



After selling Exeter International Airport last year for £60 million, Devon County Council has made available £48 million to enable hundreds of projects to take off. Here, *DevonTalk* features some of the initial beneficiaries from one-off cash grants in Exeter ...

### Library to be transformed

EXETER Central Library will become part of a landmark cultural centre – the Devon and Exeter Forum – after an award of £10million.

This major redevelopment project will transform Exeter Central Library into an innovative 21st century cultural venue with expanded and enhanced library facilities, an exhibition area, performance space inside and out, meeting facilities and café.

### Playing field development

A GRANT of £87,000 has been made to develop a large underused field in the heart of the city to be called the Cliff Bastin Playing Field.

The area in Heavitree by Ladysmith Junior School will be redeveloped to include changing rooms, showers, disabled access and toilets and will be available for use by schools and the community.

### £20k for new toilet block

ST David's Primary School has received £20,000 to build a new toilet block for the children.

# Innovative play park is shaping up

A new play facility which will benefit more than 3,000 disabled and non-disabled children and their families is taking shape in King George V Fields on Topsham Road

The innovative play park will have wheelchair access and has been specially designed to encourage disabled and non-disabled children to play together.

A total of £9,500 from the proceeds of the sale of Exeter International Airport has been awarded towards the cost of the project by five local County Councillors – Jill Owen, Olwen Foggin, Richard Westlake,

Vanessa Newcombe and Saxon Spence.

Project Co-ordinator Miriam Guard said: "This has caught the imagination of people, not just locally but all over the country. I am very grateful to everyone who has made this project possible, whether with help and advice, encouragement or money."

Symbol signs will be displayed on and around play equipment to help children, especially those with severe communication difficulties, to improve their communication skills, while tactile signs will help children who have visual impairments with navigation

and build up their confidence and independence.

The Devon County Council funding will help provide a shelter giving protection from the sun and rain – and it will be used as an outdoor classroom and as a base for creative workshops.

By the end of 2008 the paths, fencing, wheelchair access facilities, the shelter, seats, picnic tables and signage will have all been installed. The second phase will include a ground level trampoline and an area with sensory plants. The play park will be officially opened in early 2009 and will be completed in the spring.



Henry Guard, son of Project Co-ordinator Miriam Guard, gets a preview of the new play facility



Youngsters enjoy canoeing sessions at Haven Banks Outdoor Education Centre

## £2.7 million earmarked for new multi-activity centre

HAVEN Banks Outdoor Education Centre is to be replaced by a purpose-built multi-activity centre that will open up the canal-side facility to even more people.

Thanks to a Devon County Council £2.75 million grant from the proceeds of the sale of Exeter International Airport, Haven Banks will also cater for people with disabilities and minority groups – and the new centre will provide a superb venue for corporate training events.

Run by Devon County

Council's Youth Service, the centre already operates a wide range of activities for schools, colleges, youth groups and adults as diverse as kayaking, canoeing and wind surfing to archery, mountain biking and rock climbing.

Out-of-school activities for vulnerable youngsters help to boost their self-esteem and learn new skills.

The centre is currently used by around 25,000 people annually and the new facilities will mean it can be

used extensively throughout the year. It is planned to start construction in summer 2009, and the project is scheduled for completion in 2010.

Cllr Vanessa Newcombe said: "The new centre will be an iconic landmark for Exeter and put it on the map as a national centre of excellence for water-based and other outdoor activities.

"It is critical that we now attract the match funding to enable the project to go ahead."

### Hall to have new kitchen

AMERICA Hall community centre in Pinhoe will have new kitchen facilities and windows early next year after receiving £20,000. The new kitchen will be accessible for all, including those with disabilities.

The hall holds events throughout the year including theatre productions, yoga and tai chi classes, toddler playgroup, line dancing and fetes and sales.

### £100k for improvements

MATTHEWS Hall in Topsham will receive £100,000. The hall is over 80 years old and badly in need of modernisation.

The funding will go towards improve disabled facilities, a new kitchen, a cafe/bar, improved storage and a new look council chamber. There will also be better insulation, lighting and acoustics in the main hall.

### Open-sided school shelter

PUPILS at Alphington Primary School will be making cob seats for an open-sided shelter for which £7,500 was awarded. The new facility will be used for reading and play.

It is being built from local materials and during the building process there will be hands-on workshops for children, parents and teachers.