

# Western Morning News

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THE VOICE OF THE WESTCOUNTRY SINCE 1860

DEVON

## Cream of South West businesses celebrate success



Finalists line up for glittering ceremony – Inside

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Westcountry MP's warning to Chancellor on future of the country's wine industry – Page 23

# South West plan for growth goes to the top

Charter is to be debated by MPs

BY HANNAH FINCH

[@GardenerFinch](#)

The South West's plan for building prosperity is going right to the top of Government.

The South West Growth Charter, outlining the region's needs to improve its economy will be delivered to Downing Street by MPs and business leaders next Wednesday, ahead of the autumn statement.

A debate on the region's prospects is to be held in Westminster on the same day.

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## Farmers praised for saving critically endangered bird

Westcountry farmers and conservationists have brought a threatened farmland bird back from the brink of extinction. Gull bunting numbers are rising again in the South West. **PAGE 14**



## Navy ships will be left 'defenceless'

BY DAVID WELLS

[@WellsWMN](#)

Royal Navy warships could no longer be able to engage enemy fleets after cost-cutting strips them of their anti-ship missile systems – forcing them to rely on their guns alone, reports suggest.

The British fleet could be left defenceless and unable to go "toe-to-toe" with the enemy at sea after the Navy's Harpoon missile system is retired from South West based frigates before any replacement has been made available.

Harpoon missiles, which blast out at 800mph, are used on vessels such as Devonport-based HMS Montrose

Reports by IHS Jane's, the defence and security intelligence analysis group, and the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, say Harpoon missiles will retire from the fleet's frigates and destroyers in 2018 – leaving a two-year gap pending the introduction of a new lightweight anti-ship missile on Wildcat HMA.2 helicopters in late 2020.

The retirement of the Harpoon leaves the Royal Navy without any anti-surface guided weapon system, while

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## Harvey, 14, is youngest to make a million

A savvy schoolboy from Taunton has become Britain's youngest self-made millionaire with a string of business deals – aged just 14.

Harvey Millington made a cool £2 million after selling land he purchased from his start-up business to a keen property developer.

Last year, the junior tycoon sold thousands of paper tax discs to remind motorists when they need to renew their tax or MoT as part of his genius business plan.

He made a hefty £100,000 profit from helping forgetful drivers avoid Government fines with his innovative business Tax Disc Reminder.

The mini entrepreneur had planned to build an up-market glamping site with his profits and bought three acres of land for £40,000.

However, Harvey knew he had hit the jackpot when a housing development company knocked on his door eager to purchase the land and offered him a whopping £2 million. Harvey began his tax disc reminder business after he noticed motorists were being clamped for forgetting to renew their tax.



Harvey Millington with his tax renewal reminders

Year nine student Harvey said: "I wasn't sure how much they were going to offer for the land, but they came up with £2 million.

"It was too good to turn down. It's a massive amount, especially for someone at my age."

The schoolboy received up to 400 orders a day for his popular paper discs, after hundreds of people found themselves unwittingly clamped for having an untaxed motor.

Harvey had a brainwave after noticing his father's car no longer had a tax disc in the window two years ago and asked how people remembered to pay the bill.

Harvey bought the land for just £40,000 before selling it for £2 million.

The business was such a hit that after just eight weeks of trading he made £3,000 from selling the paper reminders at £4 a pop.

Despite his talents for business, Harvey has dreams of becoming a police officer and has already joined the police cadets.

His father Howard, 46, a gardener, said: "If he started getting too big for his boots I would make sure he winds his neck in."

"But to be honest that won't happen. I've taught him you have to work hard to get on in life."

"He's a grounded lad and is just a great businessman."



The remains of an old mine engine house in the United Downs area of Cornwall, symbol of the past prosperity of the region that the South West Charter seeks to rebuild

# Proposal for South West economic growth to be delivered to Chancellor

BY HANNAH FINCH

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A plan to boost South West prosperity is set to be delivered to the heart of government.

The South West Growth Charter that calls for a partnership with Government to achieve growth and economic prosperity will be delivered to Chancellor Phillip Hammond at Number 11 Downing Street next Wednesday, the day before he is due to deliver his Autumn Statement.

The charter will be raised in a 90-minute debate at Westminster on the same day.

It is a major step in the Back the South West campaign, taking the unified message from business leaders, academics and politicians on how to grow prosperity right to the door of the Chancellor.

Gary Streeter, MP for South

West Devon, said: "The key thing is for the Government to know how serious business is in the South West about putting in place a framework for growth in the region."

Mr Streeter will be joined by MPs from across the region including Scott Mann, Derek Thomas, Sir Hugo Swire, Marcus Fysh, Anne Marie Morris, Rebecca Pow, Kevin Foster, Ben Bradshaw, Dr Sarah Wollaston and Peter Heaton-Jones.

The adjournment debate has been raised by Mr Streeter and will be heard by a minister for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at Westminster Hall.

Mr Streeter said: "This is not going cap in hand asking for money. It's saying we can do an awful lot ourselves but they are some things Government needs to do to help with infrastructure, ultra-fast broadband and 5G by 2030."

The South West Growth Charter was drawn up as a result of the South West Growth Summit at Exeter University on October 21, organised by Exeter-based Pennon, in partnership with the *Western Morning News* and with the support of the Local Enterprise Partnerships for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and the Heart of the South West, and attended by more than 200 people from councils, businesses and other organisations across the region.

Part of the Back the South West campaign, the charter supports the government industrial strategy and sets out how the Government can work with the region to increase investment and opportunities for people of all ages.

It outlines a new government partnership with the South West, similar to the Northern Powerhouse and the need for increased investment

in digital connectivity, improved energy systems and increased investment in transport connectivity, especially in rail and local road links.

Pennon chief executive Chris Loughlin said: "We are obviously delighted the South West Growth Charter has been

**'It is so heartening to have high-quality businesses involved'**

Gary Streeter, MP

tabled for discussion. It shows the strength of support for the growth agenda in the South West and is another positive step in terms of ensuring the Government provides much needed commitment to the region.

"It is excellent to see Gary Streeter MP and the region's

MPs driving this forward at Westminster, taking the strong and unified business voice of the South West straight to the heart of government."

Mr Streeter said the backing of big business had helped raise the profile of the charter and kept the pressure on. The charter will be heard in Westminster less than a month after it was first developed at October's Growth Summit.

Now, the team is searching for a memorable name to define the strengths of the region and to capture the public imagination.

Mr Streeter said: "Credit must go to the Pennon Group, the *Western Morning News* and all those supporters who have brought it this far. It is so heartening to have high-quality businesses involved and their support is making a big difference."

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# Western Morning News

THE VOICE OF THE WESTCOUNTRY

## United the South West can build on charter for growth

There are plenty of reasons to see the South West as a number of largely unconnected areas rather than one cohesive region. Cornwall has a special identity all its own, with a fierce independence, its own language and a history of innovation. Exeter styles itself as Devon's capital city and has been on the receiving end of significant inward investment in recent years, while Plymouth is an historic port, a strategically important military centre and the biggest city in the region, with all that goes with such an important position.

Dragging these elements together, with the added challenge of pulling in the deeply rural inland areas of central Devon and Somerset, the semi-tropical Scillies and the far-flung outposts on the North Devon coast is a major undertaking. But the *Western Morning News*' Back the South West campaign, with vital support from commercial partners, including South West Water owners Pennon Group, Mole Valley Farmers, the National Farmers Union, solicitors Foot Anstey, accountants Francis Clark and the Devon Colleges Group, look to have pulled it off.

There is work still to do, of course. But next week two significant events, the handing in of the South West Charter for Growth to

Downing Street and a Westminster debate on the subject, take place on the same day. Some will see both events as symbolic rather than practical. But when you are trying to drive forward economic growth in a region that has, at times, struggled to present a united face to government, pulling together representatives from across the region with a single cause in mind can be counted as a breakthrough. MPs from across the region will be present, both for the handover of the charter and the debate, which has been put down by South West Devon MP, Gary Streeter.

Pennon chief executive Chris Loughlin, a prime mover in getting the region to speak with one voice on this issue, says the commitment shown by MPs and other businesses in the South West demonstrates the strength of support for action. The Government listens to those who speak loudly and logically and can make a good case. Too often different parts of the West-country have seemed to be pulling in different directions. Faced with petty rivalries it has been easy for ministers to dismiss the needs of our region and divert funds and support elsewhere.

United we can all benefit and it is that united front that business people and politicians must retain, as this charter for growth is turned into reality.



South Devon College has held the accolade of Ofsted 'Outstanding' provision since 2008

## New college group will have huge positive impact in region

Together, four linked colleges can push for the best opportunities, writes **Stephen Criddle**

Last month saw the launch of the Devon Colleges Group, a groundbreaking partnership to strengthen best practice across the whole geography of Devon, Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay and to unite the leadership of further education around key opportunities and objectives for our local economy and communities.

South Devon College is one of four unique and locally focused further and higher education colleges in Devon, and has held the accolade of Ofsted "outstanding" provision since 2008.

It is known for both excellence and also inclusion – giving every individual student the support to be the best at whatever their technical, professional or academic dream might be.

The college has won many awards over a long history but is particularly proud to be an Investors in People gold and champion employer, reflecting the whole college's high-ambition culture focused on teaching and learning and support for all individuals across a huge range and depth of high quality vocational programmes.

This high-performing culture has been reflected in excellent student and employer feedback across a range of provision, which benefits more than 10,000 individuals and employers each year.

Building on the firm,

individual pillars of South Devon College, Petroc – which has campuses in North and Mid Devon – Exeter and City College Plymouth, the Devon Colleges Group provides the collaborative vehicle to enable stronger joint communication and cross-referral of opportunity beyond the narrow self-interest of any one of the four members.

Apprenticeships, with major changes coming through, are one example where the leadership from partners in the group can be more than the sum of the individual parts as Exeter College passes on referrals to

the visionary and experienced Phil Davies at City College Plymouth.

The current picture of education and training provision across our area is not coherent, and the much commented absence of high quality information, advice and guidance at school level in many places is a major weakness.

It is good to see local authorities, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and other champions raising this as a key issue for the region's future.

Taking a clear stance towards system leadership

Devon College from 2018. We also have a number of key investment aspirations receiving great interest and support – major sports facilities are proposed for 2017 construction and a world-class £17 million Hi-Tech and Digital Centre development to provide a truly inspirational resource for photonics – the science and technology of generating, controlling, and detecting photons, which are particles of light – electronics, digital and other employers for 2019 and beyond working with key partners, about which we hope to hear soon.

As a college, we are all passionate about technical and professional education from age 14 upwards, including our own very successful South Devon High School within South Devon College, making a real difference to the aspiration and achievement of many young people.

We look forward to working closely and committedly with colleagues on the Devon Colleges Group to spread best practice, push for the best opportunities for our area and make a huge positive impact for our region as well as for our own local areas, ambitious to grow our collective annual impact well beyond the £130 million per annum currently delivered by the four colleges.

Stephen Criddle is principal and chief executive of South Devon College.

### We want to hear your views

Write to us at: Studio 5-11 Millbay Road, Plymouth PL1 3LF  
Email [wmmletters@westernmorningnews.co.uk](mailto:wmmletters@westernmorningnews.co.uk)  
Tweet us at @WMNNews

### On this day

- 1307: William Tell is reputed to have shot the apple off his son's head on this day.
- 1558: Mary I, "Bloody Mary", died and was succeeded by Elizabeth I.
- 1796: Catherine the Great of Russia died of a stroke, aged 67.
- 1955: Anglesey became the first authority in Britain to introduce fluoride into its water supply.
- 1959: Two Scottish airports, Prestwick and Renfrew, became the first to offer duty-free goods in Britain.
- 1970: *The Sun* pictured its first Page Three girl, Stephanie Rahn.
- 1988: Franz Kafka's manuscript

of his classic novel *The Trial* (1925) was sold at Sotheby's in London for £1 million, a world record for a modern literary text. Kafka had died in poverty the year before.

### Birthdays

- Martin Scorsese, film director, 74
- Lauren Hutton, actress, 73
- Danny DeVito, film director, 72
- Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, actress, 58
- Jonathan Ross, presenter, 56 *pictured*



### Thought for the day

Mark 9:35 – Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."



### Tomorrow:

**COUNTRYSIDE** Martin Hesp on the clashes between working and leisure landscapes

South Devon College and vice versa.

Another example is where City College Plymouth, Petroc and South Devon College are jointly developing a project bid to support sharing best practice approaches within a high quality curriculum.

As a principal, I personally am delighted to see the changing spirit of the times, more collaborative than previously over-competitive and duplicative, and it is great to work with dynamic new principals in Diane Dimond at Petroc and John Laramy at Exeter, as well as

(on top of strong individual college leadership) is a responsibility the four principals have agreed to grasp and I really look forward to working with colleagues for the future benefit of all.

Locally, at South Devon College, we have a number of new exciting developments where we are pushing forward.

The college has embarked upon a journey at higher education to gain foundation degree awarding powers, which would enable us to further grow local university-level provision at South