


County & District Councillor's Monthly Report Cllr. Jacqi Hodgson - Date of Report: 1st February 2023
Devon County Councillor for Totnes & Dartington
(incl. Harberton, Harbertonford, Staverton, Landscope & part of Berry Pomeroy)
South Hams District Councillor for Dartington & Staverton

Devon County Council: key issues

The 2023/24 draft proposed annual budget is due to be discussed at Cabinet on Friday 10th February and recommended for approval by Full Council (16.2.23): These are the headline figures:

<div> <div>Budget Targets 2023/24</div> <div>  </div> </div>							
	2022/23 Adjusted Base Budget £000	Inflation and National Living Wage £000	Other Pressures £000	Savings, alternative funding and additional income £000	2023/24 Target Budget £000	Net change £000	
Integrated Adult Social Care	311,968	29,535	29,999	(32,200)	339,302	27,334	8.8%
Childrens and Young Peoples Futures	176,205	9,585	32,376	(9,563)	208,603	32,398	18.4%
Public Health, Communities & Prosperity	20,308	874	617	(404)	21,395	1,087	5.4%
Corporate Services	42,213	4,470	623	(2,458)	44,848	2,635	6.2%
Climate Change, Environment & Transport	79,117	7,037	214	(4,468)	81,900	2,783	3.5%
Service budgets total	629,811	51,501	63,829	(49,093)	696,048	66,237	10.5%
	{Total Investment		115,330}				

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement that informs Local Authorities how much core funding they will receive, has yet to be confirmed, but this year the DCC precept is allowed to be raised to 4.99% overall to meet the required budget without a referendum.

“The cost of living and geopolitical situation has created huge financial pressures nationally. As a consequence, the authority has faced unprecedented price and demand pressures in the current year and although significant savings have been found to offset this, many have been one off measures. The ongoing impact of this and other pressures have been included within the target budgets with investment of £51.5M to cover inflation and national living wage being required and a further £63.8M to cover demand pressures. To enable the authority to set a balanced budget, savings, alternative funding and additional income of £49.1M have been identified. Overall, there is additional funding of £66.2M or 10.5% for service budget next year.”

	Provisional Settlement £000
Revenue Support Grant	(669)
Business Rates - Central Government Top Up	(83,428)
Business Rates - Local Element	(23,064)
Core Funding	(107,161)
	Provisional Settlement £000
New Homes bonus	(883)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(7,823)
Social Care Grant	(54,015)
Improved Better Care Fund	(29,127)
Adult social care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	(8,373)
Adult Social Care Discharge Fund	(4,084)
Services Grant	(3,987)
Other grants	(108,292)

The tables above set out the Authority's Core Funding of £107.2 million and shows the other government grants that have been announced so far. Other existing grants are expected to be published soon and will be reported as part of the overall budget papers in February, if known by then.

Re: Children's services: DCC continues to struggle with delivering the quality of children's services expected of a County Council. Recent Ofsted reports continue to be disappointing. At a meeting with the financial team today, the problem of the financial deficit that underpins a large element of this problem was outlined as follows:

DCC Children's services Deficit at 31.3.22=£86.529M DCC Children's services Deficit at 31.3.23=£127.129M

The financial team explained that some of the rise in this deficit is due to the rise of families and children accessing the service and a growing need for these services. It is my view that having witnessed the abolition of DCC Universal Access Youth Services in 2013 and the recorded rise of anxiety in Young People in DCC Public health reports since I became a County Councillor in 2017, coupled with the more recent recorded impacts of COVID being particularly worse in young people and young children, DCC have experienced a perfect storm and have little resilience to deal with this rising and expensive problem.

Last week, Cabinet Member of Children's Services, Cllr Andrew Leadbetter issued a letter that contained the following information:

"Ofsted have today published their latest monitoring report [<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50206324>] into Children's Services. This report contains some real positives but it concludes that not enough progress has been made and that some serious issues remain.

This is clearly disappointing and I attach the council's media response - [Some positives but not enough progress for children in Devon and serious issues remain, say Inspectors - News](#) including my own statement for your information.

There is no doubt how hard the whole Council is working to improve outcomes for our children, but it is very clear that we still have quite some way to go to convince Ofsted inspectors that things are getting better or that we can be considered 'good'. Our experienced new Interim Director of Children Services, Julian Wooster and myself as the responsible Cabinet member are fully committed to working with our DfE appointed Commissioner Matt Dunkley and all our partners to continue to make things better and to do this quickly."

Locality Budgets (funding to local projects distributed by County Councillors) are scheduled to be reduced further from £8,000 p.a. per Councillor this year to £5,000 in 2023/24.

At **Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee meeting** this week (30.01.23), concerns were raised regarding the need to lobby government for additional investment in Highways to arrest the ongoing decline in the state of the highway.

Cost of Living Crisis: information for help - at this link: [Cost of living | Help and advice for people in Devon | Devon County Council](#)

Coronation Street Parties: DCC is inviting communities to apply for a free street party licence to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Charles and Her Majesty Camilla, The Queen Consort. If a community wants to hold a street party, the County Council is asking that they apply using their online basic street party application to close off your street available on their [website](#). The **deadline is 26th March**.

Waste Services: New HWRC Van permit system (South Hams and West Devon areas)

DCC has introduced a private van permit system at the following Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) from Wednesday 1st March 2023:

- [Ivybridge](#)
- [Totnes](#)
- [Torr Quarry](#) (Kingsbridge)
- [Okehampton](#)
- [Crowndale](#) (Tavistock)

The HWRC van permit system will require DCC residents with privately registered panel vans (both small and large van size) or flat-bed vans to apply free of charge for a permit in order to access these sites. The van must comply with the [vehicle restrictions policy](#). The system is already successfully in operation at all other DCC HWRCs. Owners of a private van wanting to use the Ivybridge, Totnes or Kingsbridge Recycling Centres will need a permit from Wednesday 1 March. Devon County Council has introduced the measure to help stop commercial waste from being deposited at their sites at public expense. DCC residents can apply from Wednesday 1st February for their free van permit online or via a postal application. The permit will allow for 12 visits per year. Permits will only be issued to vans registered to individual residents and not to vehicles registered to companies/businesses. Use this link to view all the information (including the terms and conditions) on the [van permit scheme](#) webpage on DCC website. Alternatively, residents can call the Customer Service Centre on 0345 155 1010 for further information.

Cars, pick-ups, bicycles, motorcycles, fully-fitted campervans and minibuses, mobility type vans designed to carry people in wheelchairs, van-based people carriers/family type vans (with factory/professionally fitted seats and windows in the rear for carrying passengers) **will not require a permit**. Vans hired to a householder from a legitimate hire company (for a hire period

of less than 3 days) will also not require a permit, providing that the hire agreement is shown to site staff. Those vehicles which do not require a permit must still comply with the [vehicle restrictions policy](#).

SHDC Garden Waste Collection Scheme: Sign up asap if you want this service. SHDC will commence the charged for Brown Bin, Garden waste collection scheme from March. Residents are urged to sign up asap to ensure the fortnightly rounds can be organised and start the service quickly and efficiently. The charge is £49 per annum.

Residents can sign up to the service in two ways:

- Via the website page (which includes information about the service): www.southhams.gov.uk/gardenwaste
- Call SHDC at 01803 861234 (phone lines are expected to be busy)

A wormery instead? Residents who do not wish to avail of this scheme are welcome to keep their brown bin and reuse it for other purposes. One suggestion has been to turn it into your own garden wormery where you could turn your garden and some kitchen waste into compost. This is a link to an online blog I found that could help you do this: <https://wheeliebinsolutions.co.uk/blogs/wheelie-bin-ideas-alternative-uses/how-to-create-a-wheelie-bin-worm-farm>



Highways Matters

Poor maintenance of road surfaces and high numbers of dangerous potholes. Please continue to report in road defects using this link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

I have been receiving increasing numbers of reports of damage to vehicles due to poor road surfaces and potholes, especially when potholes become invisible during heavy rainfall. **Compensation application forms for damage to vehicles** etc due to highways defects can be made to Devon County Council using this website link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/maintaining-roads/safety/highways-insurance-claims/claim-forms/>

Local Matters:

South Hams HATOC (highways & Traffic Orders Committee) 03.02.23 items discussed included:

Pedestrian Crossing at the Lamb. The committee approved the proposal for the scheme that would provide a safer pedestrian link for the 2 ends of Leechwell Street to be investigated. This was with the proviso that it has local Town Council and community support and funding. The Chair of KHARA (Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents Association) addressed the meeting regarding local support for this pedestrian crossing. I outlined the importance of making this a safer pedestrian link:

- It was identified as an important Active Travel Route (during COVID) for enabling more people to walk into town instead of taking their car, and
- Any town centre calming will potentially push more through traffic onto the St. Katherine's Way route.
- The current road surface at this location was laid as cobbles when the Southern Development was built out ~2006-8, which indicated a 'Shared Space' link was considered appropriate at the time.

The next step will involve a Design for the scheme and a Safety Audit of the design and location. I have written to Gemma Bristow, recently designated Active Travel Officer at SHDC to ask when her Active Travel Fund could cover this item.

Traffic Sensitive Routes review. The Committee noted that Devon County Council will be undertaking a full review of the traffic sensitive streets network across the county. Devon County Council has a legal duty (under the Traffic Management Act 2004/Section 59 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991) to Co-ordinate works activities on the road network. As part of this duty, a power is afforded to Devon County Council to enable the designation of certain streets as 'Traffic Sensitive'. When a street is designated 'Traffic Sensitive', timings of works can be better regulated to ensure the free flow of traffic so far as reasonably practicable through the council's Permit for Works Scheme. The following steps must be completed before a designation can be updated:

- Each street is crossed referenced against the statutory criteria.
- Proposals for revised designations are outlined.
- Communications are undertaken with affected stakeholders.
- A 1-month statutory consultation period is held.
- The updating of Devon's mapping data is completed.

Town and Parish Councils are stakeholders and will be notified of the formal consultation during April'23.

Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum. A new Bus Users and Stakeholders (BUS) Forum has been established by Devon Bus Enhanced Partnership Board under the new Enhanced Partnership arrangements. The idea is to provide an opportunity to share information, receive feedback and discuss relevant issues amongst stakeholder representatives. I was approved as the representative from South Hams HATOC. Their first meeting takes place this week.

Road Closure in Totnes Town Centre: Works are scheduled to take place from the beginning of January until Easter. Any problems for businesses along the high street that are affected (including compensation claims) can be referred to either of the following Wales & West personnel:

- Project manager for these works - on site daily - Dan Shaw Giles - dan.shaw.giles@wwutilities.co.uk 07773 540011
- The Programme Controller for the project is Abby Smith – Abby.Smith@wwutilities 07583 069919

DCC Rescheduling of roadworks due to bad weather &/or urgent pothole repairs being prioritised for safety purposes:
Totnes

- **Ref: ORD2103775 The Grove, Totnes, Resurfacing - POSTPONED** until further notice
- **Ref: ORD1907930 Blackpost Lane, Totnes – POSTPONED** until further notice

A similar notification was issued for both postponements:

“Sadly, I am updating you today that due to circumstances outside of our control these works have now been deferred due to events across the whole county with potholes and road conditions. Whilst I understand this will be disappointing, these planned works in XXXX will be rescheduled in during the 2023-24 programme and when I have those dates I will of course be back in immediate touch to keep you informed.”

Ref: ORD2202420 Vegetation clearance and drainage investigation works.
A381 Totnes to Littlehempston.

A381 Totnes to Littlehempston: Vegetation clearance and drainage investigation work.

I am writing to inform you of our forthcoming vegetation clearance and drainage investigation work on the A381 Totnes to Littlehempston.

This work will involve removing trees which have succumbed to Ash Die Back, crown lifting and removing vegetation which is a hazard to highway users and the highway infrastructure and clearing and surveying the drainage system.

Due to nature of the work and for the safety of the workforce and the public, it will be necessary to close the A381 Totnes to Littlehempston to all vehicular traffic while the work is carried out. The works will commence on **6th February 2023** for **3 weeks** between the hours of **7pm to 7am each night**. The closure will be lifted outside of these hours and at the weekends. Access for Emergency Services will be maintained at all times.

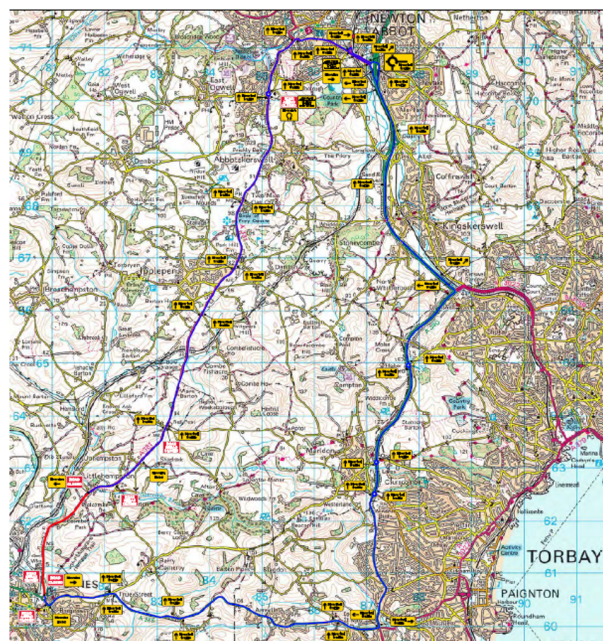
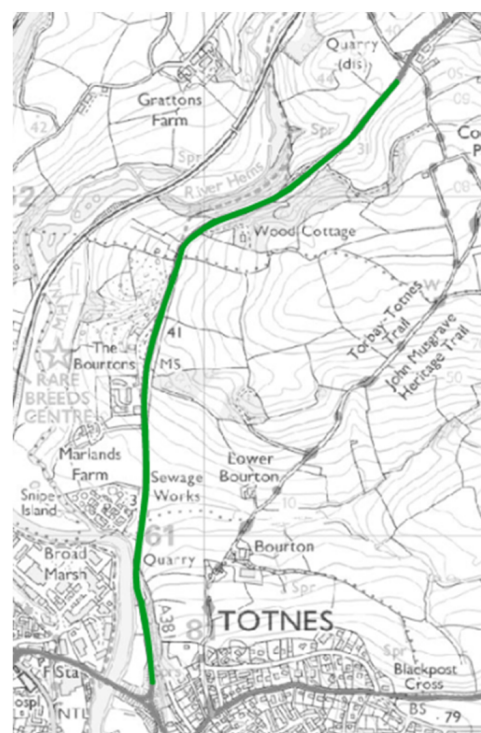
Access for residents to their properties within the site boundaries during these working hours will be accommodated by liaison in advance of the works and by speaking with the traffic management staff at the closure point. There may be a delay while we ensure the route through the site is safe before access is permitted and we ask for your patience while we carry out the necessary arrangements on site.

Any change to the start date or duration of works will be indicated on the advisory signs located on site. This link to Devon County Council's website provides up to date information on the exact location and dates for the work: [Roadworks - Roads and transport \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadworks)

We will endeavour to complete the works as quickly as possible and to achieve this we would ask for your co-operation and understanding. We do understand and empathise with residents and the users of the highway that this work will cause disruption and we apologise in advance for this disruption. Hopefully, by working together, we can successfully overcome any difficulties that may occur.

If you require any further information prior to the works taking place or are a resident within the site boundary and need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Milestone Infrastructure, working on behalf of Devon County Council quoting the above reference number and road name, by email at enquiries.SDH@milestoneinfra.co.uk or by phone on 0345 155 1015.

Area of highway which will be closed at night shown in green:



A381 Road Closure & diversion

Dartington: Drainage works A385 Tigley Cross to Dun Cross – rescheduled to 6th Feb – 8th Feb

This letter is to give you some further information about the rescheduled drainage works which will be commencing shortly on the A385 between Tigley Cross and Dun Cross.

Due to the nature of the works a **road convoy system** will be in place and advance signs will also be placed on the Highway.

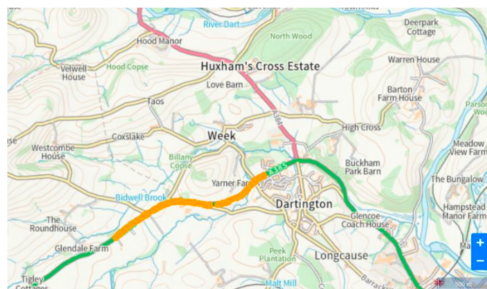
I apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused, including construction noise. We will endeavour to keep all disruption to a minimum. Access for all will be maintained although some minor delays may occur.

The planned on-site working hours will be **Monday 6th February until Wednesday 8th February 2023**. Please note- these dates may be extended if weather is adverse.

Our planned programme for the delivery of the work is:

- Replacement of drainage, haunching between Tigley Cross and Dun Cross. A road convoy system will be used between the hours of 0930 and 1630hrs each day.

Please see the below map showing the affected area for these works which highlighted in **orange**.



Dartington: Hunters Moon – Footway and road resurfacing

Dear Sir / Madam.

This letter is to give you some further information about some forthcoming works throughout the Hunters Moon housing estate in Dartington.

Due to the nature of the works a road closure will be necessary and advance signs will also be placed on the Highway. Access will be maintained all residents, but some delays will occur.

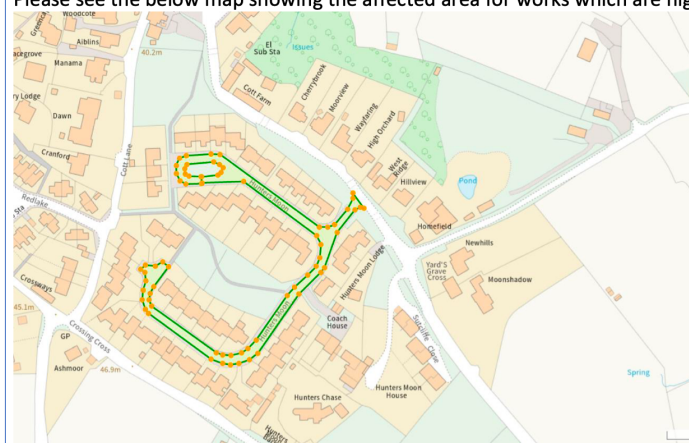
I apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused, we will endeavour to keep all disruption to a minimum.

The planned on-site working hours will be **Monday 5th March until Friday 10th March**.

Our planned programme for the delivery of the work is:

- **Monday 6th March**
We will be resurfacing the footway throughout Hunters Moon.
- **Tuesday 7th March**
We will continue to resurface the footway to completion, then remove the road surface by milling out. We urge residents/visitors not to park on the road during this date between 0800-1730hrs.
- **Wednesday 8th March**
We will resurface the road and again we urge residents not to park on the road between 0800-1730hrs.
- **Thursday 9th and Friday 10th March**
These dates are spare but may be used if any issues or bad weather occur.

Please see the below map showing the affected area for works which are highlighted in **orange dots**.



Staverton – Some of the Drainage Works from Kingston House to Kingston Gate have been delayed and reprogrammed to start Tuesday 28th March until 4th April'23

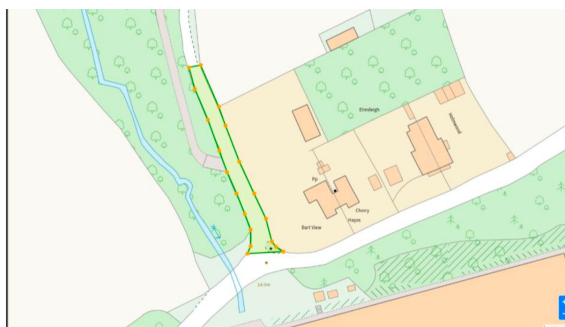
The following two sections of roadworks in the Staverton Parish area should now have been completed. The works were scheduled to follow on from each other although they are on separate roads. The third section of works was due to take place last week, but has been delayed as advised in the letter with the map below

The planned on-site working hours will be **Monday 9th January 2023 until Monday 16th January 2023**. Please note- these dates may be extended if weather is adverse.

Our planned programme for the delivery of the work is:

- Replacement of drainage, haunching and resurfacing between Staverton Joinery and Fursdon Court

Please see the below map showing the affected area for works which are highlighted in **orange**.



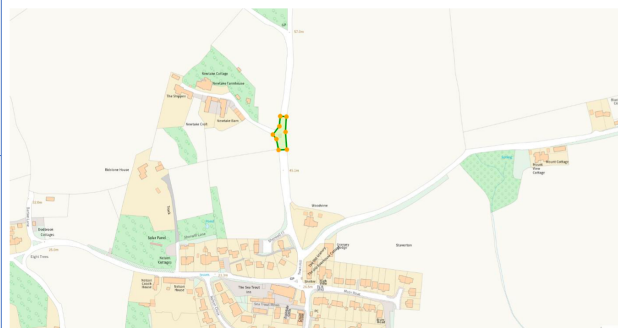
Thank you for your patience and understanding while we are carrying out these works.

The planned on-site working hours will be **Tuesday 17th January 2023 until Monday 23rd January 2023**. Please note- these dates may be extended if weather is adverse.

Our planned programme for the delivery of the work is:

- Replacement of drainage, haunching, gully replacement and resurfacing between Moothill Cross to New Park

Please see the below map showing the affected area for works which are highlighted in **orange**.

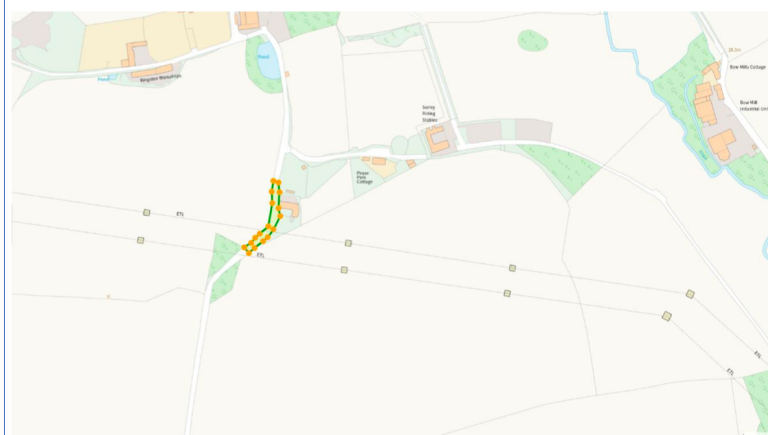


This letter is to give you some updated information about the drainage works which were due commence shortly in Staverton.

Unfortunately thanks to the two recent cold spells across the County have led to some proposal schemes being delayed until early Spring as we tackle the issues which have arisen due to the cold and frost especially.

Therefore the drainage works currently being undertaken at Moothill Cross to Town Hill (ORD2200961) have been extended until the end of this week. The works from Kingston House to Kingston Gate Cross have been delayed and have now been reprogrammed in the schedule to start Tuesday 28th March until Tuesday 4th April 2023.

Please see the below map showing the affected area for works which are highlighted in **orange dots**.



Staverton: Staverton Joinery to Fursdon Court – Highways Drainage Works: Temporary closure of through traffic & parking. Monday 27th March to Friday 31st March

Staverton – Highways repairs Moor Road. Works commenced on January 16th. I visited the works on the first morning to confirm with the operator that these repairs would bring the road surface up to DCC Highways standard. The project managed agreed that this was the case. On that basis I have written to DCC Highways to request that they adopt this road to avoid the problems of the past few years it has taken to have these works commissioned and carried out on behalf of SHDC. I will update you when I hear more.

Road conditions in Staverton: complaints about drainage and photos (sent to me by a resident) have been forwarded to the Devon Highways team and I have requested again a further trip with the officer around the parish. When this has been arranged, I will check in on these repairs listed above that have been carried out.

Harberton: A381 junction with Moreleigh Road

This letter is to give you some further information about the drainage works which will be commencing shortly in Harbertonford parish.

These works were due to be completed in January but have been deferred until March.

Due to the nature of the works a road closure is required and the diversionary route for traffic will signposted and advance signs will also be placed on the Highway.

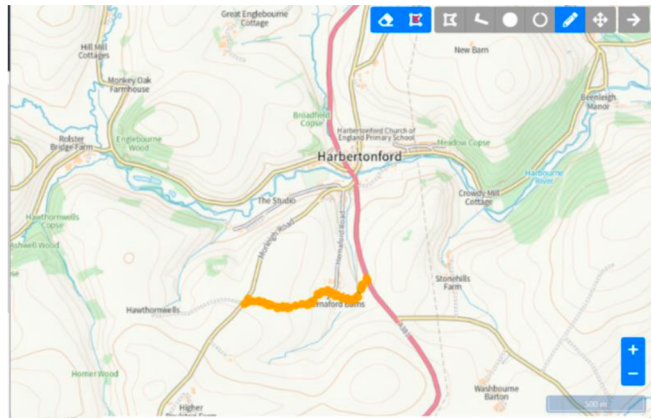
I apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused, including construction noise. We will endeavour to keep all disruption to a minimum. **Access for residents and emergency services will be maintained although some minor delays may occur.**

The planned on-site working hours will be **Monday 6th March 2023 until Thursday 9th March 2023.** **Please note- these dates may be extended if weather is adverse.**

Our planned programme for the delivery of the work is:

- Replacement of drainage, haunching between A381 to junction with Moreleigh Road

Please see the below map showing the affected area for these works which highlighted in **orange**.



South Devon Catchment Partnership quarterly meeting 2nd Feb. Received presentations and discussed:

- Progress DCC regarding the **Devon Local Nature Recovery strategy** (LNRS). A Devon Nature Recovery map has been produced. Devon based LNRS conference on June 13th
- **Friends of the River Dart** are making Bathing Water Applications (i.e. to protect key bathing water areas, including two wild swimming areas in the Dart at Dartington. They are also lobbying SWW to increase the water testing period (to include the winter months) and the number of testing metrics at 3 points along the R.Dart. They are planning a series of talks with experts.
- **Habitat projects** that could be funded by South West Water SWW are being sought: Contact jbeale@southwestwater.co.uk
- **Sustainable South Hams** are hosting a River Assembly on 18th March at Kingsbridge college
- I requested **Flood Risk modelling and Mapping to be carried out; the Environment Agency are looking into this and will get back to me.**

FAIR TRADE FORTNIGHT 2023 takes place this year Monday 27th February to Sunday March 12th. Totnes Fair Trade Group will be supporting the hosting of a coffee grower who it is expected will be attending a local primary schools' conference is being planned for March 2nd.

Totnes Climate & Ecological emergency working group: the next meeting will be held **6.30 – 8.00pm on February 14th 2023** in person at Totnes Guildhall and hybrid with Zoom access at this link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81347699786> Meeting ID: 813 4769 9786. Future monthly meetings will be hybrid, i.e. in person in the Guildhall and also accessible interactively via a Zoom link. This meeting will focus on the Devon Carbon Plan and an update on progress with community composting sites proposed for Totnes.

Totnes Climate Hub events are posted on-line at this link: <https://totnesclimatehub.info/events/>

Devon Climate Emergency News and Newsletter is at this link: <https://devonclimateemergency.org.uk>