

## **U3A Local History Group Report February 2020**

### **Dartmouth Mayflower 400**

Our speaker this month was Laura Campbell from the Dartmouth Mayflower 400 project.

This project was born from a government initiative on tourism, which resulted in 14 towns having some association with the Mayflower story forming a 'compact' to work together, but within which each town had to create its own narrative. Of these, Dartmouth is the only one to be fully volunteer-led and funded.

Laura explained how much of the story is about perception and perspective – there is very little fact to go on. Four nations are involved – the US, UK, Holland (Leiden) and the Wampanoag – our story is different from theirs and it is important to maintain a balance in all media presentations, being aware of differing sensitivities and being fully inclusive.

Laura then went through the story, talking about the role the different towns played, with most of the religious separatists coming from the Yorkshire/ Lincolnshire area, and the southern ports providing the maritime element. There is more about this on their website, and a newly-published book will shortly be available from the TIC in Kingsbridge.

Laura concluded her talk by giving examples of the various initiatives which Dartmouth have undertaken to promote the story to tourists, including the training of guides and creation of walking trails. They are also working closely with The Box in Plymouth, which will have an exhibition on the subject when it opens.