

# Devon New Economy Initiative

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## Towards Secure Livelihoods & Wellbeing For All

Researching possibilities, projects and potential across the county.

*The lack of economic security for all and concerns about sustainability and the uneven prosperity across our region were the impetus for the formation of this new initiative. We see the uncertainties of Brexit, Devolution and the impact of Climate Change as opportunities to open up new thinking and action on our regional economic strategy. Identifying the appropriate interventions for long-term outcomes, and the kind of organization that could pursue them, is the purpose of the current research project.*

**How the project came about** For the past three years a regional conference called Convergence has brought active individuals and projects in Devon that are experimenting in innovative economic approaches together. Following the second annual conference in 2016, a working group interested in developing more links, effective co-ordination and increased coherence amongst projects across the region started to meet.

In July 2016 a New Economy Seminar was held at Exeter Cathedral's Old Deanery and attended by over 50 people. Following an inspiring talk by Stewart Wallis, former head of the New Economics Foundation, they voted unanimously to support the formation of a new organisation. This was initially conceived as a Devon wide 'think and do' tank - to map, facilitate and develop new economy initiatives across the region building on all the activity that was already taking place.

A working group comprising those interested met several times to take the project forward and asked a smaller steering group to raise funds towards a short term research project. Finally on May 17th this year the research project started with two researchers appointed to collate and map information about the 'new economy' and to identify opportunities for positive further development.

### **What we are trying to achieve**

In the short term we are carrying out a feasibility study with 3 aims:

- to map projects and protagonists in the region relevant to a new economy
- to identify projects with potential for scalability, replicability and fundability
- to facilitate engagement with the project by as many individuals and organisations in the region as possible, with a view to building a new Devon-wide organization capable of demonstrating a new approach to economy, one that incorporates inclusivity, well-being and the role of land and the natural world

### **Opportunities for your input**

- We invite your involvement, comments and suggestions as we go forward. Anyone wanting to join the wider working group meetings is invited to attend, just let us know
- In September there will be a seminar at which we will report on our findings, our progress and seek feedback on next steps

### **Who We Are&Contact**

- Researchers Gill Westcott and Isabel Carlisle. [gillwestcott@gmail.com](mailto:gillwestcott@gmail.com) and [isabel.carlisle@bioregion.org.uk](mailto:isabel.carlisle@bioregion.org.uk)
- Devon New Economy Initiative steering group – Stewart Wallis, Gerald Conyngham, Sue Errington and Joshua Malkin
- Further information: contact Gerald Conyngham [gerald@eclipse.co.uk](mailto:gerald@eclipse.co.uk)

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