

EXE VALLEY MARKET BUS

We have six volunteer drivers – Ian Brooks, Timothy Browse, Phil Dey, Reg Howe, Catherine Omell and Anthony Vigus. More drivers would be very welcome; all you have to do is undergo training and a test run – and it's fun.

The Exe Valley Market Bus organisation recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. It originally covered the route from Oakford to Tiverton. However, a few years ago Past Parish Chairman John Smith asked if our parish could make use of the bus one day a week – on Thursdays. This was agreed to.

The bus runs from Oakford via Roachill, East Knowstone and Knowstone to South Molton ; the following Thursday to Barnstaple.

We also organise day trips. The next one is a visit to Darts Farm and Topsham on Wednesday 20th June. To book your place call Timothy Browse on 01398.341977.

New regulations governing bus and coach transport are being introduced. These pose a threat to local community transport groups like ours because there is a risk that they will be treated as commercial organisations with all the attendant 'red tape' putting an end to charitable groups. However, at a meeting in Westminster Hall on Thursday 10th May there was cross-party support for groups such as ours so we look to the government to take a common sense approach. By the way, one of the consequences is the expansion of the Exe Valley Bus Constitution from two pages to sixteen.

However, the major threat to the future of our very convenient service is poor passenger numbers. Recently, the Parish Council made a significant donation to the Bus Group to make up for a shortfall in fares. This cannot continue so, to put it bluntly, *use it or lose it !* In a nutshell, the bus needs more volunteer drivers and more passengers. **Over to you !**

I close by thanking Catherine Omell for organising the weekly rota of drivers and our gallant drivers and the Exe Valley Bus Committee for their dedication in keeping the service running so well.

Reg Howe – 14.5.2018