

WINTER 2019-20



NEWSLETTER

LOOKING AFTER ALL OUR TOMORROWS TODAY

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Ageing Well Torbay newsletter.

Please do share this copy, which celebrates just some of the fantastic things and fabulous people that are involved with Ageing Well Torbay (AWT) across the bay.

GET INVOLVED

Call the AWT team on **01803 212638**. We can put you in touch with your local community builder, who can help you find a group or activity that's right for you.

There's all sorts going on in Brixham, Paignton and Torquay; from coffee mornings to luncheon clubs, from yoga classes to dance sessions, from hula hooping to radio production, from mediation to singing. We are confident that there is something for everyone. And if there isn't one, where possible we will create one.

You can find out more on our website at:
www.ageingwelltorbay.com

TELL YOUR STORY

This newsletter is made up of news from out in the community. A massive thanks go to them all for taking the time to write for us.

If you are over 50, live in Torbay and would like to contribute a story or article, you can email davidgledhill@torbaycdt.org.uk or send by post to Ageing Well Torbay, c/o Torbay Community Development Trust, 4 - 8 Temperance Street, TQ2 5PU.

WHAT IS AGEING WELL TORBAY?

Ageing Well Torbay is led by people over 50 and aims to increase opportunities and reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst older people in Torbay.

It is a six-year project and is part of the National Lottery Community Funded programme 'Fulfilling Lives, Ageing Better' and is managed by the Torbay Community Development Trust (TCDT). The project runs until 2021 and is one of 14 projects around the country.

Over 50s sit on our board and also decide which projects receive funding. There is also a steering group who organise the Ageing Well Festival every year - we have now begun planning the 2020 festival. **If you'd like to join the committee, get in touch.**

We have lots of different activities and opportunities on offer.

Why not get involved?



HUNDREDS LEAVE FESTIVAL SATISFIED, PLANNING BEGINS FOR 2020 EVENT

We promised the biggest and best Ageing Well Festival back in October – and the numbers attending and the feedback we received tells us we achieved that aim.

More than 1,750 people came through the doors at the Riviera Centre in Torquay to enjoy a huge range of workshops, entertainment, talks, advice and fashion shows.

There was a mix of the well-tried and tested alongside things being demonstrated for the very first time – one of which was the catwalk of fashions provided from the Sainsbury's Tu range, which went down a storm.

The music was as wide ranging as taste – from the Torbay Ukulele Band through to Sandy Sparkle singing songs from the seventies and eighties and if that didn't float your boat then Missin' Tackle waded in with sea shanties and songs of the sea.

And despite many people dancing throughout the day, some with the aid of walking frames and sticks, they still found enough energy to strut their stuff energetically when Anne George hosted her dance party for the last hour.

The centre was abuzz throughout the day with mainly over 50-year-olds (with some youngsters in attendance too) letting their hair down; trying new things, learning new facts and meeting and making friends.

Organisations from the police and fire services to voluntary groups and charities manned stalls throughout the day introducing their services and giving out much-needed information.

The Friends Around the Bay, just one of the seventy-plus groups represented, enthused: *“We have had an excellent response and have had people signing up throughout the day”*

Staying Put, a new partnership service lead by the Torbay Community Development Trust, which aims to allow people to stay in the homes that they love for longer with support, advice and a handyman service benefited from numerous referrals.

“We have had people saying that they need our help, we have booked in jobs across the Bay and the interest in our work from individuals and other groups has been amazing.” said one helper.

Lions Groups also had people not just interested in their work, but wanting to join the ranks: *“It has been a great day, a terrific amount of interest as well as people wanting to join not just us but other Lions in the Bay.”* said a representative of Paignton Lions.

And Age UK Torbay's Wellbeing Coordinators were



overwhelmed by the event: *“It has been great, so many people. So many very happy people, what can you say?”* said one. And they had new referrals from people who were in need of their help.

But the best of the feedback came from people who travelled to the Riviera Centre from right across Torbay.

One 73-year-old woman from Brixham said as she left, flourishing her hands with freshly painted brightly coloured nails: *“I have had a lovely time. So many people – I even got my nails done!”*

For Barbara from Paignton, it was her first festival and by the end she was wishing she had been to previous ones: *“The talks were great and I have picked up lots of leaflets and am now looking forward to pilates and dancing.”*

We have analysed the hundreds of feedback forms that attendees completed, and it is heartening to see so many have ticked the ‘Exceptional’ box when asked the question ‘Overall, how did you rate the quality of the festival?’

We have read them all and had them professionally evaluated to allow us to learn lessons, both good and

(albiet few) bad to learn in time for next year’s festival which we have now started planning.

We are on the lookout for new volunteers to join our hardworking volunteer committee, who organise and deliver a first-class festival year in year out, so if you have time, energy and enthusiasm to join us then email here at ageingwell@torbaycdt.org.uk or give us a call on 01803 212638.

We don’t pretend it isn’t hard work, because it is, and the 2019 festival was for many of the hard-pressed volunteers an exhausting one, but seeing so many happy faces and not hearing a single complaint all day, makes it all worthwhile.

And returning to the feedback forms, as we will to remind us of just what was achieved, all under the theme of Love, Live, Laugh and Learn, you can’t help but smile when you read comments like *‘I thought the Ageing Well Festival was outstanding!’* and *‘Keep up the good work, great day, thank you’*

But the final words have to go to the person who wrote: *‘Just like Christmas Day. Wonderful.’*

TORBAY OVER 50'S ASSEMBLY - AN UPDATE FROM TOFA



Torbay Over 50's Assembly

The Torbay Over 50's Assembly has begun work and has started tackling issues that you have said need attention.

We held public meetings in Paignton, Brixham and Torquay during August and September and manned a stall at the Ageing Well Festival promoting TOFA and listening to people's views, concerns and ideas.

Our Town representatives have digested all comments made by you, our membership, under the eight themes (known by the World Health Organisation as the petals) – **environment, transport, respect and inclusion, employment and participation, housing, communication and information, social activities, and health and support services.**

What has been identified is that we first need to map the work already being done on the individual themes. Additionally, relationships need to be built with trust between TOFA



Paignton's first open town assembly took place in September at Preston Baptist Church.

representatives and the council, NHS and others that make up the World Health Organisations, petals.

In particular, **the Action Group** has been concentrating on building a regularly updated what's on guide with the Community Builders to share with our members for **Social Activities.**

Within **Transport** we have been observing the OurBus developments (*see page 8*) and researching Torbay's current highways plans, policies and strategies to identify ways to address issues identified by you such as cars parked on pavements, trip hazards on pavements, poor lighting etc.

In **Employment and Participation**, we have focused on employment recently, introduced ourselves to JobCentre Plus and shared the concerns made by you about their current services and the support for over 50s. That work led to an event in Paignton

Library at the beginning of December, where we ran a joined event with JobCentre Plus staff and TOFA representatives, and invited users to come along and share their experiences.

In the **Housing** sector, we have been involved in helping develop the 'Plan for Housing in Later Life' and the recommendation documents which will go to all prospective developers regarding suitable housing standards. We have also been researching the proposed housing development in the higher Paignton area, as well as the council's progression to become a social landlord again. We are seeking to ensure the design of the housing estates meet the needs and requirements of people over 50.

Research by the **Respect and Inclusion** representatives has started to understand what current services and support is available in Torbay. This has included discussion with

the Diversity Officer at Torquay police station, and the committee who organise the Into the Mix Festival which promotes diversity across Torbay.

Health and Support Services representatives have two places on the Health and Wellbeing Board, where we will be involved in strategic and long-term planning and will influence using your voices.

Furthermore TOFA members and representatives have been involved in feedback regarding the Better For You Better For Devon long term plan for the NHS. They have created a presentation aimed at demystifying adult social

care - what is it, how much does it cost, and what do you need to consider when planning for later life care?

Our **Environment** lead has been looking at the many concerns regarding TOR 2 with waste disposal and recycling as well as litter and preserving our green spaces and coastline.

Our volunteer representative has been researching the contract council with TOR2, and how we can escalate concerns regarding this service. She has also met with the Green Space Forum and has joined as a member, to be kept informed and updated as it looks into activity regarding Torbay's green

spaces.

We have also had several meetings and a workshop to discuss the best way forward with Age-friendly status in Torbay and have gained the support and commitment of several high-ranking politicians including Torbay Council's leader councillor Steve Darling.

If you have concerns that you want TOFA to tackle on your behalf please contact us. If you want to become a member of TOFA (at no cost) please email us at Ageingwell@torbaycdt.org.uk and we will add you to our database to receive regular updates.

NEIGHBOURLY WAYS TO HELP OUT *By Gill Knight, Community Builder & Staying Put Volunteer Coordinator*

Usually with a new year come New Year resolutions, some we will make and break within the month, but others can have a life-changing effect and lead us to new opportunities and adventures.

I recently attended a Timebank Christmas disco, where a group of Torbay folk celebrated all that was good about neighbourly help across the bay. The party and dancing was interspersed with personal stories highlighting the positive effect that helping and being helped had had upon them - the resounding message being that people were now happier, more fulfilled and felt supported. Being neighbourly should

be something we do naturally, welcoming newcomers into our road, and a friendly hello when we pass others by can make a huge difference, giving us the feeling that someone is looking out for us.

My job has hit home to me how many people have little or no contact with those immediately around them, and as a result no support network, but it has also shown me what big hearts people have, and the positive effect that helping others can have on both the helper and helped.

There are many ways to be neighbourly, and our Staying Put project and Torbay Together timebanking scheme

will help you find a way, without any pressure of a regular commitment. New friendships have been made, jobs that have been waiting to be done for months have been cleared, and problems solved. (A bit of advice from one timebanker gave me a way of solving something that had been an ongoing worry to me).

The hardest thing is to make a phone call to start the ball rolling, so why not make your New Year's resolution to be a little more neighbourly, say hello to people you don't know, and contact me on 07884887063 or log onto www.torbaytogether.org.uk to find out how you can offer neighbourly help to others in your community.

LADY MARGARET - A LIFETIME OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND CARE

To her friends and family, she is simply known as Lady Margaret, a wholly deserved title after a lifetime of fostering.

The moniker, bought as a present for her 80th birthday, might not earn her a place in the House of Lords, but it is no less deserved and the certificate proclaiming it takes pride of place on the mantelpiece of her Brixham home.

At 82 Margaret Earnshaw can look back on a life filled with the patter of tiny feet – 25 pairs of them over a lifetime of stepping in when birth parents couldn't cope.

As if that were not special enough Margaret did 99% of the fostering as a single parent having only been married briefly, just long enough to have one child of her own, a son, Andrew who will be 42 in January.

Not that being flesh and blood meant that he got more attention than the others, Margaret's heart has proved to be big enough for as many children as you could fit into her tiny home.



Pride of place on her lounge wall, are photos of a few of the many children Margaret fostered.

And it was tough. Money was tight and the private fostering fees were a fraction of the money on offer from local council social services departments, but as word spread, Margaret found it impossible to say no.

Being a lone woman with children in the 1950's, 60's and even into the 70's was to be the subject of derision and even disdain. As if that was not enough to cope with, Margaret bravely took her critics head on.

At a time when mixed families were frowned upon – abhorred by the racist norm and hidden from sight to the majority,

Margaret cared for children of all races.

She thought nothing of stepping in when a young Ghanian family asked her to foster their baby, because all she could see was a child in need and to her all children that needed her help were equal.

It was not an easy time for Margaret or indeed some of the children – over the years she fostered several children of Ghanian and West Indian descent and faced down the racists in the street, in the education system and even in the Church.

On one occasion, another mother told Margaret

We are on the look out for Hidden Heroes – like Margaret. If you know of a life that should be celebrated contact David Gledhill on 01803 212638 or email him: DavidGledhill@Torbaycdt.org.uk



Margaret's family home in the village of Mapperley, near Nottingham, after being bombed by German forces during her childhood.

that one of her wards was being taunted by the other children in the school playground who were surrounding her and performing tribal dances.

The headteacher got short shrift but the same headteacher was responsible for remarking when one of the young girls had her hair restyled and straightened: *“Don’t let her think she is like us, because she isn’t.”*

Thankfully it is difficult to believe in more enlightened times, but that was for a time daily life for Margaret and her charges: *“The reactions were terrible, people would stop me in the street,”* she recalled, *“One even stopped me to ask what I fed them on.”*

But the worst was yet to come. When one tiny fostered twin died, the local vicar refused to allow her burial in the local churchyard and instead she had to be laid to rest in Torquay, miles from the only place she

would have come to call home.

Today for all the trials and tribulations Margaret looks back happily on her 20 plus years as a foster carer and remains in touch with a number of her former charges who stayed with her for anything from a few weeks to seven years.

Memory might not be her strong point anymore, but she can remember with perfect clarity the day the Luftwaffe dropped a bomb on her family home in the village of Mapperley, just outside Nottingham.

A short time earlier four-year-old Margaret, her twin sister, Barbara and her brother, George, had been upstairs in their bedroom, but frightened by the sound of gunfire and seeing the sweeping arc of the searchlights they pleaded with their mother to be allowed downstairs.

Just ten minutes later blackness enveloped

everything as the house collapsed on all of them: *“All of a sudden you could hear the bomb coming down, it is a sound I will never forget.”*

Amazingly and much to the surprise of the fire watchers combing through the wreckage, the whole family emerged, more or less unscathed to find their father waiting a respectful distance away having been told to keep back as there was ‘no chance’.

They lost everything and the effect of having no toys, no teddy, no doll, no pram was something she would remember time and again in her later years when caring for her little ones.

On another occasion, as she walked back from school carrying her regulation gas mask the air was rent with strafing bullets and she looked up into the face of a German pilot: *“I could see his face as clear as day as he pulled his oxygen mask to one side.”*

It was another lucky escape as the plane that minutes earlier had been strafing people stood in queues at the nearby Huntingdon Street Bus Station, then climbed back into the clouds and away.

Having begun to foster at the age of 21 whilst in Nottinghamshire, she and her mum regularly holidayed in Brixham and both decided to take the plunge and move into Bolton Street in 1962.

She needed a job as well as her fostering allowance for the four children she brought with her and to make ends meet she initially took a job in the launderette and then various jobs that allowed her to juggle her obligations.

Despite some resistance, the majority of people were welcoming and the ever-changing family settled into Brixham and the children – some as young as just a few days old and the oldest joining at just over three – came and went.

Margaret's memory may play up from time to time and she may not still be in touch with all of them,

but an indication of the love that was shared remains in the fact she can remember them all: Andrew (birth son), Donald, Graeme, Joanne, Theresa, Julie, Lincoln, Jean, Alex, Jennifer, Debbie, Beverley, Barry, Gary, Bridget, Derek, Annie, Luke, Kathryn, Stuart, Kweku, Margaret, Elizabeth and Janie.

These days, Margaret, who lives in Sellick Avenue, retains a wicked sense of humour and a mischievous smile, and has made a great friend in Rosemary Clarke, one of Ageing Well Torbay's Community Builders.

Together they attend the over 50's get together at Brixham Cricket Club and the Memory Café in the United Reformed Church Hall in New Road, but Rosemary is hard pressed to prevent Margaret taking advantage of being out and popping into the nearby Vigilance for a

'small' glass of whisky.

Love and the love of others has sustained, and continues to sustain Margaret and she also learned to love and let go where appropriate. Only age stopped her fostering more and she would recommend it to anyone

"If you have love to give and love children, then I would recommend it to anyone. You don't do it for money, it will never make you rich, but you do it for love, and that is all you need."

If you know someone who has a hidden history, please give me a ring on 01803 212638 or drop me an email: davidgledhill@torbaycdt.org.uk

LIFELINE BUS ROUTE 61 SAVED BY COMMUNITY IT SERVES

A lifeline bus service has started running again saved and financed by the very community that it serves.

Dubbed a 'community centre on wheels' the 61 bus from Livermead to Torquay via St Luke's is once again reuniting old friends whilst travelling up and down some of the longest and steepest hills in the Bay.

It is more than just a bus

service on so many levels – it allows some people to get out and about which they were unable to do when the service was cut last year because of mounting costs.

A taxi ride from Livermead to Torquay is around £8 – a sizeable chunk of your state pension if that is all you have, and if you have given up your car then there are no real alternatives – walking

down the hills is OK for some, but back up again is out of the question.

Commercial operators gave up on the route in 2017, and cash strapped Torbay Council were unable to provide a subsidised alternative, so it was left to the voluntary sector, in the shape of the Torbay Community Development Trust, to plug the gap – if possible.



We are lucky enough to have volunteer drivers who put their time in free of charge for the benefit of the community, but we need more – lots more, and all you need to take to the wheel is a clean licence which includes a D1 category, which most people have if they took the test before 1997.

The first attempt was costly – buses are expensive in fuel and maintenance, particularly when running up and down steep hills – and there are the salaries of the drivers to consider, all of which must be covered by the fares paid by passengers.

And there's the rub. Here in the Bay, an ageing population means that many of those that rely on a bus also have a bus pass and that means they don't pay cash to the operator with them relying instead on a much reduced compensatory fare from the council for each passenger journey.

In a nutshell, the numbers do not and never could add up. And a bus pass without a bus is worthless.

But the 61 (formerly the 60 service) is different. It still has the costs, but it does not rely on fare-paying passengers on the day, because they have paid in advance for the privilege and they have paid whether they use it or not, and whether they have a bus pass or not. The service also relies heavily on volunteer drivers to keep the service going.

The relaunched service is believed to be unique – and whilst time will tell – might just represent the future of community transport in this country because the community it serves subsidises it with weekly direct debits which vary depending on where they live – around £6.50 for Livermead residents with the closer to Torquay St Luke's residents paying £3.50.

Planning the new service has brought the community together again with people paying the subsidy whether they have a bus pass or not, because they can see the value of getting their neighbours out and about.

Some hadn't seen each other since the last service ground to a halt a year ago, but now they are picking up and renewing friendships as if it were only yesterday - it's worth it just to see the smiles put back on people's faces.

The service runs three days a week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday with seven circular services a day starting from Livermead at 9.15 and the last out of Castle Circus, Torquay at 4.45pm.

As one 82-year-old subscribing customer, Stuart Wilson said: *"I can walk down the hill from my home in St Luke's, but walking back up again?"*

"The bus is more than just transport it is the beginning of a community – one man I saw all the time when the bus was running before but didn't see him again when it stopped."

One of our drivers, 67-year-old Donald Williamson, a former HGV driver who moved to the area a few years ago from South Wales, has found it a great way to meet people.

"I am enjoying it so much; when you get a few people on board, it is a proper little social. I would recommend it to anyone who has a bit of time and enjoys driving."

For more details about the OurBus timetable and to volunteer as a driver, please ring **01803 212638** or email us at info@torbaycdt.org.uk



COMMUNITY CARE EXTRAORDINAIRE, KAREN PARKER

BEHIND every successful charitable organisation are the unseen people, the glue that holds it all together.

At the Crafty Fox Café 'n' Hub in Foxhole Road in Paignton, there are, among many others, the Ageing Well Torbay community builder Nina Cooper, the knitting ninja, Robbie Lynch and working front of house and in the back office, Karen Parker.

Karen is a coordinator, an administrator, a fundraiser, a mosaic maker and a tea brewer, but fundamentally she is a community carer and has been at the Crafty Fox the last two years.

Born in Torquay, to a builder Dad who built their house in Nutbush Lane and a Mum who worked as an assistant at her school, Sherwell Valley Primary, cementing a link that has gone down the generations through Karen's children to one of her grandchildren.

Caring isn't new to Karen, far from it. Next year marks 40 years in a variety of caring professions starting when she left her Torquay home, aged just 18 to train as a nurse at the Westminster Hospital



in London. A brave move for a young girl back in the day.

She remained in nursing on and off, taking breaks to have two children, through three decades finishing that part of her caring career as discharge officer at Torbay Hospital, ensuring patients continued to get the support they needed after leaving hospital.

Then came a brief and successful spell turning around an old people's home in the Bay that had slipped into special measures. But it wasn't for her – she had hated the paperwork in nursing, and the administration of a home was a step too far.

Instead, sticking to her life theme, she set up Palm Home Care from the basement of her house in Northleat Avenue in Paignton and in just three years grew it to employ 25 staff.

But if anything it was too successful, “Managing a company of that size was stressful. It was going to kill

me,” mused Karen, “It was all too much.”

In a nutshell, the clients were getting the care they needed, the carers were getting the care they needed, but Karen was suffering and so she came up with a novel way of caring for everybody.

Three years ago, instead of selling, she gave each of the carers the choice to become independent and take their clients with them. Many are still in business today.

Karen worked out she could take a full year out and concentrate on herself for once, and her life was full of dog walking, family and ‘me’ time. But there was something missing and that was when she discovered the Crafty Fox.

At first she volunteered for just a few hours a week doing hand massages to grateful customers: “I was looking for something for me, and even though I didn't realise it at the time, I needed a purpose,” she recalls.

Inevitably her involvement grew and little by little by lot she was immersed in the varied and growing community that was growing out of the café and hub.

It started as a pop-up on the Green outside the shops, but the community that had lost its other hub, the Tom Cobbley pub, wanted more and the search was on for a building.

Step forward Sanctuary Housing who own the building they now occupy, a former doctors surgery, between the barbers and Bargain Booze, that they maintain and provide rent-free.

The community knew what it wanted and what started out as an informal drop-in centre with volunteers serving cakes, tea and coffee, it has grown to provide services for the lonely, the isolated, the vulnerable and anyone else.

There isn't a day that goes by during the week that doesn't have something going on. Every other Tuesday it is home to a depression and anxiety (DASH) meeting, a men's group that has seen many a positive outcome.

Also on Tuesday's, the mosaic group, sometimes led by Karen, create works of art that are proudly displayed on the walls of the café – including one

of the ubiquitous crafty looking fox.

On Wednesdays, the aforementioned Robbie, herself a near neighbour, leads the ladies of the Yarnbombing group – responsible for brightening up public buildings and structures across the Bay.

Thursday gives itself over in part to the art group – a multi-disciplinary class that creates work in its own time and of its own inspiration. And Friday the crafts group take over for a few hours.

In addition, there is much needed advice on Wednesday's and Thursdays from the Citizen's Advice Bureau. Several of the volunteers have also been trained by FAIR (Financial Advice, Information and Resilience) and are on hand to give guidance when needed.

Every day, there is a warm welcome alongside the chat, the home made cakes and the enthusiasm of the many volunteers who watch out for each other, whilst making the café a homely, safe, and of course, caring place to be.

But scratch the surface and what has been created is a haven for some people to also find themselves and from faltering beginnings, they often manage to pick themselves up from some dark place.

One regular has recently taken a job in a local factory – impossible a few months ago, and another has taken her craft skills to a whole new level by opening a shop in Paignton.

In theory, Karen, now aged 57 doesn't need to work, but stopping would be unthinkable and she can be found there most days even though her paid contract is for just 16 hours a week. And as if that wasn't enough she is also responsible for the award winning Grow Gap community garden project at Great Parks Community Centre.

When she can be persuaded away she can be found singing in a local choir, visiting her grandchildren, holidaying (a relatively new thing) and walking her 10-year-old Golden Labrador, Meg around her home village of Marldon.

To her it is much more than a job and she tries to find the positive in everyone who walks through the door (and that numbers hundreds over the years). But what keeps her going and fuels her every day is the fact that she cares.

If you know someone who has a story to tell or you think should be told, please get in touch with David Gledhill via email: davidgledhill@torbaycdt.org.uk or on 01803 212638.

SPOTLIGHT ON: ELLACOMBE & PLAINMOOR

Who are you?

Hi I'm Usha, Community Builder for Ellacombe & Plainmoor.



I've been very lucky to have lived and worked in Ellacombe for 26 plus years. I worked at the local Ellacombe Primary school as a pastoral support worker as well as being a youth worker and a Play Ranger in the area.

From 2005 I also volunteered with my local Community Group REACH (Residents in Ellacombe about Community Hopes) as their Secretary and then the Ellacombe Community Partnership where I was honoured to be the Chair for three years during which time we took on a Community shop - TQ Together, which was set up to engage the community (before my community building days) Community Building for me is an extension of everything I've been involved in and everything I love!

What's your area like?

Ellacombe & Plainmoor is a diverse neighbourhood with wonderful assets which include schools - Ellacombe Academy, Warberry Academy, All Saints Babbacombe School, (yes it is actually in Ellacombe!), Spiers College, as well as Neighbourhood Watch, Swim Torquay, Torquay United Football ground, Salvation Army Church

& Community Centre, Salvation Army Charity Shop, Phoenix Childcare, Zig Zag's Children's Centre, Ellacombe Conservative Club, Ellacombe Community Café, the Church Army, the Torquay indoor Market, Warberry Copse, Ellacombe Park, Brewery Park, Stentiford Hill Park to name a few.

An amazing, diverse community of inspirational people passionate about enhancing their community, some of whom I have yet to meet!

What do you most like about your job?

It's a job made for me. I love the ethos of Asset Based Community Development where we work with the communities strengths and assets, connecting and linking people people, for example on the Timebank - a lady befriending and visiting a housebound lady, linking people with organisations - eg meeting Janet who had moved to Ellacombe and knew no-one - putting her in touch with the Salvation Army Charity Shop were she regularly volunteers and says that it has changed her life.

Supporting new groups which make a difference to people's lives e.g. the Babbacombe Walk a gentle stroll started up by Joy and Paul and runs from April to October where new friendships have been made...every day is different and you never know where it will lead you and every

conversation brings new opportunities.

What one thing are you proudest of /remember best?

This is a hard question as there are so many! One that does come to mind because they became so valued and looked forward to were the day trips which came about after speaking with residents at a coffee morning.

The group wanted to go to Trago Mills so I supported them in making this happen and linking up with the Community Café. It became a regular monthly trip and they ended up visiting Sidmouth, Exmouth, Plymouth, Exeter, Dartmouth and more! Denise loved the trips because she said *"you meet people from all different walks of life coming together as a community on the bus and get to go to places you would otherwise be unable to visit."*



If you'd like to get in touch with Usha, you can call her on **07702 557723**, or email ushagarrattley@torbaycdt.org.uk