hear from any local companies that would be interested in putting their pool cars into the scheme when they are not being used.

Jeremy Farr, the man behind E-cocars, would like to see a car in every neighbourhood of Totnes - and beyond. "We'd love to hear from other communities who would like to operate car hire co-ops," he said. "The technology behind E-cocars is perfect for Totnes, but there are other models that may be more appropriate. As well as operating E-cocars, we have been supporting smaller, rural communities across the UK for over twelve years and can offer clear, impartial advice."

Visit www.e-cocars.com.

Centre signs deal with big UK provider

THE South West Energy Centre, part of South Devon College, has agreed a partnership with NAPIT, one of the industry's largest training and membership scheme UK providers.

Tradespeople in the South West can now sign up to courses at a 'NAPIT Approved Centre' and installers who become qualified there will receive NAPIT Certification.

South West Energy Centre director

Paddy McNevin said: "This partnership is very important for the centre in its role as a regional hub for training and certification. It will provide people in the southern part of the region with a local training and accreditation venue that will enable businesses to build a skilled workforce in order to benefit from the opportunities in the fastest growing sector in the UK."

Visit www.southwestenergycentre.com.

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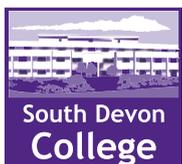


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Local energy Q&A

Q I want to reduce my energy bill and have heard news about the Green Deal cashback scheme being extended. Can you tell me more?

A The Cashback Scheme encourages people to make energy improvements to their home under the Green Deal. Install certain energy efficiency improvements in your home and you may be able to claim cashback for each measure you install, up to a total of two thirds of the amount you have to pay. The process is as follows:

- Have a Green Deal assessment carried out on your home - you will be able to apply for cashback for any of the eligible improvements you plan to install, as recommended on your assessment.
- Get and agree quotes from a Green Deal Provider registered with the Cashback Scheme.
- Apply for your Cashback voucher online or by phone, before you begin the work.
- Complete works within three months (six months for solid wall insulation).
- You will receive payment once your provider has confirmed work has been carried out and arranged for the Energy Performance Certificate to be updated. You can choose to fund improvements through a Green Deal Finance Plan, or pay in other ways, and get the cashback but you must use a Green Deal Provider to do the work. The more improvements you make, the bigger your cashback.

Applications close on June 30 2014, or while funds last. Installations must be completed and vouchers redeemed by September 30 2014.

Q I was approached by a company who was claiming to be able to reduce my energy bills by installing a device called a voltage optimiser at my electrical meter, is this true?

A The claim is that by reducing the mains voltage (usually to 220V) there will be significant cuts in power consumption from electricity loads, and therefore reduced bills. Various tests have indicated that there is a wide variation in savings, and in some cases none at all. This isn't surprising because electricity usage varies day-to-day in an average house and different electrical appliances also respond in different ways to reduced voltage.



Our expert for this issue is Paddy McNevin, director of the South West Energy Centre at South Devon College

Incandescent (filament) lighting uses less energy if the voltage is lowered, but the lights will be less bright, so a better option would be to change to LEDs, which are much more efficient and last longer. According to the Carbon Trust there will

be no savings by reducing the voltage for LEDs. Devices like cookers and kettles will not use less energy with a lower voltage because the element will simply be on for longer to achieve the same heating effect. Flat screen TVs' consumption would be the same for 240V and 220V.

The biggest savings are claimed to be on appliances with motors, on average it is around a 2% saving. Overall in a domestic situation it will reduce energy usage, but not a significant amount. I would recommend domestic consumers to be wary of voltage optimisation technology sold purely on the basis of energy saving in appliances.

ASK THE EXPERTS If you have a question for the experts at the South West Energy Centre, email it (with your name and phone number) to patrick.mcnevin@southdevon.ac.uk. They will answer you personally and the pick of the questions will feature in Reconnect. Or call them on 01803 540725 for help and guidance.

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Machu Picchu is on Trudi Morgan's itinerary of her "two-week journey of self-discovery."

Time in the land of the Shamans

If, like Reconnect's Pete Hardy, a visit to the magical 15th century Inca site of Machu Picchu in the Andes is a life-long ambition, you may want to talk to Shamanic practitioner Trudi Morgan.

Trudi is welcoming people to join her on a trip to Peru and Bolivia later this year. And Machu Picchu is one of the destinations she has added to the itinerary, along with Lake Titicaca in Bolivia.

She plans to visit sacred sites and work with local Shamans and to learn about local plant medicines.

Said Trudi: "I am inviting a small group of like-minded people to step into a two-week journey of self-discovery in the powerful landscape of the Sacred Valley in Peru and Lake Titicaca in Bolivia.

"We will have the company and guidance of Jamee Curtice, who lives and works as a shaman/trip organiser in Peru. We will benefit from her great archeological and historical knowledge of the sites and rituals and from her close connection to local shamans."

The trip is from August 15 to August 30 and there is an optional third week trip to Colca Canyon.



For all the details and itinerary go to www.starkeepers.co.uk/Websites/starkeepers/images/Peru_2014.pdf

Said Trudi: "The holiday is not so much a wacky adventure; more a chance for anyone, professional, artists, writers, to take time out in a beautiful and sometimes challenging environment.

"On the last trip there were businessmen, doctors, nurses, teachers as well as alternative therapists."

Anyone interested should contact trudi at trudi@starkeepers.co.uk or call 07763 825410.



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Beautiful alternative to plastic

TWO South Devon craftmakers are taking action after seeing plastic bags polluting our oceans.

"Even 'degradable' plastic bags do not biodegrade," explains Yuli Somme. "Instead, they break up into tiny particles which find their way into the oceans of the world and become part of the diet of many sea creatures."

Yuli has joined forces with lah Michele to set up Raggy Bags, hand-making shopping bags using upcycled textiles that would otherwise be shredded.

Says Yuli: "Alternatives to plastic bags are often made with virgin materials such as cotton and jute, which still have an adverse effect on the environment in the growing and processing of the crops. But we are supporting our local re-use centre by buying their waste material and turning it into bags with character."



Raggy Bags are made at Bellacouche, Yuli's felt workshop in Moretonhampstead, and are on sale in the shop there during weekdays when Yuli and lah are working.

Raggy Bags will be launched at the Powderham Garden Festival on May 1 and 2 (www.powderham.co.uk).

Visit www.bellacouche.com.

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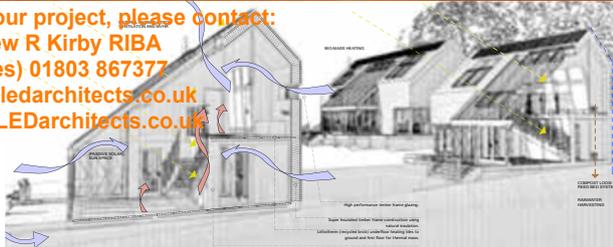
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Chris Riley uses an Austrian scythe, which is light and adjustable.

Historic reed plan for home

THE first water reed to be harvested in Devon in 25 years has been cut by scythe from reed beds opposite Topsham on the Exe estuary.

Chris Riley spent a labour-intensive week harvesting just over an acre of water reed, which can reach up to 10 feet high.

"Water reed is an untapped resource, because of its inaccessibility and the manual labour involved in cutting it," said Chris.

Mick Dray, president of the National Society of Master Thatchers, was commissioned to find the water reed for use on the roof of Link House, an eco-house that Mary Clark hopes to build in the South Hams.

Mick, a fourth generation master thatcher, remembers using Exe water reed on a roof in Ide 25 years ago and his grandfather thatched with Slapton Ley water reed.

"There's absolutely no reason why water reed can't be used exactly like wheat straw for thatched roofs," says Mick who believes this harvest could pioneer the re-growing of Devon water reed as a thatching material. "Once it has dried out, the wigwams of water reed will make perfectly good thatching reed, and it's a very saleable product."

A proportion of the reed has been hand-tied into bundles and stored, while the remaining area will be

cleared to encourage fresh regrowth. New reeds will grow to full height by next Winter, when a full harvest of the eight-acre reed bed is planned, in readiness for the first roof in quarter of a century to be made entirely from Devon water reed.

Mary, 72, has employed a team of architects specialising in sustainability to design Link House and the surrounding habitats. Gavin Woodford, director of Ashburton-based Woodford Architecture & Interiors, has designed the house with an holistic approach, even incorporating a bat roosting cave beneath the building.

"The thatch roof contours reach ground level to blend into the landscape and beyond the boundary of the house it is pure ecology," says Gavin, who explains why the Link House Conservation Project is an unusual proposal in terms of planning permission.

"It may not fit into the regular categories of plans for commercial or private developments, but it has the potential to be of huge educational value with huge scope for community and conservation projects," says Gavin.

Their planning application was rejected in December last year but they hope an appeal will be successful on the grounds of its innovative design and build.

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Project offers rate-free package

SPARE a thought for the people who run not-for-profit business for the benefit of the community.

As well as all the usual hassles of business, they also have to contend with endless fundraising, applying for grants and the like. And some projects are also frequently negotiating for the very premises in which they are based.

Refurnish, the not-for-profit furniture and household goods recycling project with outlets throughout the South Hams, is constantly on the lookout for new premises – with the added challenge that they need to be rent-free.

In fact that's not as difficult as you might think because landlords who have empty premises for sale, or to let, often prefer to have them

temporarily occupied – for financial as well as practical reasons.

"Not-for-profit companies such as ours," explains Refurnish's David Banks, "are classified as charities by local authorities and therefore receive 80% rates relief. And if it's a project the council supports, they might also waive the remaining 20%."

"This means the landlords do not have to pay rates (or at most the 20%) while they find new tenants or buyers – a process that could take two months or two years."

So if any landlords out there are looking for short-term tenants, who can be out at very short notice and also pay all utility bills and provide security, call David at Refurnish on 01752 897311, or email davidbanks@refurnish.org.uk.

Energy Source	Scale	Type / Rate	Tariff (p/kWh)	
			< 31/3/14	> 1/4/14
Anaerobic digestion	≤250kW		15.57	12.13
Anaerobic digestion	>250kW - 500kW		14.40	11.22
Anaerobic digestion	>500kW		9.49	9.24
Hydro	≤15 kW		22.23	20.57
Hydro	>15 - 100kW		20.76	19.20
Hydro	>100kW - 500kW		16.41	15.18
Hydro	>500kW - 2MW		12.82	11.86
Hydro	>2MW - 5MW		3.32	3.23
Micro-CHP	<2 kW	(limited)	11.65	13.24
Solar PV	≤4 kW	Higher rate	14.90	14.38
Solar PV	≤4 kW	Medium rate	13.41	12.94
Solar PV	>4 - 10kW	Higher rate	13.50	13.03
Solar PV	>4 - 10kW	Medium rate	12.15	11.73
Solar PV	>10 - 50kW	Higher rate	12.57	12.13
Solar PV	>10 - 50kW	Medium rate	11.31	10.92
Solar PV	>50 - 150kW	Higher rate	10.71	10.71
Solar PV	>50 - 150kW	Medium rate	9.64	9.64
Solar PV	>150 - 250kW	Higher rate	10.25	10.25
Solar PV	>150 - 250kW	Medium rate	9.22	9.22
Solar PV	≤250kW	Lower rate	6.61	6.61
Solar PV	>250kW - 5MW		6.61	6.61
Solar PV	≤5MW	Standalone	6.61	6.61
Wind	≤100kW		22.23	17.32
Wind	>100 - 500kW		18.53	14.43
Wind	>500kW - 1.5MW		10.05	7.83
Wind	>1.5MW - 5MW		4.26	3.32
Any	existing systems transferred from RO		10.49	10.49

Feed in Tarrif rates - the full story

Tarrif cuts matched by lower costs

SINCE Feed in Tarrifs were introduced four years ago this April, they have continued to reduce, but despite being a third of what they were, they still represent an excellent return on investment.

The change in tariff rates must also be coupled with the huge reduction in installation costs which has seen prices plummet from £14,000 to £5,000 for a typical domestic 4kW system.

The new rates which will apply from April 1 this year have dropped by 3.5% bringing the higher rate tariff down to 14.38p, while the higher rate

for those between 4kW and 10kW will reduce to 13.03p per unit.

Since the initial launch there have been a number of new rates added such as higher, middle and lower. These are conditional on such things as the energy efficiency of the building to which the system is attached or whether the system is new or a retrofit - in other words in a newly built house or an existing one.

Some systems are called stand-alone which means they are not attached to a building and these tend to attract a much smaller tariff.



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Song of the swan

THE Song of the Swan is a full-day and evening workshop to honour the loss of a miscarried, terminated or stillborn child.

Yuli Somme, who is facilitating the workshop with Sue Charman and Cat Large, said: "This is a day for women to honour the loss of a child who didn't live in this world and so may have lacked a formal funeral or a period of mourning. We are offering a day of meditation, ritual, crafts, poetry, ceremony and song in which you can speak of your experiences and witness those of others."

The Song of the Swan will be held at Sharpham House in Ashprington, near Totnes on Sunday April 27 and costs £85 (three bursary places are available for £40).

For more information and bookings contact Yuli on info@bellacouche.com or 01647 441405.

Therapists' nutrition

DEVON healer and author Sue Lilly has just released her latest book, Nutrition for Energy Therapists.

The book explores nutrition and nutritional assessment using three systems that complement each other: the digestive system, the chakra system and colour.

The underlying patterns inform and clarify how our conscious and unconscious relationships with food affect how we feel, think, behave and react. ISBN 9781905454266 (Tree Seer Publications).

The story of nine lives outside the system

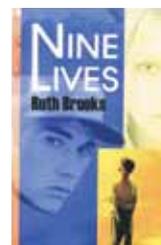
SOUTH Devon author Ruth Brooks will be known to Radio Four fans as an expert on the humble snail.

Her first book, A Slow Passion, describes her love for snails that led to her winning the BBC Amateur Scientist of the Year for her research on the homing distance of the garden snail.

But now Ruth is back with book number two – and it has a very different story, or rather nine stories, to tell.

Ruth was an LEA tutor for 35 years and in Nine Lives she describes the lives of nine children who have been excluded from mainstream education.

"I never intended it to be a book," says Ruth. "It started as a diary, scribbled frantically at the end of an often stressful or frustrating day, to clear my head.



"Nine Lives highlights the educational and social problems currently faced by children and their families. I wanted to flag up the importance of LEA one-to-one tuition because I'm worried that budgetary cuts could severely affect or even cut it altogether.

"I have changed every aspect of the children featured to ensure they are unrecognisable, but they are stories of real children – and each story is a true depiction of his or her particular problem."

Ruth pays tribute to all her former colleagues in the home education team and urges everyone involved – parents, teachers, therapists and social workers – to fight to keep "this vital service".

Nine Lives is available from Totnes Bookshop, Waterstones and Amazon and through all good bookshops.

Wild nature is 'homecoming'

FOR the past 15 years WildWise has faced the challenge of how to coax modern teenagers into the great outdoors and away from the new epidemic of 'screen-time'.

And yet, they have found that whenever they persuade young people to step over the threshold and go out on camp, they absolutely love it.

The combination of wild nature, the elements and community living is "like a homecoming for them", and they leave with renewed enthusiasm for life and the outdoors.

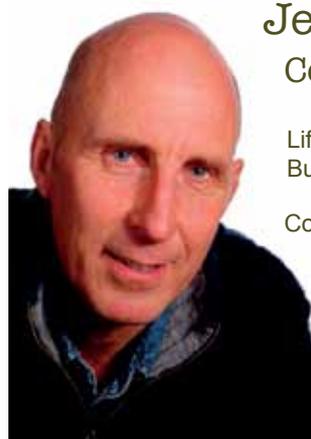
In response to this, WildWise has this year developed new courses to make the most of their experience working with kids and teenagers in the wild outdoors. They are launching two year-long mentoring programmes for teens.

The 'Wolf Pack' is for young men aged 13-16 years and was piloted with great success last year. It will be run this year from April 16-18; May 24-26; July 28-30; Sept 12-14 and Oct 28-31.

For the first time they are also running 'Wild Daughters' for young women aged 12-15 years from May 28-30; June 27-29; August 1-4 and September 26-28). The two programmes will be held over five and four weekends respectively.

"The aim is to offer support and guidance in those amazing and sometimes troubling teenage years; support from the experienced WildWise team and the beautiful natural world here in the Westcountry," said a spokesperson for WildWise.

For information call 01803 868269 or email info@wildwise.co.uk.



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Organic gardening

THE weather's improved, the days are longer and things are really waking up in the garden. Joa Grower gets to grips with carrots, spuds... and weeds, of course.

WELL, here we are again full steam ahead, well and truly into Spring with the lighter evenings giving us that bit longer to get jobs done in the vegetable garden or allotment.

After such a wet and windy Winter and early Spring, your first job, if you haven't done it already, should be to loosen up the surface of your soil and add a dose of organic fertiliser (seaweed meal or chicken manure pellets will do the job). Always take care to follow instructions, though - just because it's organic doesn't mean it won't do harm if over-applied. Young plants can so easily be burnt!

Now is also the ideal time to sow root vegetables such as parsnips, swede and turnips - and you just have to give carrots a go.

The best tasting carrots really are those that have just been pulled straight from the ground! Sweet and delicious!

Choose an area of the garden that isn't too stony and rake it thoroughly. Carrot seed is very small and it is very easy to over-sow. A good tip, to get some space between the seeds, is to mix them with some very dry horticultural sand and then sow into trenches 1-2cm deep and 15cm apart.

When the seedlings start to appear and are large enough to handle you can thin them out to about 7-9cm apart. To protect your carrot crop from carrot root fly, create a barrier over or around the crop. This can be done in various ways, but probably the easiest is to cover with horticultural fleece.



Fresh and sweet...

May is your last month to sow parsnips (never use old seed, incidentally - it doesn't last longer than one year), but this time make a trench 1-2cm deep and place three seeds every 15cm. Once again, wait until the seedlings are big enough to handle and pull out the two weaker ones, leaving just one to grow to maturity. Try not to allow the soil to completely dry out.

By now those of you who planted your spuds earlier will be seeing the shoots starting to come through the surface.

To increase your crop you will need to 'earth them up' which just means pulling a bit more soil up around the plant. Or you could mulch them with some grass clippings or homemade compost.

Finally, don't forget to keep up with the weeding. This will provide you with plenty of material for the compost bin and also help to keep those unwanted slugs and snails away (if that's possible)!

Growing in pots and containers

FOR those of you who don't have gardens or allotments but still want to produce your own veggies, all is not lost.

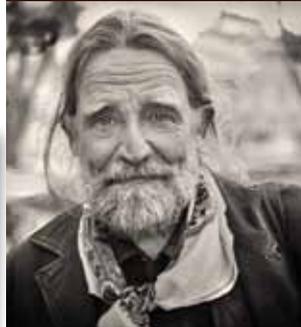
A wide variety of plants can be grown in pots. They need to be at least as big as a bucket and I have found that a 50/50 soil and compost mix works really well. Don't overcrowd the containers and remember plants grown this way require a lot more feeding. The great thing is you can get them started off indoors and when the weather gets a bit milder you simply take them outside to carry on enjoying the beautiful sunshine we all hope we'll get. Whatever you grow, they will always taste better than anything you can buy in the shops - that I can guarantee! Happy gardening.

Reconnect's Organic Gardening column is written by Joa and Charlie Grower of Growers Organics. Meet them in person at Totnes market on Fridays and Saturdays. Visit www.growersorganics.com, or call 01752 881180.



GRIEFWALKER

A documentary film profile of Stephen Jenkinson's unique work with dying people - followed by Q&A with the man himself



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Festivals & shows '14

Following on from our seven-page festivals

Spirit of Sunrise promises you a good night at Quest 2014

ANYONE staying over at Quest this year is in for a treat because they'll be part of the new Spirit of Sunrise Camping Village, co-created by the founders and organisers of Sunrise Celebration Festival.

They promise "a haven of unique love-filled, family vibes" including The Earheart, "a beautiful festival cafe space" with performance space, ambient music, atmospheric art installations, morning family yoga, sauna, hot-tubs and more.

And the lucky campers will also be able to enjoy night time soirées with astrologer Jonathan Cainer, fire side talks with Tim 'Mac' McCartney of Embercombe and the inspiration of Jamie Catto.

Another new feature for Quest 2014 is Kids Quest, which will include a treasure hunt and family activities from toddlers and teens.

Sophie Docker of the Quest team told us: "Quest boasts a safe, enclosed, undercover and welcoming family environment with free kids activities ranging from drumming, hula hooping and spoon carving to circus skills, theatre and storytelling – little ones will be safe and entertained all weekend so they can share in the magical adventure that is Quest."

Dance Quest, new for 2013, returns this year with its unique celebration

**Quest 2014
July 24-27**

of all things dance and movement, including world dance, contact improvisation, 5 rhythms, and more.

Plus there will be the usual mix of stalls and stands (including Reconnect!) and wonderful food and drink too.

Quest is at Newton Abbot Racecourse, from July 24-27.

For the full details, and to buy tickets, visit www.questuk.co.uk.



Win your family free tickets!

THANKS to our friends at Quest, we have tickets for two adults and two children to give away to one lucky reader and their family – plus a seven-year life plan and a personal horoscope, by astrologer Jonathan Cainer (who's at Quest) for two runners-up.

All you have to do is email the answer to one simple question, along with your name, address and phone number, to editor@reconnectonline.co.uk.

The question is: What is the venue for the Quest festival?

Good luck and we look forward to seeing you there!

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QuestFestivalUK

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Jonathan Cainer Sarah Rozenhuler Peter Owen Jones Colin Tipping The Barefoot Doctor William Bloom

Even more at this year's Totnes Yogafest

YOGAFEST Totnes is back on Saturday April 5 and organisers Karamroop, Maite and Nikki say they aim to make the "day of all things yoga" even better.

"We have an even wider selection of styles for you to try this time", says Maite, "with Vinyasa, partner yoga, structural yoga, Viniyoga and gong meditation represented for the first time. And we know from people's feedback that they'll be happy to see some old favourites return."

Nikki says: "We have two excellent speakers on yoga philosophy. And we have a henna tattoo artist who came last year as a customer - we loved her work so much we asked her to come back."

Om Cafe will be providing healthy snacks and meals, and also this year a supper to keep everyone going until the kirtan (chanting session) at the end of the day.



Maite, Karamroop and Nikki, organisers of YogaFest Totnes.

Ten per cent of profits will go to support Ram Dass Project, which helps vulnerable people in the UK through yoga.

Yogafest Totnes will be held at Birdwood House and Bogan House, 9am-6pm.

Prices are again £30 (£25 conc) for a day ticket, incl chai and kirtan, and drop-ins cost £6 - where space allows. Kirtan alone is £3.

Visit www.yogafest-totnes.co.uk and book at yogafestotnes@gmail.com or on 07894 444506.

FESTY SHORTS

PLYMOUTH Arts Centre hosts the inaugural **Plymouth Short Film Festival on Saturday, May 17. £5 for individual screenings, £12 for day pass. Entries will be accepted until April 20. Find out more at www.plymouthfilmfestival.co.uk.**

RIVEN Stone 2014, Festival of Bones, on August 23 and 24, is described as "a celebration of ancestors from the ancient hearths of Dartmoor to the edges of the world" and features organisers Nigel Shaw and Carolyn Hillyer and a host of international and UK names. Visit www.seventhwavemusic.co.uk and see the next issue of Reconnect.

GLAS-denbury is a two-day festival at Denbury, near Newton Abbot on July 11 and 12. The line-up this year includes Dr & The Medics, Electric Swing Circus and Owen Penrice plus a dance tent and stuff for the kids. Visit www.glas-denbury.co.uk.

PLYMOUTH'S Jazz and Blues Festival is on the weekend of June 13-15. Visit barbicanjazzandblues.blogspot.com.



The Hillyfield stand at last year's Pink Tree Wood Fair - see them at Totnes and District Show in July.

Hillyfield at Totnes Show

YOU can expect all the usual attractions at the Totnes and District Show this year - plus a few new additions.

Joining all the animal displays - including horse jumping and judging areas, plus trade stands and the return of the acoustic music stage - this year's show on Sunday July 27 will also include a special area dedicated to The Hillyfield.

Regular readers will know The Hillyfield (www.thehillyfield.co.uk) is a woodland farm on the edge of Dartmoor that works with the community to help people reconnect with all aspects of natural life.

The show stand will include an insight into what's on offer at The Hillyfield and a chance to rest among a range of wood and plant-based products - and a pen of star-struck Hillyfield Hens!

Also new to the show this year will be The Sheep Show ("edu-tainment at its best," say the organisers) and The Dartmoor Hill Pony Display Team.

Find out more at www.totnesshow.com and in the next issue of Reconnect.

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Living on a little land

Firms fighting climate change

ETHICAL investment advisor Cris Iles Wright of Barchester Green on investing in a whole new industry fighting climate change



MANY of us have been concerned about environmental abuses for decades, so it really is relieving to see these issues discussed at every level in current times.

Fighting climate change has become an industry. Companies have emerged locally, nationally and internationally to deal with themes they believe are the future.

Many are small and growing rapidly, so less immediately profitable but with large potential for growth: waste management, renewable power, energy efficiency technology, resource management and the supply of both food and water are expected to become key issues demanding expert companies.

Claudia Queiroz, who manages the Cheviot Climate Change investment fund, says: "There are large opportunities where companies are offering solutions to challenges.

"Over the next 10 years 100 million extra people in the world will want food, energy and other resources. Companies can improve the efficiency of supply."

She quotes the example of Natural Grocers, an organic wholefood supplier. The specialist, focussed approach of the company has meant it has targeted markets excellently and the stock value has doubled in the few years in which Cheviot has invested.

Taiwanese Giant Manufacturing makes lightweight bicycles for transport and racing has also doubled in value rapidly while producing improved technology which has enabled cycling as an alternative to car travel.

Investing participates in the growth of companies while also helping their development. However, remember climate change funds are focused on sectors, not the economy as a whole – sectors which are emerging and therefore less stable. This can mean returns are volatile.

As environmental issues have become mainstream concerns, the relationship between environmentalism and business has changed. Many businesses are providing a guiding light in these challenging times and showing a pathway for the generation which will either deal with climate change, or suffer from it.

If you would like more information on this fund or ethical and sustainable investment in general, please contact Barchester Green Investment www.barchestergreen.co.uk.

See the back page of this issue for more information.

William shows the practical power behind the romance

IT'S easy to get all misty-eyed and romantic about the idea of magnificent heavy horses returning to work in our countryside.

But there is increasing recognition of the role they can play in a whole range of applications, including horticulture and logging.

At The Hillyfield, the woodland farm on the edge of Dartmoor near South Brent, the dream is of a fossil-free forestry future no longer dependent on heavy machinery. Ultimately they want to move to electric-powered chainsaws, charged by a micro-hydro plant, and to train up in some older technologies - like the relationship between man and beast.

Doug King-Smith, owner of The Hillyfield, is keen to encourage the community's connection to the natural world, and much of the work there is carried out by local volunteers. And at a recent volunteer weekend they had some very special guests - William, a 15.2hand Ardenne working horse and his handler Will Hampton.

"Ardenne horses are almost as wide as they are tall, weighing around 800kg, and easily able to pull their own weight," said Doug.

"William pulled whole trees off the hillside. These are 500kg, 75foot long trunks that make our tractor and winch and five-ton digger struggle - and with heavy machinery there's always the

risk of diesel or hydraulic oil spills."

With William there are no such environmental risks. In fact he spent the day enriching the soil, and nibbling the brambles that need clearing anyway.

Said Doug: "He's also very nimble, able to change direction and pull a log around an obstacle far quicker than I could move the tractor."

William hauls trees with ease and he can also pull a crowd - it was the best attended volunteer weekend all Winter, with 20 people helping and watching the horse in action.

"It was really good of Will to bring William and volunteer to help out - and wonderful for everyone to watch them working together," said Doug.

Last month Doug visited the Centre of Alternative Technology in Wales to learn more about horse-logging with Barbara Hadrill of Ceffylau Gwaith Carnog Horse Loggers (www.carnog.co.uk).

If you are interested in learning about horse-logging, or attending an introduction day, The Hillyfield will be running events with working horses in the near future. Get in touch via email thehillyfield@gmail.com, or visit www.carnog.co.uk and contact Barbara for workshops in Wales and nearby.

William's handler, Will Hampton of Dartmoor Horse Loggers, is



Will of Dartmoor Horse Loggers pulls trees off the hill at The Hillyfield.

an experienced horse-logger and available to work anywhere across the region - call 07592 004523 or visit www.dartmoorhorseloggers.co.uk. He works with his brother Alex who is looking for a working horse of his own to run as a team.

● The next volunteer weekend at The Hillyfield (April 12/13) will again be dedicated to tree-planting (hundreds were planted at the March event). To get involved and enjoy a day in the woods, working with lovely people and sharing a meal, email thehillyfield@gmail.com or visit www.thehillyfield.co.uk.

Lessons to learn from the bee hive

EMBERCOMBE is shifting the emphasis of some of its bee courses away from practical beekeeping towards a deeper inquiry into the relationship between humans and honeybees.

Tim Hall, the natural beekeeper at Embercombe and for the Canonteign Estate, said: "We will look at the gateway honeybees offer us back into connection with our environment and nature. We can gain great insights into our current situation and ourselves if we listen to the lessons the bees are offering us.

"When we consider the honeybees' evolution over millennia, and the impact the last 150 years of human intervention has had on these invaluable insects, I think we can begin to understand our own plight more deeply."

The new course offers practical lessons about bees and their lives and ways, combined with time to reflect on our own personal experiences, stories and understanding of what the honeybees mean to us.

Said Tim: "This course is designed for everyone who has a care for the honeybees and their situation and wants to learn more about them as well as looking at ways they can

support them in a practical way.

"This course is also ideal for those who wish to spend time with bees and may want to go on to keep bees themselves one day, particularly following the natural 'bee first' approach we hold dear at Embercombe.

"It is a residential weekend to allow as much time as possible with the bees we care for, as well as reflective time in a group and alone."

The workshop will also look at the different bees and the anatomy of a colony, the honeybee as a super-organism, the wisdom of the hive and the interrelationship between honeybees and flowers.

Lessons from the Bees will run on the weekend of May 10/11, followed by a practical natural beekeeping course at the end of May.

Visit www.embercombe.co.uk/bees. Call Tim, who also runs one-day Meet The Bees courses at Canonteign Falls, on 07870938323.



New for chics

ARE you chicken where already you're pests o

We hav Hillyfield Worksh

As regu Recon his wife organ Smith a woodla Dartmo

And we reaction of them that a l would themse on their land pr

The wa basics: buying feeding from p wellfare



Agroforestry project offers qualification

TREES for Health, the South Devon agroforestry project, is offering a unique opportunity to obtain a work-based Horticultural Diploma accredited by Duchy College.

Tasks to learn and experience include planting, sowing, weeding, ground preparation, mulching, scything, pruning, plant care, composting, raised bed maintenance/building, pond work, willow work, harvesting, food processing and more!

The course will also cover safe use of tools and health/safety in the workplace and participants will also get experience of working with a range of volunteers and groups.

Liz Turner of Trees for Health said: "We are looking for applicants who can work with us 1-2 days a week. The qualification can be gained in 6-9 months but this is flexible."

Find out more about the qualification from Carole Stocker of The Conservation Volunteers, who will observe and assess the course. For more on Trees for Health, email Liz - liz@treesforhealth.org.

You Diggin it?

DIGGIN It, a gardening project managed by Plymouth-based charity Routeways, has a range of courses planned for the year.

Subjects include composting, container/balcony gardening, keeping chickens, establishing a community garden, creating a pond and a number of food-based courses, like cooking from the garden, preserving and making Easter eggs.

They also have a workshop for anyone who has just taken on a new allotment and a regular that looks at what jobs need doing in the garden that month.

For booking, times and costs call 01752 558209 or email zunderwood@routeways.org.uk.



Veronica Parry in the polytunnel.

Growing for all abilities

THE Hannahs horticulture disability group at Seale Hayne is open to people of all abilities.

Veronica Parry, who attends horticulture sessions every Wednesday, said: "The horticulture session at Hannahs is tops all the time, 10 out of 10! It is a really worthwhile course because you can follow things through from beginning to end, inside in the polytunnel or outside. I really love it."

The new kitchen garden at Hannahs produces flowers, fruit and vegetables for Hannahs' on-site Bistro. The garden is fully wheelchair-accessible and has raised beds both inside the polytunnel and outside, with a cosy indoor space for poor weather days.

For more information, contact adult services co-ordinator Karoline Stanton on 01626 325861, email karoline.stanton@discoverhannahs.org, or visit www.discoverhannahs.org/Seale-Hayne.



The hunt is on!

WHAT better way to explore and celebrate the arrival of Spring than by playing in the woods - and eating chocolate.

The Hillyfield woodland farm near South Brent is holding its fourth Great Hillyfield Egg Hunt on Easter Monday, April 21, 11am-4pm.

There will be all manner of fun and games (including the egg hunt in the woods - open to chocoholics of all ages).

Just take warm clothes (bunny ears optional), sensible footwear... and an egg! All donations raised will go directly to supporting this ancient woodland on Dartmoor.

Find out more at www.thehillyfield.co.uk or email thehillyfield@gmail.com.



Workshop for first-time chicken keepers

Are you thinking of keeping chickens but don't know where to start? Or maybe you already have a few hens and are struggling a little with their accommodation?

Get the answer - The World Chicken Keeping Workshop for Beginners.

Regular readers will know, our next editor Martin and Jenny keep chickens locally with Doug King at The Hillyfield, a woodland farm on the edge of South Brent.

We know from the magazine that we get to any mention in the magazine, a lot of people out there love to keep poultry in their gardens, allotments, on their projects.

The workshop will cover all the basics: choosing your breed; making a henhouse; pest control; protection from predators; general care... and anything else

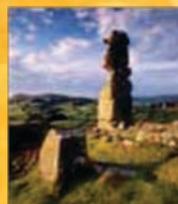


that comes up. There will be plenty of opportunity for questions and the chance to handle hens too.

So if you want compassionate but down-to-earth advice, or even if you just fancy a day in the woods around lovely chickens and friendly people, this is for you.

The workshop is on Sunday May 4, 10.30am-4pm, and costs just £30. All you need is sensible footwear, appropriate clothing for the weather (we've booked a sunny one) and food to share (we'll provide soup and bread).

To book, call Martin and Jenny on 01803 868455 or email editor@reconnectonline.co.uk. We will then email you directions. See you soon!



Dartmoor Centre CIC Counselling & Psychotherapy In Newton Abbot

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tel 07801 248421

For details of all courses see the website www.safespaceforcounselling.com

Events diary

FREE publicity for your gig here in Reconnect's diary

WE'RE planning to develop the Reconnect Events Diary over the next few months - which means it's YOUR chance to get FREE publicity for any gigs, shows and festivals you're involved in.

If you have an event planned for June or July (or any time later this year), we need to know by May 2 to get it into the next issue.

So all you have to do is email us the info now and we'll spread the word. We might even get in touch with you for more info so we can write a story about it.

Please keep to the following format if possible:

- Name of event
- Brief (very brief!) description
- Price
- Time
- Venue
- Phone number
- Website address

And send it to us at editor@reconnectonline.co.uk.

Please also get in touch if you'd like to make a more regular contribution to the diary pages - call Martin on 01803 868455.



What Masie Knew - Saturday April 26



Devon County Show - May 22-24

APRIL

TUESDAY 1

Until April 21

Near and Far. Work of local artists, Harbour House gallery, Kingsbridge, www.harbourhouse.org.uk, 01548 854708.

WEDNESDAY 2

Until April 4

Celtic Media Festival celebrating languages and cultures of the Celtic nations with awards for best of film, TV, radio and digital media, Tregenna Castle Hotel, St Ives, Cornwall, www.celticmediafestival.co.uk.

THURSDAY 3

Voiceplay! Creative singing workshop (Free Skillshare), 7-8.30pm, REconomy Centre, Leechwell Street, Totnes, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

FRIDAY 4

Hamer & Co - jazz at The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, 9-11.55pm, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

Creative singing workshop, free Skillshare, 6.30-9pm, REconomy Centre, Leechwell Street, Totnes, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

SATURDAY 5

Yogafest Totnes - workshops, talks and cafe, Birdwood House and Bogan House, Totnes, 9am-6pm, www.yogafest-totnes.co.uk.

Bokashi composting - free Skillshare, Landmatters, Allaleigh, Blackawton, Totnes, 3-5pm, booking essential - Ambuka on 07722 762701, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

SUNDAY 6

Forest-gardening for all, free skillshare at Follaton Arboretum, 10am-1pm, call Annie on 01803 762992, 07929 962653

or follatonforestgarden@gmail.com, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

Stone facing, Devon Rural Skills Trust workshop, Lupton Estate, Hillhead, Brixham. Book on 01548 821156, www.devonruralskillstrust.co.uk.

TUESDAY 8

Transition Town Totnes film night - Occupy Love, Totnes Methodist Church, 7.30-10.30pm, edap.totnes@transitionnetwork.org, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

WEDNESDAY 9

Cafe Acoustica - fortnightly showcase of acoustic music, The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, 8.30-11.55pm, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

FRIDAY 11

Transition Walks on Friday - walks visiting Transition projects, 2-6pm, starting and ending at TTT office, 43 Fore Street, Totnes, 01803 867358, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

Caravan - prog rock legends on tour with new album, Exeter Phoenix, Gandy Street, 8pm, 01392 667080, www.exeterphoenix.org.uk.

SUNDAY 13

Until April 19

Canzart exhibition - Elements of Colour, The Gallery, Birdwood House, work of Canzart collective, james@lewisburton.com, 07596 257744.

Guided wild food forage with Trees for Health for edible leaves, roots & flowers followed by cooking/preparing the harvest, 2-4.30pm, adults £6, children £2, 07765 631877/info@treesforhealth.org

Taiko drumming taster workshop for beginners (14+), Roland Levinsky Building, Plymouth Uni,

10.30am-12.30pm, £20, hj@taikojourney.com.

THURSDAY 17

Malcolm Holcombe - country, acoustic blues and rugged folk, The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, 8-10.30pm, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

SATURDAY 19

Turf hedging - Devon Rural Skills Trust workshop, Culvertor Farm, Farthing Lane, Marldon. Book on 01548 821156, www.devonruralskillstrust.co.uk.

SUNDAY 20

Taiko drumming taster workshop (14+), Roland Levinsky Building, Plymouth Uni, 10.30am-12.30pm, £20, hj@taikojourney.com.

WEDNESDAY 23

Spring Fever - Totnes mayor's charity event, proceeds to Transition Town Totnes, Totnes Fairtrade and Devon Community Foundation, Totnes Civic Hall, 7.30pm, tickets 01803 862147 or TIC, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

THURSDAY 24

Thomas Ford - slide blues 'n' harp, The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, 9-11.55pm, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

Emily Portman - folk singer/songwriter, Exeter Phoenix, Gandy Street, 8pm, 01392 667080, www.exeterphoenix.org.uk.

Exeter Festival of Food and Drink - food and drink stalls, demonstrations and tastings, celebrity chefs, parties and more, Exeter Castle Courtyard and Northernhay Gardens, www.exeterfoodanddrinkfestival.co.uk.

FRIDAY 25

Acoustic Haven - great

live music, wonderful food and friendly people, St John's Church, Totnes. Tickets from Harlequin Bookshop and www.wegotickets.com.

SATURDAY 26

Until May 5

North Devon & Exmoor Walking Festival - guided walks, www.exmoorwalkingfestival.co.uk

Until May 11

Interpretations 3 - work of local artists Maggie Smith, Sam Gingell and Sarah Harcus, Harbour House gallery, Kingsbridge, www.harbourhouse.org.uk, 01548 854708.

What Maisie Knew (15)

- Follaton Community Cinema film night, 7pm, Follaton Community Centre, www.follatoncommunitycinema.co.uk

Dangerous Dads - event for dads and young children, wild walk in Totnes. Call Ian on 01803 840990 or 077317 95160 for details.

United Kingdom - an evening with Matt Harvey and Jim Causley. Poet Matt and folk singer Jim, South Brent Village Hall, 7.30pm, eileen.southbrentfolk@gmail.com, 07947308268.

SUNDAY 27

Coco & The Butterfields - with support Sound Of The Sirens, St Bartholomews, Coffinswell, Newton Abbot, call 01803 875527 for tickets or buy online at www.wegotickets.com.

TUESDAY 29

Jim Mullen in concert - international jazz guitarist (ex-Average White Band), The Bread and Roses, Ebrington Street, Plymouth, 7pm, www.breadandrosesplymouth.co.uk, 01752 659861.

The weird and the wonderful...



Robin would be delighted for you to check out his ceramics - and buy one if you really like it! You can see the 'Weird and wonderful' ones on his website at www.robincurrie.co.uk - and some aren't even terribly 'weird'!

Tel: 01392 22 11 29



MAY

THURSDAY 1

National Theatre Live - King Lear (12A). Screened version of Sam Mendes directed version of Shakespeare tragedy. 7pm. 01803 839530, www.theatrelive.org.uk.

FRIDAY 2

Sewing! Guided session, free Skillshare, book with Anna at anna@ilovesewing.co.uk or 01803 847899, 6.30-9pm, REconomy Centre, 13 Leechwell Street, Totnes, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

Ed Byrne - top TV funnyman on his Roaring Forties tour, Exeter Corn Exchange, George Street, Exeter, 01392 665866.

SATURDAY 3

Seedy Sisters Seedling Swap, Holly Villas Allotments, Ashprington, Totnes, 4-6pm, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

Pole lathing - Devon Rural Skills Trust workshop, Culvertor Farm, Farthing Lane, Marlton. Book with

Mick Godfrey on 01548 821156, www.devonruralskillstrust.co.uk.

Nick Harper - singer/songwriter (former member of Squeeze), 7.30pm, St Bartholomews, Coffinswell, Newton Abbot, 01803 875527 for tickets or buy online, www.wegotickets.com.

SATURDAY 10

Exeter Pride - celebration of city's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, at venues across Exeter including market and Pride stall in Exeter Phoenix, www.exeterpride.co.uk.

MONDAY 12

REconomics - Totnes Style. Designed to precede the Local Entrepreneur Forum on Saturday May 13, 10am-4pm, REconomy Centre and around town, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

TUESDAY 13

Until May 18
The Imaginary Body - work of artist and curator Karen Lorenz, photographer Phil

Pierce and sculptors Phil Wakeham and Kari Furre, Harbour House gallery, Kingsbridge, www.harbourhouse.org.uk, 01548 854708.

Local Entrepreneur Forum - offer help and support for new and would-be businesses, Totnes Civic Hall, 10am-4pm, email Jay Tompt at info@reconomycentre.org. See page 5 for details.

Meet E-cocars - meet the Totnes community car hire team, as part of the Local Entrepreneur Forum in Totnes Market Square.

TIT film night - Transition Town Totnes film night, Totnes Methodist Church, 7.30-10.30pm, www.transitiontowntotnes.org.

WEDNESDAY 14

Cafe Acoustica - fortnightly showcase of unplugged talent, The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, 8.30-11.55pm, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

FRIDAY 16

Until May 18
Dart Music Festival - showcase for local talent

in all genres of music, at venues across the town, www.dartmusicfestival.co.uk.

SATURDAY 17

And May 18
Big Community Energy Weekend - Exeter Community Energy (EcoE)'s energy fair and green open homes event "across Exeter and beyond", info@ecoe.org.uk, 07806 623311, www.ecoe.org.uk and on Facebook and Twitter. See page 12.

Dangerous Dads - event for dads and young children, rockpooling in Salcombe, 1-4pm. Call Ian on 01803 840990 or 077317 95160 for details.

Plymouth Short Film Festival - inaugural festival showcases short films, Plymouth Arts Centre, www.plymouthfilmfestival.co.uk.

TUESDAY 20

Until June 1
Vibrant Images - Vibrant Artists. Work of local artists, Cherry Lyons, Wendy Chudley and Jenni Pentecost,

Harbour House gallery, Kingsbridge, www.harbourhouse.org.uk, 01548 854708.

THURSDAY 22

Until May 24
Devon County Show - county show celebrating all things rural, www.devoncountyshow.co.uk.

FRIDAY 23

Until May 25
Ashburton Blues Festival - wide choice of performers in acoustic and blues/rock to 60s R&B and country blues, Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot, www.discoverhannahs.org.

Brooke Sharkey and Adam Beattie - The B-Bar, Castle Street, The Barbican, Plymouth, theb-bar.blogspot.co.uk.

Until May 28
Surya Yoga Festival - small four-day family-friendly festival near Falmouth, www.surya.org.uk. More on page 7.

SATURDAY 24

Baka Beyond - Afro-Celtic dance band inspired by music of rainforest, Exeter Phoenix, Gandy Street,

8pm, 01392 667080, www.exeterphoenix.org.uk.

Phillip Henry and Hannah Martin - BBC best duo folk award winners, 7.30pm, St Bartholomews, Coffinswell, Newton Abbot, 01803 875527 for tickets or buy online, www.wegotickets.com.

FRIDAY 30

The Bliss LGBT Party
A night of entertainment and music for the LGBT community and their family and friends at the South Devon Arts Centre. For more info and tickets e-mail bil@southdevonarts.co.uk.

SATURDAY 31

Lemonfest. One-day festival including The Correspondents, Luke Friend, The Other Tribe, Will and the People, Mad Dog McRea, Newton Abbot racecourse, www.lemonfest.co.uk.

Muscle Shoals (PG) music documentary at Follaton Community Cinema, Totnes, 7pm, www.follatoncommunitycinema.co.uk

● Turn to page 40 in Wellbeing to check out our workshops and events listings ●

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Teenage girls have hunger for bushcraft

WHICH bird's call can warn of an oncoming storm? Which mushroom can you use to light a fire? Do you know? Do your children know? If not, does that matter?

South Devon bushcraft instructor Robin Bowman believes children's connection with nature is vital – for their sense of responsibility and leadership skills and, more importantly, for their self-esteem, motivation and confidence.

Robin, who runs camps and workshops with Dartington-based WildWise, says it is important to “meet teenagers where they are at” and is currently running four and five-day camps based on and inspired by the Hunger Games books and films, which tell the story of a 16-year-old girl living in a post-apocalyptic nation and surviving thanks to bushcraft and wilderness skills learnt from her father.

“Watching and enjoying the well-made film, a small light bulb went on in my head,” said Robin. “Traditionally, since the early days of Scouts, bushcraft and messing

about in woods has been more in the domain of teenage boys than girls and the real challenge has been how to coax girls into participating in the deep nature connective experience.

“That’s where the Hunger Games comes up trumps, because it’s the story of a strong, empowered teenage girl.

“The WildWise version of Hunger Games is, of course, non-combat but includes the teenage Tributes tracking, stalking, sneaking up on and ambushing each other while using edible and medicinal plants, making fires and shelters to sleep in and using nature awareness skills like bird language.”

Last year Robin ran three hugely successful camps, with a total of 60 teenagers, and this year’s Hunger Games will be held in the same Somerset woods from May 24-27 and August 1-5 and 23-27.

Find out more at www.wildwisehungergames.co.uk, call 01803 868269, or email info@wildwise.co.uk.

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TQ9 5SF
johardy@freeuk.com / 01803 849199 / 07905 493956

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Southernhay United Reformed Church, Exeter EX1 1QA
consciousdancespace.com



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Simon de Quincy

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Inspiring action for a truly sustainable world

Coffee trike wins tasty green award

YOU might have seen, and tasted the wares of, Beanbug, the mobile coffee bar on a trike – owners Rich and Lou Taylor serve excellent coffee from it at markets, events and festivals all over the region.

Well, next time you order your double-shot Americano with hot milk, you can congratulate them on winning the Green Trader of

the Year, awarded by the National Federation of Market Traders.

The Beanbug is built on a pedal-powered former rickshaw, the coffee is ground using onboard solar power and all the drinks sold are local, organic or Fairtrade.

To book Beanbug for your event, call 07538 188766.

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Wellbeing...

Retreats for young people

MEDITATION and mindfulness are valuable tools for overcoming stress and anxiety - and Gaia House wants their benefits to be available to all age groups.

Turn to page 35 to find out more about their retreats aimed specifically at young people.



WELCOME to Wellbeing.

WELCOME to Wellbeing, the unique truly local guide to natural therapies and personal development across South Devon. If you're a practitioner and want to spread the word, get in touch.

An 1/8-page ad in the Wellbeing section, like those at the bottom of this page, can cost just £41.85 a month when you book three issues and pay by direct debit.

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Reconnect does NOT do the hard sell - we simply believe in helping you to do what you WANT to do.

Call Pete on 01392 346342 or Martin on 01803 868455.

Top tips for all active children

IF your child takes part in sport, dance or exercise, check out SportingChildren.com, a website and free newsletter designed to support parents of children involved in physical activities.

It's the idea of Totnes-based injury and rehabilitation specialist Michael Newman, and offers advice from experts who specialise in working with sports injuries, rehabilitation, health and fitness.

"We will cover injury prevention, nutrition, common sporting injuries in children, sports psychology, physical conditioning and more," says Michael. "We will also run stories from athletes past and present, highlighting their ups and downs in sport and dance, and some of the strategies they used to help them succeed."

To sign up, visit www.sportingchildren.com.

Seeing life through the eyes of a horse

HORSES are known for their strength, loyalty and balance and they can teach us things we didn't even realise we needed to know, says Hannah Burgon, co-director of Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship.

The seeds of the Sirona project were sown when Hannah, working as a social worker, introduced looked-after children to her small herd of horses in the green hills of rural Devon.

After witnessing the positive effects of the encounters, she partnered with Di Gammage a psychotherapist and play and drama therapist to develop a process-focused therapy, supported by a horse handler.

Now, based at Hannahs at Seale Hayne near Newton Abbot, Sirona is running Through The Eyes of a Horse, a one-day therapeutic workshop combining dramatherapy and encounters with their herd of horses "to explore trust, intuition, healing, resilience and creativity."

Says Di: "Inspired by our interaction with the horses, we will use dramatherapeutic techniques, such as myth, movement and

mask, to explore our own nature.

"It will benefit and be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in equine-assisted therapy and learning, and in experiencing this exciting way of working with horses and the Sirona approach."

Through the Eyes of a Horse will be held at Hannahs at Seale Hayne, in Ashburton Road, near Newton Abbot, on Sunday June 15 and Saturday September 20, 10am-5pm. A May workshop is already full as we go to press, so don't delay.

The workshop is £95 per person, including lunch and refreshments, and the group will be restricted to eight participants so don't delay.

For more information and to book, call Susie on 07939 268 227, Lia on 07570 759 997, or email susie@wildandwise.co.uk. Visit www.sirona.com.



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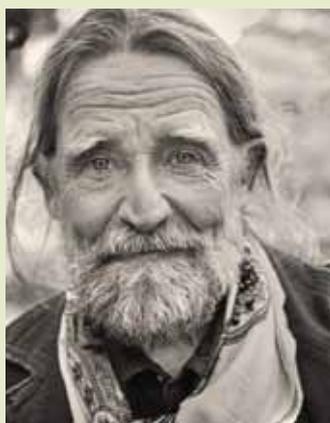
A one-day therapeutic workshop combining dramatherapy and encounters with the herd of horses at Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship.

Sunday June 15 & Saturday Sept 20
£95 (including lunch and refreshments).

Hannahs at Seale Hayne

Newton Abbot TQ12 6NQ

Call 07570 759997
or email susie@wildandwise.co.uk
www.sirona.com



Stephen Jenkinson

Griefwalker: watch the film and work with Stephen

THERE'S a rare chance in early April to see Griefwalker, a documentary film profile of Stephen Jenkinson's unique work with dying people – and an even rarer opportunity to meet and work with the man himself.

Stephen is a teacher, author, storyteller, spiritual activist, ceremonialist and founder of the Orphan Wisdom School, "a learning house for the skills of deep living and making human culture."

On Saturday April 5 Stephen will run a Q&A session after a screening of the film in Studio 1 in Space on the

Dartington Hall Estate.

The man behind the event, Duncan Passmore, says that one thing that Stephen said particularly resonated with him: "Human beings aren't born, they're made."

Says Duncan: "It deserves some time and respect to really let those words settle inside you."

Griefwalker, filmed over a 12-year period, is a lyrical, poetic portrait of his work with dying people and shows Jenkinson in teaching sessions with doctors and nurses, in counselling sessions with dying people and their families,

and in meditative and often frank exchanges with the film's director.

On Sunday April 6, there is a day long teaching entitled 'And should the world tree be withered', which is described as "a day of grief and wonder, with some prescription scribbled in the sand for what this now withered world may ask of us."

To see more about Stephen's work, and a trailer for the film, visit www.orphanwisdom.com. To find out more about the screening and the day of teaching, contact Duncan Passmore at otaboy@gmail.com or on 07428 767592.

A Peruvian adventure

A personal pilgrimage to Peru and Bolivia - a Trip for the Soul.

Meet up with shamans and take time out for inspiration and connections with the land and locals.

August 2014 - Only limited spaces available

trudi@starkeepers.co.uk - 07763 825410



Capturing subtle audio essences

JUST as for centuries people have been using sunlight to capture vibrations in pure spring water to create water essences, so a Devon man has created a unique and revolutionary process to create Audio Essences.

Brian Parsons has developed a technique for capturing subtle vibrations on to MP3 files so these digital sound vibrations can be received simply through the act of listening.

The audio essence track can then be embedded into any piece of music or spoken track. The audio essence effect does not arise from the music itself but from the subtle vibrations contained beneath the music and or words.

Said Brian: "Many ancient traditions around the world talk about subtle vibrations, which cannot be heard with the human ears, or created through the human voice, or even through musical instruments, but which influence how the universe works and coalesces.

"Using the Audio Essence process, these subtle vibrations can be captured from many different sources: single crystals, crystal patterns, flowers, trees, essential oils, homeopathic remedies, energy techniques, even the past words of enlightened masters."

Brian, from Cullompton, is running a number of workshops over the



next 12 months, which use Audio Essences to help people access different states of consciousness for practical ends.

These include:

How to Really Feel the Feeling of the Wish Fulfilled (Audio Essences for Manifestation), Exeter Natural Health Centre, Sunday May 11, £50.

Roots & Wings (10 Primary Corrections), Cullompton Care Centre, August 23 & 24, £80

Energy Astrology Part 1 (Experience Your Natal Chart through Energy & Feeling), Cullompton Care Centre, October 8 & 9, £160.

More information about these courses, and Audio Essences, can be found at www.samarpanalchemy.com or via emailing info@audioessences.com.

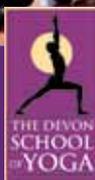


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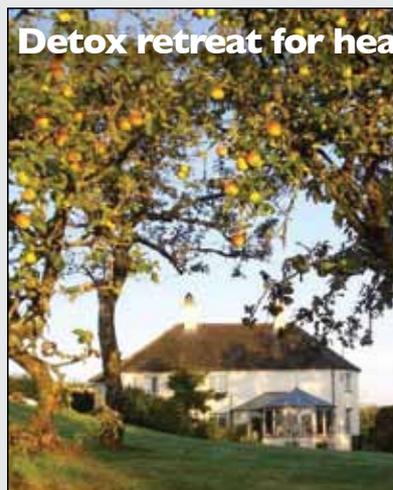


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Playing for joy - and solutions

ALL work and no play is a well known adage - and truer today than ever. But surprisingly, centuries ago there was far more time dedicated to leisure and play. Communities of hunter-gatherers spent around four hours a day on work. The remainder was dedicated to playing and games.

According to Totnes psychotherapist and counsellor Lucia Capaldi, the evidence today shows that play is just as vital for adults as it is for children because it connects us to a deeper place within ourselves.

Said Lucia: "It is well established that play not only brings joy, but can also facilitate problem solving, creativity and help

rekindle stale relationships."

Lucia is running a personal development retreat that centres around simple circle games that are not only fun but can also facilitate personal growth and change. She also uses arts and crafts, guided imagery and other group activities.

She added: "There are times in our lives when we can often feel life is not what it should be. Maybe we are working long hours and forgetting to take care of ourselves or the stresses and strains of life have taken their toll on our relationship with ourselves and those around us.

"Perhaps we have become all work and no play and would like



Lucia Capaldi

The whole body facial

MANY women see facial treatments not just as a way of achieving a more youthful appearance but also as a way to unwind, de-stress and centre.



Charlotte Taylor of LightTouch Facials says:

"Our treatments target not only the face, but the whole body and mind. Just treating the body is akin to treating symptoms rather than the cause. With a sound mind comes a sound body, and a genuine feeling of well-being. Instead of 'look good to feel good', we ought to focus on feeling good, then looks will naturally follow".

Charlotte's LightTouch Facials include two main treatments, "which can also be combined for the perfect facial."

She says: "The Natural Rejuvenating facial uses award-winning Microcurrent technology to gently re-educate, lift and tone facial muscles. This luxury aromatherapy facial is perfect for those looking for great results from an holistic and natural approach to beauty.

"The Holistic Bliss treatment focusses on releasing energy blocks in the body and mind. This facial uses essential oils and very gentle pressure to massage the marma points and balance the flow of energy. This is particularly good for unwinding, re-centring and general mindfulness."

Lighttouch Facials is situated just outside Totnes in Littlehempston with free parking and prices start from £35 for one hour.

Visit www.lighttouchfacials.co.uk.

Shiatsu duo join forces on course

TWO Shiatsu practitioners, teachers with more than 20 years' experience between them, have joined forces to run a short course that will "enable changes in your life to create harmony and reduce the symptoms of dis-ease."

Jean Netherway and Lucie Thring's "very practical and experiential short course" is based on an understanding of the natural rhythm of the universe, with the theories of Yin and Yang and the Five Transformations as its foundation.

"The Shiatsu element is taught to a very high standard suitable for the beginner as well as therapists who would like to use it for continuing professional development," said Jean, who discovered Shiatsu 22 years ago after 15 years in orthodox medicine.

"It would make an excellent starting point for your own development, as a stand-alone course, or to ascertain if a professional training is where you would like to go next."

The course will also include Do-In (tapping the meridians), meridian stretches, qigong and meditation.

Food will be explored in the light of which foods and cooking styles support or damage the different transformations.

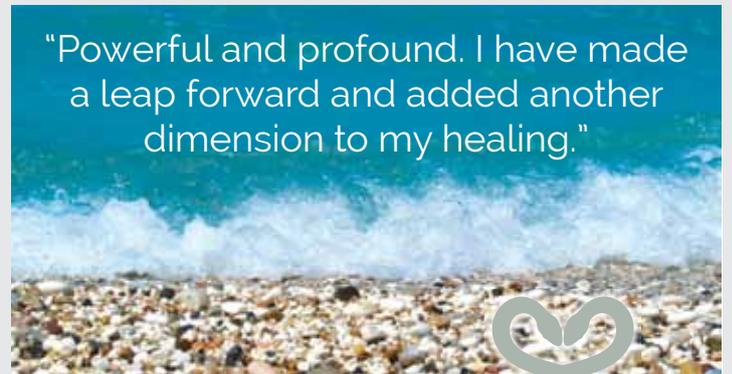


"The course will include delicious sugar-free vegan wholefood lunches produced by an experienced macrobiotic cook to complement the transformation being studied that day," said Lucie, who trained at the Devon School of Shiatsu, where she was also introduced to macrobiotics.

All teaching days are on alternate Saturdays (with a three-week gap around Christmas), starting on October 4 and running through October 18, November 1, November 15 and so on. They will all be held in Denbury Village Hall, from 10am-5.30pm.

To find out more about the course, plus interesting recipes and Jean and Lucie's reflections, visit their blog website www.shiatsudevon.wordpress.com or email shiatsucourses@outlook.com.

Lucie Thring giving a Shiatsu treatment.



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Katheryn Trenshaw - inviting women to explore how they support each other.

Remembering to live in your skin

A NEW series of workshops, a follow on from V-Day, invites a small group of women to "re-member" – bring back together body, kith and kin, and wisdom.

Katheryn Trenshaw, creative director of the Passionate Presence Center for Creative Expression in Totnes, admits the title, Remembering to Live in Your Own Skin, may sound funny at first.

"Women are invited to gather together to explore how we support each other, collectively and individually. How can we bring ourselves more fully into our being and bodies to be part of the great re-member-ing?"

"I make it my passion to stir those embers of remembering and engage the stirring of natural wisdom so that we can all be more whole together. We can do this most effectively through movement of being, creative inquiry, portraiture and dynamic sharing with other women.

"How did we forget we are made of stardust, mystery and wonder? Our presence here is an erotic blessing. There is a threshold to cross into remembering. Shall we dance over?"

Visit www.inyourownskin.org, call 01803 863552 or email info@trshaw.com.

Claire's back - inspired by baby Toryn

SPRING is definitely in the air at The Ola Chiropractic Clinic in Totnes.

Ola founder Dr Claire Ryan is now returning from her maternity leave and "learning the dance between motherhood and work life."

"I am really excited to be back," said Claire. "I find practising Network Chiropractic gives me so much energy and when I go home I see my son Toryn with renewed clarity after a little time away.

"Throughout the past seven months I have enjoyed observing his little spine growing and I've helped it grow as straight and clear as possible. I studied paediatric chiropractic many years ago but having my own child has given me a renewed passion for helping mini-spines along their path!

"Using cranio-sacral and network principles, it requires very little to clear stress from their little systems."

The Ola Clinic was in good hands while Claire was away, with practice manager Lynsey looking after the 13 alternative care practitioners working there and locum Dr Rachel Windebank looking after Claire's clients.

"We will be having an open day in the Summer so look out for news of that in



Ola's Claire Ryan with son Toryn.

the next Reconnect," said Claire.

And she will be out and about at local events so visit her stand at the Steiner Summer Fayre, Quest or Totnes District Show for a free posture and spinal analysis, and to ask any questions you may have about your family's wellbeing.

Said Claire: "If local practitioners would like to join the Ola team, we have a couple of rooms available through the week. They would also enjoy the benefit of regular marketing and support meetings."

If you're interested, email Ola at info@totneschiropractic.co.uk.

Visit www.totneschiropractic.co.uk.

Peter's big gong experience

SOUND therapist Peter Whitehart has been running gong baths, bathing participants in multi-layered sound, for some years.

But his latest creation is taking things to a whole new level – a two-hour gong event featuring the skills of five different sound therapists.

So what is a gong bath?

"Well, the only water involved is the bottled spring water distributed at the end of the session as people emerge from their sound journey!" says Peter.

"Gong bath participants lay wrapped in a blanket on a mat, head on a pillow, eyes closed, while the sound waves wash over them.

These come primarily from gongs, but with other sacred instruments and voice toning added to create a soundscape that gently induces a deep meditative state."

Peter says the effects are deeply relaxing and rejuvenating, cleansing and clearing – at the same time activating the individual's healing process and "frequently allowing



resolution of long standing problems and relief from pain and stress."

"Each person has their own unique experience," says Peter, "but many sense a feeling of timelessness and experience moments of heightened emotion, greater clarity, creative ideas and spiritual insight."

Peter is keen to collaborate with others to make the gong bath effect more profound, and to take it to a wider audience, and has organised a series of special two-hour gong events featuring five sound therapists.

"It promises to be a unique and memorable experience," says Peter.

Peter's special two-hour gong baths will be held at The Heathcoat Old School Community Centre in King Street, Tiverton, on April 20, August 17 and December 21, 6.45-9pm.

The cost is £12.50 and booking is essential by email (info@sound-gong-bath.co.uk) or on his website, www.sound-gong-bath.co.uk.



Perfect time for a detox massage

THE change of season is the perfect time for a detoxifying Ayurvedic massage, says practitioner Marie Oxley.

She offers a range of traditional Ayurvedic therapies that can ease aches, pains and tension in the body and help treat a wide variety of common ailments.

Says Marie: "Ayurveda addresses the root cause of illness and helps gently heal imbalances and prevent disease from re-occurring in the body.

"If somebody has a specific problem that needs healing I first carry out a consultation session, and then give advice based on Ayurvedic nutrition and lifestyle recommendations.

Massage is an important part of the healing process and all treatments are tailored to suit the needs of each individual person.



Marie Oxley in a consulting room at the Totnes Natural Health Centre.

"Ayurvedic warm oil massage is a wonderful treatment for the mind, body and soul, and regular treatments result in increased energy levels, better circulation, improved immunity and reduced stress."

Marie is based at the Totnes Natural Health Centre, the Ola Chiropractic Centre (Totnes) and also practises in Plymouth. Visit www.aliathrapy.co.uk, call 07834 354151 or email marie@aliathrapy.co.uk.

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International Essence



Awareness Month

May 21st–June 21st 2014

A month of talks, events workshops and more

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Organised by the **BRITISH FLOWER & VIBRATIONAL ESSENCES ASSOCIATION**
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info@bfvea.com Facebook: BFVEA ☎ 07950142512

Capturing the essence

Jan Stewart is the co-chair of the British Flower & Vibrational Essences Association. Although a retired academic, she has made and worked with flower essences since the 1960s. Here Jan explains what their International Essence Awareness Month means to practitioners and others interested in getting involved.



VIBRATIONAL essences are energetic solutions of flowers, trees, crystals and other natural sources. You probably know of the Bach Flower Remedies but many new essences are now available to help us through these uncertain times.

You can find out more during International Essence Awareness Month between May 21 and June 21. This is being organised by the British Flower and Vibrational Essences Association, a friendly group which was formed in 1998 to serve the best interests of all essence practitioners while providing information for the general public.

In 2013 it helped, with the Bach Centre, to form the Confederation of Registered Essence Practitioners (www.corep.net), the leading body for essence therapy which sets UK standards.

You can use our website (www.bfvea.com) during IEAM to: discover more about essences; find or become an accredited, registered practitioner; sign up for Essence magazine and the free e-newsletter; join a local group or

find details of local events.

Any essence enthusiast is welcome to join in - to contribute with talks, workshops or seminars; special essence promotions, sample consultations or any other activity you feel will help the cause.

Readers might also like to learn about using essences in the environment or local community during the weekend of May 30 - June 2. Additionally, they could aid BFVEA research into whether essences help feelings of overwhelm by trying a free or reduced price treatment from June 7-14.

You can obtain more information by following the BFVEA website links to International Essence Awareness Month. Contributors should also send their event details to Dawn White (dawn7sevenwayhealing@btopenworld.com), our website manager, for free advertising.

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History of healing with flowers

FLOWERS have been used in various therapeutic and mood enhancing activities throughout the ages.

The concept of employing a flower's energy for enhancing wellbeing is ancient in origin and thought to have been practised by early cultures from the Egyptians to Aborigines.

Sue Lilly, the secretary of the British Association of Flower Essence Producers, says the UK has more essence producers than the rest of the World put together.

Sue explained that early records dating back to the 12 century tell of Hildegard von Bingen collecting dew from flowers and the liquid being used for healing. In the 16th Century Paracelsus was also known to have used dew water from flowers.

In the early 20th century, doctor and researcher Edward Bach created one of the currently best known range of essences - the Bach Flower Remedies.

Dr Bach became disillusioned with conventional treatments of the time and was drawn to look at natural sources, mainly plants, to treat the

emotional states he saw as the basis of many diseases.

In 1967 Dr Arthur Bailey from Yorkshire created The Bailey Flower Essences and in the 1970s, Richard Katz and Patricia Kaminski developed the Californian Flower Essences and Lila Devi, also from the USA, started work on essences now known as 'Spirit-in-Nature Essences', made from easily recognisable fruits and vegetable flowers.

Historically the next essence maker in 1985 was Ellie Web, from Galloway in South West Scotland with a range reflecting the wild flowers in her surroundings. In 1990 Sue's husband, Simon Lilly began producing Green Man Essences. These heralded a new growth of UK essence producers which blossomed explosively following the International Flower Essence Conference at Findhorn in 1997.

Today, there are nearly 90 essence producers in the UK.

Visit the BAFEP website at www.bafep.com.

The heated indoor pool at Kate's farmhouse retreat, see below.



Spa day relaxation with therapies

THREE local therapists have joined together to create the ultimate relaxation spa day where women can relax, re-energise and regain their zest for life.

Hosted by lifecoach and juicing expert Kate Harris, the days promise relaxation, healthy food, freshly made organic juices and pampering at her farmhouse retreat near Totnes, with its own beautiful, tranquil heated indoor pool, sauna and hot tub.

Designed for small groups of up to seven women, the all-inclusive days include a yoga session, juicing demonstrations and a choice of facial massage, Reiki or reflexology, with Kamini Gupta. There is also access to a cross-trainer and rebounders, and relaxed spaces in the house and conservatory to chat, relax, read or learn more about health and wellbeing.

Vicky Rippin runs the morning or afternoon Dru yoga session, focusing on stretching and breathing to aid relaxation and detoxification. Vicky also provides raw food treats and Kate will provide an organic alkaline, vegetarian lunch.

Kate says: "At this time of year, as we emerge from the Winter, people's energy can be rather depleted and this is the ideal time to find some



space just to relax and be.

"It can be particularly difficult for women to find time to do this at home, with the demands of work, families and running a household, so this day provides the perfect opportunity to relax – and enjoy the skills of three friendly, experienced therapists."

The next New Oasis of Wellbeing day is on Thursday April 3, 10am-5pm, with further days planned for May 24 and June 27. The day costs £135 per person and early booking is recommended.

Kate also creates bespoke spa retreat days, including pre-wedding packages, with a wide range of therapies and other events.

For more information, or to book a place on Oasis of Wellbeing, contact Kate Harris on 01803 847674 or email info@sandwellfarmhouse.co.uk. Visit www.sandwellfarmhouse.co.uk.

Helping practitioners get it write

EVERY health practitioner is aware of the importance of marketing but no matter how well you know your business, it's not always easy to capture it in words.

Soul Copywriting is a new copywriting service for therapists, healers, artists, charities, eco businesses and anyone working at a 'soul' level, rather than merely for profit or personal advancement.

It has been created by Kate Philbin, a Totnes-based copywriter with more than 25 years' commercial writing experience.

Kate currently works for some of the largest organisations in the UK, including the Government, and is keen to help soul businesses market themselves more effectively.

"In today's noisy information-packed world, businesses need to be able to get their message across simply and



Kate Philbin

clearly," says Kate. "If you can't, you won't be reaching the people you need to help."

Kate has created a range of cost-effective packages so businesses know exactly what they will get and how much it will cost. She also runs a Copy Clinic for people who have written their own copy but would like professional advice on

how to improve it.

Soul Copywriting provides all types of commercial writing services, including: editorial, websites, leaflets and brochures, newsletters, blogs, video scripts and ad copy. A modular training programme and downloadable training guides are in development for anyone who would like to learn to write their own copy.

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● "I feel like an owl and can now see virtually 360 degrees..." - M.H. Forest Row

● "I've had no back pain or migraine, this is phenomenal." - C.H, 41yrs old

● "Vertigo has disappeared... my hearing has drastically improved... I can now move my head normally... I used to zigzag and struggled walking straight. I now have a perfect balance and I can walk straight." - P.C, London

● "That was until I woke up the next morning with my back pain completely gone, it has never returned and it's all down to the adjustment of my atlas." - Lynsey, UK

For more happy clients and chiropractors' feedback see:
www.marieatlas.co.uk

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Helping couples to reconnect

A RECENT article in The Times suggested the upsurge in the economy has led to divorce lawyers being inundated with business over the last 12 months.

“But what might be good for the lawyers,” says Paul Hayward, right, of Beautiful Relationships, “can be disastrous for many couples who would be better served learning to reconnect with each other.”

Paul, an experienced practitioner, counsellor and Shamanic guide, founded Beautiful Relationships in 2013.

“Relationships today are under tremendous pressure,” he says. “Many couples struggle and often fail to nurture each other as an isolated unit when once they would have the support network of an entire community.

“After suffering greatly in many of my own relationships, and then as



a counsellor myself experiencing the suffering of others, I am passionate about making a difference and empowering people to live healthy, more rewarding lives.”

Paul’s unique blend of elements has proved hugely popular with participants. Neil Finemore, who

attended a 2013 workshop, described it as: “...a wonderful experience, some great reflections were made with such a lovely and warm group. A great mix between journeying, dance, inward and outward reflections.”

Paul is running a Beautiful Relationships workshop in Totnes over the weekend of April 26 (10am-6pm) and 27 (10am-4pm). The programme is based on his 5-step process and costs £60.

Find out more at his website, www.beautifulrelationships.com, or call 01803 864160.

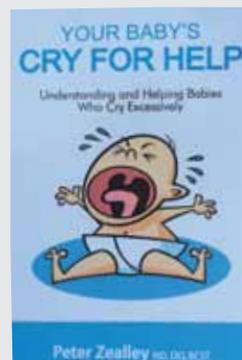
Birth trauma behind baby cry

IF your baby cries excessively, inconsolably, or screams, and no one understands why, yet you instinctively know that something must be upsetting him or her, then author and therapist Peter Zealley could have the answer.

Peter, a craniosacral therapist, has written *Your Baby’s Cry for Help*, a book

to help you understand how your baby responded to strain, stress or trauma during their birth or post-natal period. And he examines how these experiences may be causing many of their present symptoms and behaviours, including excessive crying and screaming.

The book will give you an insight into your child and the theory and practice of craniosacral therapy and cranial



osteopathy to help you decide if trying either of these two similar treatments is the best way to help your baby become more settled.

Having been in private practice since 1986, Peter knows past accidents, injuries, stressful events and traumas are the cause of many present health issues and this includes birth.

He works with all age groups and has a reputation for being able to help babies and children whose health and disposition are adversely affected by the effects of their birth, post-natal complications, prematurity, baby surgery, or injury.

Your Baby’s Cry For Help is only available from Amazon as a book and kindle version.

Visit www.peterzealley.com.

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Gaia House - silent retreats for young people.

Being mindful of all ages

GAIA House wants everyone to have the opportunity to experience the benefits that a retreat can bring to all aspects of life, including relationships, work, study and emotional wellbeing.

Each year, Gaia House holds a retreat for 16-25 year-olds, allowing them to experience retreat life with others of their own age.

"Learning meditation and mindfulness on retreat can provide very practical tools to help reduce stress and anxiety, and build self-compassion and emotional resilience in daily life," said Susanne O'Brien, retreat manager at Gaia House.

The theme this year, from Saturday May 24 – Monday May 26, is discovering freedom and love through being present.

Said Susanne: "During the retreat there will be an exploration into how meditative awareness and presence can reveal the possibility of freedom,

ease and deep care, with support from meditation instructions, dharma talks and meetings with the teachers."

The retreat costs £37 including food and accommodation (a special 70% discounted rate for 16-25 year-olds) and, like all Gaia House retreats, it will be held in silence.

Previous retreats have made a huge impression on their young attendees. Ellie, 19, said: "I have had such a wonderful weekend. I have never felt so welcome and comfortable as I have here these past few days. The silence has been so healing for me. I have learnt a great deal which I will extend to use further in my life."

And 22-year-old Richard said: "I have learnt a lot about myself and the practice and this weekend has altogether been a joyful experience."

There's more information at www.gaiahouse.co.uk, or call 01626 333613.

Working towards meditation on retreat

TREES for Health (see also page 23) is hosting **Sowing Seeds of Change**, which will combine practical work with meditation.

The retreat will be run by Sangha Seva, who has organised similar events around the world but who comes to Trees for Health for the first time.

Find out more at www.sanghaseva.org.



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13 April - Emotional Entanglement Strategies £50

(Ideal CPD day for therapists and anyone working in close contact with others)

12-16 May - ICGT Crystal Therapy Certificate (Intensive) £500 by instalments. (Full certificate for professional practice)

7-8 June - Tree Spirit Healing (£100) (Linking to and working with trees for healing and well-being)

15-19 Sept - ICGT Crystal Therapy Diploma (Intensive) £600 by instalments.

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Richard Buckland has a long experience both within the NHS, and privately, providing psychotherapeutic help for children and adolescents.

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Helping to deepen the connection

HOLISTIC massage practitioner Ailsa Lucas, right, says she gives massage simply because she has experienced for herself what a profound difference our relationship with our body can make to every other aspect of our lives.

"In this culture there are so many pressures that take us away from our internal experience of our body," says Ailsa. "I love helping people to rebuild and deepen that connection."

One aspect of her work is doing what she can to help clients find immediate relief from symptoms like headaches or other pain, but even that she sees as a chance for them to "get to know what that greater ease is like".

She explains: "It can help them notice when they are falling into everyday habits that increase their pain, and step-by-step they can learn to live their lives in ways that bring them less pain.

"Many clients love massage for the blissful state of relaxation and sensory awareness it can bring. Others come to feel more grounded,



centred, cared for, open or alive.

"But I believe these experiences are all the more valuable when their effects extend well beyond the hours immediately following a massage. I sometimes use simple words as well as touch to help clients find these feelings for themselves in more of their everyday lives."

Ailsa practices at Ola Chiropractic Centre in Totnes and you can contact her on 01803 849039 or 07999 486059 and email ailsa.clare.lucas@gmail.com.

Acupuncturist new to Kingsbridge

AN acupuncturist who has run a successful practice in Totnes for almost 18 years is now also working in Kingsbridge.

"My patients come not just from Totnes but from miles around," says Mark Edlund-Plater, "so when I was offered the chance to work one day a week in Kingsbridge, I leapt at the chance."

Mark has been working from two bases in Totnes - the Totnes Natural Health Centre and the Ola Chiropractic Centre. Now he will also spend Fridays based at the Mayberry Centre in Kingsbridge.

"I was just so impressed by the centre and people working there," says Mark. "It's tucked away in the Old Station Yard, off West Alvington Hill, but it's a hidden gem!"

Although he's new to Kingsbridge, he practices a skill that is thousands of years old and which forms the basis

of everyday medicine in its native China.

"And it's increasingly a mainstream treatment here in the UK too," says Mark, who as a member of the British Acupuncture Council is fully accredited and fully insured.

"I have had dramatic results on a whole range of ailments. Conditions I have treated many times, with much success, include back, neck and joint pain, including arthritis and sciatica, and stress and anxiety-related complaints like headaches, insomnia and depression."

Mark says he always tries to make treatment affordable for the client and operates a sliding scale of charges depending on income.

To find out more, contact him direct on 07506 179808, or at mark.edlundplater@gmail.com, or call The Mayberry Centre on 01548 853700.



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One of the rooms at Release SW

New city therapy centre

TWO Devon-based therapists, counsellor/ psychotherapist Emma Redfern and dramatherapist Martin Redfern have set up a not-for-profit company to create and run a new therapy centre in Exeter.

Release Southwest CIC is leasing what was part of the old Exeter Steiner School at 80 Merrivale Road.

"The centre has a set-apart, private feel to it which enhances the therapeutic nature as well as permitting the making of noise and being expansive physically and emotionally," says Emma.

The centre has a variety of room sizes, suitable for one-to-one sessions, groups, workshops and trainings, plus a well-appointed kitchen, disabled access and facilities and half a dozen extra toilets (useful for larger groups).

Currently the centre is already used for therapist-led group meetings for foster carers, one-to-one therapy, dramatherapy, training groups, tai chi and a drumming circle.

"Our first trauma-focussed event was a workshop led by an international dramatherapist Dr Nisha Sajjani," said Martin.

Bookings are available by the day, half day and hour, and for occasional as well as longer term bookings. Call 0845 345 8977 or 07970 893778, email emmalizbeth@hotmail.com and visit www.releaseSW.org.

Does your body need a springclean?

IF you're still feeling a bit lethargic after those long Winter months, it could be your body is ready for a spring clean.

Beryl Roseblade at Restore-me Therapies explains: "Our bodies benefit from a spring clean to re-energise us and refresh all the systems of the body."

"I would recommend reflexology for this process. Toxins that may have built up through the Winter months can be released through the massaging of special reflex points on the feet or hands."

And currently Beryl is running a special offer - if you book a series of five treatments you get the sixth half-price. Just mention Reconnect when you book.

Call Beryl on 01803 853605 or 07753 471618, or visit www.restoremetheries.com.



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Burial structure grand opening

A BEAUTIFUL structure, cob-walled and turf roofed, now stands watch over the hill at the Sharpham Meadow natural burial ground.

The building is the work of Duncan Passmore, whose shepherds' huts we featured in a recent issue of Reconnect, and follows an elliptical design to echo the oval structure (and exact dimensions) of the famous staircase in Sharpham House.

Said Rupert Callender of The Green Funeral Company, which manages the burial ground: "It

provides perfect shelter from the weather for ceremonies, as well as setting the mood for what Sharpham Meadow is all about.

"Anyone can visit it any time - the burial ground is always open - but you can see it with a flourish at its grand opening on April 26, where there will be all the touches we have come to expect from Sharpham, creating a warm hearted and thoughtful welcome into the wonder of the natural world."

Visit www.thegreenfuneralcompany.co.uk.

Special Sound Healing Event

20th April 2014

Old Heathcoat School Community Centre
81 King Street Tiverton Devon EX16 5JJ
Held in the main hall. 6.45pm - 9.00pm

Five sound therapists are joining forces to bring you two hours of "gong bath relaxation" This will involve eight gongs as well as other sound therapy instruments, including drum, sounding bowls, Tibetan bowls, crystal bowl, healing chimes and the human voice. The cost is £12.50 per person. Please bring a blanket and a pillow. Pre booking is essential for this event.

Email Peter on: info@sound-gong-bath.co.uk
More details: www.sound-gong-bath.co.uk

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Importance of environment

THE learning environment is a crucial part of the process of becoming a counsellor, according to psychotherapist Julie Jeffs.

Julie, who set up the Waterloo Wellbeing Centre in Plymouth and runs Lotus Training, says the environment enhances the learning process.

Lotus training was established last year in the grounds of the impressive Crownhill Fort.

Said Julie: "I have worked in various therapeutic settings across the city and then opened the Waterloo Wellbeing Centre in 2009. With Lotus Training we are delighted to have found a majestic training venue in the grounds of the Fort.

"Our training environment, one where therapeutic practice takes place, is designed to convey a sense of peace, containment and safety. Students can rest in the knowledge that they are being trained by experienced practitioners who have been working in the field of counselling for many years.

"Our aim is to create the conditions for growth whereby students can flourish and become the best they can be, both personally and professionally."

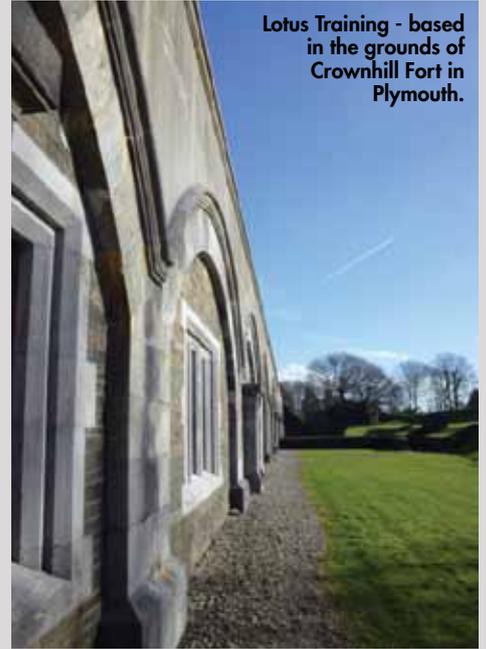
Julie left a successful career in business management to take an Introduction to Counselling course in 1995 and became a registered psychotherapist in 2005.

She said: "My route to becoming a psychotherapist has been costly, challenging and yet hugely rewarding.

"We at Lotus Training are interested in training people who believe in putting the relationship at the centre of the work.

"Our two-year diploma in mindfulness-based counselling is about learning to trust in the client's own inborn capacities for self-healing.

Lotus Training - based in the grounds of Crownhill Fort in Plymouth.



As a trainee counsellor, you can learn skills and techniques but unless you can learn to be present with yourself how can you learn to be present for another? Our course may not be the easiest route to becoming a counsellor, but then why should it be!?"

Julie added: "The diploma course will use personal development and mindfulness as a foundation for professional development, supported by a thorough exploration of the theoretical concepts of human relationship."

Julie added that In addition to the diploma the centre would shortly be offering the lower level and higher level courses up to level 6.

"I started the Waterloo Wellbeing Centre and Lotus Training because of my commitment to a way of being that supports people in finding the gift of relating. I hope to support students in exploring their unique perceptions and in investigating the true meaning of human relationship."

For more information about the courses, please contact Julie Jeffs or Heather Morfett on 01752 560002, or visit www.psychotherapyplymouth.co.uk.

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Hélène Demetriades

Post-treatment dreams reveal clues to transformation

THE Metamorphic Technique is all about transformation, as the name suggests, and the process of that change is often revealed in people's dreams after completing a session.

Practitioner Hélène Demetriades says they always take time on the second day of her workshops to share the dream symbolism and experience that may have arisen the night before.

"One of my favourite dreams was of a participant who kept moving house, but each time the house caught fire until the last house burnt down to the ground leaving a central room built out of stone and divided into four chambers.

"Then, during the night immediately after the workshop, another participant dreamt she could feel a key dangling on a string down her throat. She pulled it up, and at once started to throw up a thick black tarry substance, which kept tumbling out. After this her 'insides felt clean and smooth, like the inside of a well'.

"In the first dream the fire of transformation was burning away unneeded securities to reveal the indestructible four-chambered heart at the core of our being.

"And in the second dream the finding of a key catalyses the release of waste to reveal a clean well, a powerful symbol

of life and of depth of feeling. And, of course, we also have a play on words and a suggestion of 'wellness'!"

Hélène says a session of the Metamorphic Technique acts as a catalyst to our own life-force, which can "transform patterns and stuck places in our lives".

She added: "Sometimes these changes are dramatic, sometimes so subtle we just feel more fully ourselves."

Hélène's next workshop takes place on June 7 and 8.

To find out more, visit www.helenedemetriades.co.uk or call her on 01803 868655.

Sylvie brings Shiatsu form to Devon

NAMIKOSHI Shiatsu is one of the lesser-known forms of Shiatsu in the UK, although the technique is familiar to people in continental Europe, especially in Spain, Italy and Portugal - and in Canada and Argentina.

There is now also a Namikoshi Shiatsu school in London (www.shiatsu-london.net).

Exeter-based practitioner Sylvie Thomas is Spanish and studied for three years in the Japanese School of Shiatsu in Barcelona.

Says Sylvie: "Namikoshi Shiatsu involves the application of pressure to areas of the body to correct imbalances and treat a whole range of conditions.

"A basic treatment involves over 500 points being pressed at least three times each on the structural body: muscle, articulation, deep work of the spine and the abdomen."

Sylvie says she has treated people with sports injuries, insomnia, migraine, diarrhea, constipation, depression, anxiety, fibromyalgia, neck, back and shoulder problems, sciatica, arthritis and tendonitis "to name just a few".

Patients receive treatments fully clothed and although they usually visit first with specific ailments, they often continue to have regular treatments "because they feel better, more relaxed and healthier."

Sylvie is a member of Shiatsu Society UK and works at The Shiatsu Practice, which is based at the Devon School of Yoga in Barnfield Hill. She also offers home visits and treats workers, seated in their chairs, at their workplaces.

To find out more, call Sylvie on 07804 507765, or email shiatsu.exeter.devon@gmail.com.



Sylvie Thomas after receiving her certificate with Matsuko Namikoshi and Takashi Namikoshi at the Japanese School of Shiatsu in Barcelona.

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WORKSHOPS & COURSE DIARY

To advertise your workshops or courses here, simply email us the words, along with your name, address and phone number and we will invoice you. The cost is just 90p a word, with a minimum of 20 words. Email adverts@reconnectonline.co.uk, or call Pete on 01392 346342.

EVERY MONDAY

TAIKO DRUMMING, starting April 21. Beginners welcome (14yrs+) £8pp, 7-8.15pm, Ariel Centre, Totnes. Details/bookings: hj@taikojourney.com

EVERY MONDAY

TEN WEEKS to a Vibrant Voice'.... Singers! Join this supportive, fun and empowering course, to be able to sing with richness, freedom and confidence. Starts April 28. Visit www.comealivesinging.com/10-weeks or call Selena, 01803-762438.

EVERY THURSDAY

TAIKO DRUMMING, Thursday evenings, starting May 8, 7-8pm, beginners welcome, £8pp, central Plymouth. Find out more: hj@taikojourney.com

FRIDAY LUNCHTIMES

MEDITATE WITH MAGGIE. Drop-in meditation class with Maggie Kay. Every Friday 1-2.30pm. Totnes Natural Health Centre. Experienced/newcomers - all welcome. Friendly & relaxed. Guidance, support & practice in four key Thrivecraft meditations. £9/£7.

EVERY FRIDAY

QIGONG at St Johns Church Hall, Totnes with Brad Richecoeur, 10-11.30am. Suitable for all levels, new students welcome. 01364 644040. www.qigong-southwest.co.uk

APRIL

FRIDAY 4 - SUNDAY 6

'GETTING OUT THERE' training. An arts, environmental and intercultural approach to working with

children, young people and families. £75 www.embercombe.co.uk

SUNDAY 13 & 20

TAIKO DRUMMING Taster workshops for beginners (14yrs+), £20pp, 10:30am - 12:30pm, Roland Levinsky Building, Plymouth Uni. Details/bookings: hj@taikojourney.com

THURSDAY 10

SILENT MEDITATION then discourse led by psychotherapist and spiritual teacher Richard Harvey. 7pm-9pm, Holmedale Health, Exeter. Donation. Details: peter@zealley.com or telephone 01363 774196.

THURSDAY 17

BASKET MAKING. In this one-day course, you will use a range of basket making tools to make a small basket. You will select and use different types of locally-grown willow. £5 materials fee. All tools provided but you are welcome to bring your own secateurs. 10am - 4:30pm. Tutor: Vivienne Turner. Cost: £48. For more info www.growersorganics.com 01752 881180

SUN 20 - FRI 25

CATALYST for 18-25's 'Shape your world'. Embercombe. £295 www.embercombe.co.uk/catalyst

SUNDAY 27

THE SONG of the Swan, a full-day and evening workshop to honour the loss of a miscarried, terminated or stillborn child. Facilitators: Sue Charman, Cat Large, and Yuli Somme. Sharpham House, Ashprington, Totnes, £85 (three bursary

places at £40), email info@bellacouche.com or call 01647 441405.

MAY

EVERY MONDAY

TAIKO DRUMMING, starting April 21. Beginners welcome (14yrs+), £8pp, 7pm - 8.15pm, Ariel Centre, Totnes. Details/bookings: hj@taikojourney.com

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SATURDAY 10

DEATH CAFÉ, Ivybridge. For details, call Jane at Green Fuse on 01803 840779.

SAT 10 - SUN 11

GREEN WOODWORK - an introduction. Make a stool to take home on this two-day course. You will combine the use of traditional bodgers'

tools including a shaving horse, froe and draw knife with contemporary methods of furniture making. 09:30 - 16:30 hrs. Tutor: Peter Lanyon. Cost: £120. For more info www.growersorganics.com 01752 881180

SAT 10 - SUN 11

LESSONS from the Bees, the relationship between humans and honeybees, with Embercombe's beekeeper Tim Hall. Visit www.embercombe.co.uk/bees, 07870 938323.

TUESDAY 13

DEATH CAFÉ, Ashburton. For details, call Jane at Green Fuse on 01803 840779.

WEDNESDAY 14

SEAWEED Foreshore Forage, 11am - 2pm at Newton Ferrers. £10. Contact Sara Hills Medical Herbalist 01752 872960 www.herbs-work.co.uk

SAT 17 - SUN 18

SAYING YES to

abundance: How to create money with heart & soul. Thrivecraft workshop with Maggie Kay. Totnes Natural Health Centre. £149 incl lunches & refreshments. Contact Maggie at www.maggielaywisdom.com or 07905 628905.

SATURDAY 17

HERBAL BODY CARE. On this gorgeous half-day course you will learn about the use of herbs in body care and make some of your own natural body products. 10am - 1pm Tutor: Tania Bryson. Cost: £35. For more info www.growersorganics.com, 01752 881180.

SATURDAY 17

DEATH CAFÉ, Moretonhampstead. For details, call Jane at Green Fuse on 01803 840779.

TUESDAY 20

DEATH CAFÉ, Totnes. For details, call Jane at Green Fuse on 01803 840779.

THURSDAY 29 - TUESDAY JUNE 3

SOWING SEEDS of Change, meditation and work retreat, Trees for Health agroforestry project with retreat organiser Sangha Seva. Visit www.sanghaseva.org, info@treesforhealth.org, Call 07765 631877 for details.

SATURDAY 31

WILD FERMENTATION: a one day, hands-on course for growers, gardeners, chefs, food therapists and food lovers with Sandor Ellix Katz at Embercombe £75 Visit www.Embercombe.co.uk

SUN 11 - FRI 16

THE JOURNEY: Finding Earth, Finding Soul. Embercombe. www.embercombe.co.uk/journey.

AUGUST

SAT 2 - SUN 10

LIFEBEAT Camp for 13-17 years. Embercombe. Visit www.Embercombe.co.uk for details.

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- Chicks (ready now)
- Point-of-lay hens (soon)



Want to eat Hillyfield eggs?

Call Jenny on 01803 868455



WANT TO KEEP HENS?

We are running The Hillyfield Chicken Keeping Workshop for Beginners on May 4 - see page 23 for details or call Martin and Jenny on 01803 868455

Call Jenny on 01803 868455 or Doug on 07976 589 927

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Living on less...

We have the technology...

CAN you fix stuff?

When the mechanical moving parts in your life cease to move, do you reach for your trusty, well-equipped toolbox? Or the telephone? Or the bin?

Talking with a friend about our practical abilities the other day, he admitted his father had 'encouraged' him to at least try to fix things himself "because if he had to call someone in it was somehow a sign of failure."

I kind of get what he means. It's at least a little disempowering if we have to call in the experts every time something breaks.

My dad was much the same, although as a farmer he had to turn his hand to most things simply because he couldn't afford to constantly call in plumbers, electricians, builders, carpenters, vets, fencers, roofers and so on.

And there are times when a specialist is the only option – when we fear for our lives, for example. Even a moment's hesitation before you select the red wire or the blue wire shows you should be putting work the way of a local electrician. And if you need any more persuading, the law says you need to be qualified anyway.

But there are many items that could be repaired by those of us with a reasonable degree of practical ability and a decent toolkit – if they hadn't been designed to be thrown away.

Oh dear, I smell an anti-consumerism rant...

The root of the problem, as ever, is the uncontrollable nature of that free market we're so keen to protect. The simple economics of it are that if things break and can't be fixed, people have to chuck them out and

ISN'T it time we moved on from this era of planned obsolescence? MARTIN FOSTER suggests there's an opportunity for manufacturers to build things that last - or at least that can be repaired...



Heated argument...

buy new replacements. Awfully good for the economy. Awfully bad for the environment.

Of course if there were some controls, some creative and constructive intervention in the system, manufacturers could be incentivised (let's use taxation constructively for a change) to design and produce goods that could be repaired.

Sure, the scale of the manufacturing and sales empires would gradually diminish, but there would be scope for a whole new strata of repair companies.

Given the insatiable hunger of the consumerist machine, you might think that repairable goods are a thing of the past - but while that might be true, some of them are still on the market.

We were recently looking to buy an incubator to hatch out some of our chickens' eggs. It's simple enough

technology: an enclosed heated tray, in which the eggs sit (a carefully controlled temperature is crucial), with a tray of water to keep up the humidity and something to gently turn them (recreating the broody hen's movements).

One of the simplest and most effective units comes courtesy of a Somerset company called Brinsea.

They have a reputation for reliability and durability – and every individual part of their machines can be bought from their stores, so when we found one selling cheap on eBay due to a faulty motor, we didn't hesitate.

Once it arrived, I found out what it needed and bought the part (next day delivery) from Brinsea. As an electrical repair person, I make a good editor, so when my enthusiastic but not always wholly successful trial and error approach failed me, I called their helpline for advice.

The person I spoke to wasn't able to help, but they took my number with the promise that their "product development engineer would call back". And he did. And he was really helpful. And it's now working a treat (with 24 little chicks singing Brinsea's praises).

If you need an incubator then, I suggest you check out Brinsea.

But what if (bizarrely) you don't actually need to hatch any eggs this month? What if you're having trouble with some other mechanical device. Like a car, say?

Oh yes, the motor car. They pollute, they kill, they swallow our money like chrome-trimmed black holes. And yet



most of us run one (with due respect to those of you who can manage without).

Cars have become increasingly less DIY-friendly over the years but I would like to give a mention to The Durable Car Ownership Scheme, operated by Charles Ware's Morris Minor Centre at Bristol.

Now I realise the humble Morris Minor is not everyone's ideal transport, but it's really the principle of the scheme that interests us here. So you take along your Morris Minor and, after giving it a thorough going over, they suggest a programme of restoration that gradually returns your car to its original condition – at the same time allowing you to continue using it (except when it's actually in their workshops).

It's no accident the scheme is based on the rotund little Morris, of course. Its more traditional method of construction means it can be gradually replaced, part-by-part – and their classic status means they are actually appreciating in value.

But wouldn't it be possible to design and build a new car with a similar ongoing maintenance plan? Is there not a demand for a car that simply does its job? Without all the fancy marketing-driven image nonsense?

And continuing the logic, what about a range of practical, plain and repairable white goods?

As they said when they rebuilt Steve Austin, "We have the technology." Shame we only seem to use it to make money...



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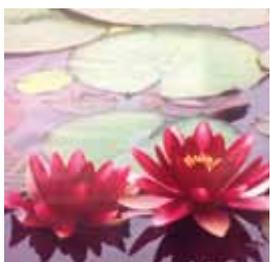


Waterloo Wellbeing Centre

Providing Counselling, Psychotherapy and Training in our community.

Here at the WWC we provide a professional counselling, psychotherapy and well being service. We offer a wide range of therapeutic approaches including CBT, DBT, EMDR, in-depth psychotherapy, short term counselling, Emotionally Focused Therapy for Couples and child & adolescent psychotherapy.

The Centre is well appointed, spacious and has plenty of natural light. We have a range of therapy rooms, available to hire, including weekends & evenings. There is plenty of free parking close by.



Lotus Training for Counselling and Mindfulness

(In association with Waterloo Wellbeing Centre)

Professional Counselling Training – Sept 2014

Two year Diploma in Mindfulness based Counselling (CPCAB Accredited)
(Payment options available)



Mindfulness is essentially training our attention so that we can be more aware not only of our own inner workings but also of what's happening around us in the here & now. Sharon Salzberg

Waterloo Wellbeing Centre

Mindfulness meditation (All welcome)

Weekly Drop-in sessions

Tues & Thurs Evenings,
7pm – 8.15pm

Lotus Training for Counselling and Mindfulness

A Space for Mindfulness

Sat 26th April 2014 – 10am – 4.00pm

A Space for Young Wellbeing

Sat 3rd May 2014 – 10am – 1pm

A Space for Mindfulness

Sat 14th June 2014 – 10am – 4pm

Stress Reduction Course (MBSR)

Autumn 2014, Sunday afternoons
(4 week course)

New Courses - coming soon

Level 2, Effective listening skills
(10 weeks)

Level 2, Listening support skills
(10 weeks)



The Waterloo Wellbeing Centre, 191 Devonport Rd, Stoke, Plymouth PL1 5RN

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For more info visit: www.psychotherapyplymouth.co.uk

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