

















County Councillor's Monthly Report Cllr. Jacqi Hodgson - Date of Report: 8th November 2023
Devon County Councillor for Totnes & Dartington
(incl. Harberton, Harbertonford, Staverton, Landscope & part of Berry Pomeroy)

Devon County Council: key issues

Please use the Report it webpages on Devon County Councils website to report in any potholes, broken street lamps, overgrown hedges obstruction pavements, refills for grit and salt bins...simply 'Google' Devon County Council Report It

or use this link: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/>

 <p>Pothole Large 40 mm vertical-edge hole that is also greater than 300 mm wide</p>	 <p>Parking Request enforcement in residents' parking and on-street parking zones</p>	 <p>Overgrown vegetation Pedestrians forced into road, cars over central line, reduced visibility</p>
 <p>Public rights of way For example, blocked access or broken stiles</p>	 <p>Hazardous or fallen trees Trees that have fallen into the road or are leaning, unstable, diseased or dying.</p>	 <p>Debris or obstruction Thick mud, soil, stones, embankment slips, large branches, fallen trees</p>
 <p>Defective road markings or signs White and yellow, stop or give way lines or warning signs</p>	 <p>Trip hazard Hole or significant difference in level on pavement or cycleway</p>	 <p>Traffic lights Damage or fault to traffic lights or signals or school crossing patrol light</p>
 <p>Broken manhole cover Broken, missing or rocking manhole cover</p>	 <p>Grit bin Empty bin, damaged bin or a bin with contents that are unuseable</p>	 <p>Bridges and retaining walls Structural damage or significant obstructions restricting water flow</p>
 <p>Fences and barriers Damaged or missing roadside fences or barriers</p>	 <p>Ice Ice or snow on the road</p>	 <p>Street lights, lit signs, lit bollards Faulty street light, zebra crossing, bollard, lit sign</p>
 <p>Flooding and blocked drains Standing water, blocked drain, flooded property, impassable road</p>		

Any **severe potholes or dangerous areas of the road** can also be reported via this link on the Report It website: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/help-and-support/make-a-complaint/#:~:text=If%20you%20have%20a%20complaint,Centre%20on%200345%20155%201004>

DCC Cabinet meeting 8th November 2023. Mobile Library Services: Call in of cabinet decision in July to stop the service which is run by Libraries Unlimited. This call was discussed this morning at DCC Cabinet and reached the following (disappointing) decision: **RESOLVED**

- (a) that Cabinet has given due consideration to the recommendations of the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee of 28 September 2023;
- (b) that the additional information provided within the Report, following the decision to cease the mobile library service at Cabinet on 12 July 2023, be noted;
- (c) that recommended Option 4 be approved (replicated below);
- i. to decommission the Mobile Library vehicles and provide £25K transition support for vulnerable users;
 - ii. to extend the decommissioning period to end of February 2024;
 - iii. to provide an additional funding stream of £15k for community groups and parish councils to apply for small grants to facilitate local community library developments;**
 - iv. to create a support resource for community libraries signposting best practice; and**
 - v. to provide clustered networking events for parishes/community libraries to network.**

Devon County Council and Devon Nature Partnership: presentation by Sarah Jennings, Senior Ecologist at DCC. This meeting provided a briefing about the forthcoming Environment Act and what it will mean for DCC. There was a very useful set of slides in this comprehensive presentation which I can share to anyone interested.

Public Flood Meeting at Harberton 17.10.23 – further to September storm flooding. Attended by DCC Flood risk team and Environment Agency staff to provide an opportunity for local people to raise concerns and ask questions about the disastrous flooding that happened on 16/17th September. The meeting was very well attended and my impression was that the meeting was well received and the explanations about the mud that came into the village from one of the surrounding fields was provided in the context that more needs to be done to ensure that the farming community and landowners are more aware of how to prevent the extreme run-off that is more likely to occur with more extreme weather we are now experiencing.

DCC are currently applying for a large Natural Flood Management (NFM) funding bid to support further avoidance work in Harberton and Harbertonford (I was asked to provide a letter of support) – I will keep you posted on the outcome.

Dartington Floods: At this meeting I raised with DCC Flood Risk Team, the issue of the repeated flooding that has been taking place in Week, Dartington which has coincided with the huge landworks and developments taking place at Sawmills Field, and the concerns about the flood risk for those new developments being based on 2013 Flood Risk data. I was assured there had been nothing illegal about this and that Week is not topographically lower than Sawmills Field!

More Flooding due to extreme weather in storm Ciaran 1/2nd November.

Local reports in Devon recorded over 80 incidents of fallen trees, flooded roads and landslips were sent in to DCC further to the extreme rainfall and high wind speeds and flooding that took place in a number of locations across Devon. With many areas already saturated from the high rainfall over the past few weeks, there were a number of places badly affected with flooding.

People are encouraged to report any property flooding on the [Flood Online Reporting Tool](#), Which provides a comprehensive reporting tool and links to useful contacts for assistance as needed. Any further information can be provided to DCC Flood Risk Management Team by emailing floodrisk@devon.gov.uk

Support available to flood-hit communities through grant scheme

Communities hit by flash floods in September are being encouraged to approach the Devon Community Resilience Forum if they need support. The forum has extended its [Emergency Resilience Grant scheme](#) until next April so that Devon communities affected by flash flooding on Sunday 17 September can seek help if needed. The initiative offers two funding schemes:

- Help for communities to develop emergency plans, and
- Support for small scale works and resilience equipment, which is usually intended for those communities with an emergency plan already in place.

However, in response to the recent flood events and to support community flood resilience, the grant of up to £1,500 for small scale works and equipment is being available until the end of April 2024 for those communities that are still in the process of developing their plan or do not yet have one.

This funding is intended as a “fast track” grant to provide:

- Rapid purchase of simple flood equipment (PPE, signs, sand bags etc.);
- Exceptionally, a contribution to minor, practical works. (However, this will not cover activity that is otherwise being promoted through the community self-help / Road Warden scheme, such as clearance of drains, or general maintenance works that are the responsibility of land owners).
- For those communities that have recently experienced flooding, works to assist community recovery and getting things back to normal will be included.

Applications are made via a simple two-page form in Word. Any constituted group (Parish Council or Community Group) with a bank account is able to apply for the grant. All communities and applications will be considered, however those areas affected in the most recent flood event in September 2023 will be prioritised in order to help those communities get back on their feet and address any immediate issues.

If a community is interested in developing an emergency plan then the scheme one grant is still available to assist with this. Devon Communities Together is also available to help groups put their plan together.

For more information visit the [Devon Communities Together website](https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk) or contact rod.birtles@devoncommunities.org.uk

Staverton Bridge was badly affected by the flooding with substantial debris being reported to DCC Highways Bridge Team.

Water Quality: Torbay carried out a spotlight review to look at South West Water. Click below for all the information from Torbay on their recent investigation into South West Water:

[Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Board on Thursday, 5 October 2023, 5.30 pm \(torbay.gov.uk\)](https://www.torbay.gov.uk/agenda-for-overview-and-scrutiny-board-on-thursday-5-october-2023-530-pm)

Local Roadworks – road to Penn from Landscope - The Highways Team have reported back as follows:

“I checked all seven recently completed enquiries and the related defects: Recently completed lways:

	Received	Required Completion	Outcome comments
W231666367	1 st October	8 th October	This problem has already been reported or repaired (duplicate report). No action taken. D233802742 D233802745 D233802749
W231666366	1 st October	8 th October	This problem has already been reported or repaired (duplicate report). No action taken. D233802755. Moved location slightly.
W231670611	18 th October	20 th October	This problem has already been reported or repaired (duplicate report). No action taken. D233802753 Moved location slightly.
W231653464	10 th August		Raised as defect D233797103
W231667917	8 th October	20 th October	An inspector has visited this location and found the defect not to meet our intervention criteria, therefore no action taken.

W231669338	13 th October	20 th October	This problem has already been reported or repaired (duplicate report). No action taken.
W231653932	11 th August	6 th October	Raised as defect D233797115

Related defects:

	Instruction date	Completion date	Outcome comments
D233802742	20 th October	23 rd October	Carriageway pothole
D233802745	20 th October	23 rd October	Carriageway pothole
D233802749	20 th October	23 rd October	Carriageway pothole
D233802755	20 th October	23 rd October	Carriageway pothole
D233802753	20 th October	23 rd October	Carriageway pothole
D233797103	20 th September	10 th October	Carriageway pothole
D233797115	29 th September	6 th October	Carriageway pothole patch large. 8000mm long x 1500mm wide x 70mm deep. In wheel track near Penn Bungalow.

The additional information you need may be contained above but I would deduce from this that an inspection took place on the 20th October and all defects have been actioned and completed. That just leaves the three live enquiries which await inspection.”

The recent extreme weather has adversely affected this already very damaged and pretty well undrivable (even with a 4X4 vehicle) road. However, it has also been reported that the potholes that have been mended whilst full repair works are awaited, have been very inadequately done. There are local reports that they have simply been half filled with mud. I am awaiting a definite time and day to meet on site with the Neighbourhood highways Officer to check both the quality of work and also to press for the full repairs to be carried out as soon as possible (i.e. not wait for the next financial year) as some residents and businesses have been virtually cut off by the damaged road.

Flooding on the A385 outside KEVICC. A resident sent me a detailed list of the SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage scheme), they thought DCC needed to carry out as remedial works to alleviate this regular flooding site. I contacted DCC only to be informed that as the water spilling on to the road is coming out of KEVICC’s site, it is their duty to resolve. I am taking this up with KEVICC.

FYI- The current road works taking place in Totnes on the bridge on the Western By-pass are structural repairs that were identified a couple of years ago.

DCC Council Leader Autumn briefings for Town and parish Councils. Cllr John Hart will once again be hosting online meetings with Town and Parish Council’s and North Devon’s briefing is confirmed for 6pm, Thursday 30 November 2023. Please find below the link to register if you would like to join the meeting:

- [South Hams | November 30 | 6pm – 7.30pm | Register here](#)

Community Composting: There has been a good interest in groups coming forward to enquire about Community Composting initiatives. The Sustainable South Hams Community Composting Team is being commissioned by SHDC to undertake some pilot projects to engage the public and support new schemes coming forward. One of the first pieces of work has been to review the SHDC own website advice to which the feedback to date has provided some useful insights and proposals for improvements to make the process for groups to apply with an expression of interest. As this is my portfolio area, do contact me if you want to find out more.

Marldon Community Composting group has had its planning application approved and the National Trust site next to the pub in Marldon is now able to make good progress

The Community Composting site at The Marsh in South Brent is being supported in development as a demonstration site to help new groups to understand what is needed to establish a site. There will be roadshows for both the new recycling roll out by SHDC and the Sustainable South Hams Community Composting projects so keep an eye out and ask your questions when you see them.

South Hams District Council – Draft Corporate Strategy continues to be consulted on.

The formal consultation phase on the strategy itself opened on Monday 25 September 2023 and will run for four weeks (until 22nd October). **This has since been extended to 30th November 2023**

Link to the information page and on-line consultation:

<https://ourcorporatestrategy.commonplace.is/proposals/lets-talk/step1>

Link to the Strategy: [https://res.cloudinary.com/commonplace-digital-](https://res.cloudinary.com/commonplace-digital-limited/image/upload/v1695379282/projects/64ff400cd364d9df16a3b053/media-upload/SH%20Corp%20Strategy%202023.pdf/k56whmy1a2lvuesan8bd.pdf)

[limited/image/upload/v1695379282/projects/64ff400cd364d9df16a3b053/media-upload/SH%20Corp%20Strategy%202023.pdf/k56whmy1a2lvuesan8bd.pdf](https://res.cloudinary.com/commonplace-digital-limited/image/upload/v1695379282/projects/64ff400cd364d9df16a3b053/media-upload/SH%20Corp%20Strategy%202023.pdf/k56whmy1a2lvuesan8bd.pdf)

Sustainable South Brent has developed a comprehensive response to the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Elements of the SHDC Corporate Strategy which can be shared with other groups who may wish to learn about their views and make similar submissions. Contact them at for more information

info@ssb.org.uk They used **Council Climate Action Scorecards** which provide information and assessments of various elements of how SHDC measures against some determinants:

<https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/councils/south-hams-district-council/>

South Hams District Council have launched their **thermal imaging camera service** whereby Parish Councils and community groups can borrow one of 4 cameras for free. More info here, including how to apply:

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/housing/housing-support/thermal-imaging-camera-hire>

Panel Meeting about the South Devon Freeport: Friday 17th November 7-9pm at St Mary's Church,

Totnes. Chaired by George Monbiot; 'You now live in a Freeport, what does it mean and does it matter?'

SHDC Leader Cllr Julian Brazil, SHDC portfolio holder for Enterprise and Economy, Cllr John Birch, myself and others have been invited to participate in the panel. (the meeting is free to attend). This is the link to reserve a place: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/westcountryvoices/1052609>

Education / Local Schools:

KEVICC – there has not yet been any decision regarding the sale of sites. However, Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education did visit South Hams in September for a round table meeting with local Heads and Anthony Mangnall MP. To date no decision has been made regarding the Elmhirst site or sale.

Steiner School was inspected in September has received its Ofsted report as a Good School

Robins School at Shinnars Bridge – there is likely to be a changeover in management to become a Devon County Council run - in house facility. They are seeking ideas for a name change “ explore a name change, which would be acceptable to the families and the local community”. Please let me have any thoughts on this and I will feed back.

The River Dart (Wave) Academy at Shinnars Bridge has been identified for investment from the Schools Replacement Programme (SRP) and the DfE are indicating that it will need to move off site given the recent unsuccessful planning application on site and ongoing issues regarding flood risk. DCC has provided the Department for Education with a brief in terms of preferred location, key requirements in terms of the site (for example not in a commercial/industrial site) and transport infrastructure links, good public transport, access to A38 etc. I have meeting next week with DCC officers to learn more about their possible plans.

Adult Social Care:

Forder House, Dartington has given notice to its residents that this residential house is closing. The date provided is January 17th, which has caused a lot of local concern. Support and advice is being provided by South Devon Rural Housing Association and Devon County Council's Adult Social Care Team working with NHS local team. This is the information I have received from the latter who can be contacted directly by anyone who is affected:

"To confirm we have put together a bundle of information for each resident and their families. This is slightly different for DCC funded and self funders. However, it includes links to where to get advice and info, how to make decisions including the legal guidance around this and an overall list of local options.

DCC funded people each have an allocated worker now and for those who self fund we are potentially available to get actively involved as required. We do have to be proportionate around this, but are working with the home where there are relatives or residents who are especially anxious etc or where there is a clear need for further assessment of health or social care needs to inform decisions. This is where possible including consideration of relationships with each other, family and other individual community links.

The home and staff continue to be a port of call and residents and families have my contact details. So if in doubt please direct them my way. The availability of care homes changes daily, we are sharing info frequently with the care home to update on options, this will involve a degree of phoning around for self funders, who are able. Where this is more tricky, we can support. So again if you get queries related to this please send them my way.

We continue to meet weekly as a wide MDT and we are tracking progress, so we can highlight where there are particular concerns or risks for any resident and act accordingly. It is not easy, but at this point I am assured we are doing what we can to support. If in doubt please encourage residents or their families to reach out to me or the named workers involved.

Emily West: Mobile: 07464 656592. Email emily.west@nhs.net

Community Services Manager for Moor to Sea Health & Social Care Teams

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and Devon County Council

Or David Hodges my Personal Assistant – please contact david.hodges1@nhs.net or 07588 178401"

South Hams Community Action (Previously called Community Voluntary Services – CVS) is holding two events in the next few months that may be of interest to residents:

Mini-conference: Caring organisations - Tuesday 21 November, 10am to 2pm, at Follaton House, Totnes.

*All are welcome to our mini conference where Claire Hill, Totnes Caring; Liz Hitchens/Steven Parker Davidson, Four Rivers Dementia Alliance; and Suzie Walters-Jefferies, Devon Carers will talk about the work they are undertaking in the South Hams. The aim of this first mini conference is to enable our caring organisations to network, to learn what other organisations are doing, and also to consider the potential to join together with a future district-wide alliance/peer-support network (around funding and other needs). It will be useful for community leaders to attend to see what is being undertaken and the needs of our groups. There will be a networking lunch from 1pm-2pm. **To attend either in person or via Teams, please***

email: admin@southhamscvs.org.uk

Funding support day -Hold the date! Monday 4 December 2023, (times tbc) at Tumbly Hill, Kingsbridge

Funding bodies, including the National Lottery team, will provide more information on their funding streams and answer questions from attendees. There will also be a workshop on 'How to write a successful bid'.

Please disseminate this information to your community and voluntary groups? Your groups can register interest for the event at this stage as we will need to limit numbers for the sessions.

Jackie Wesley, Chief Executive Officer, South Hams Community Action

E: jackie@southhamscvs.org.uk T: 07801 574 945 W: www.southhamscvs.org.uk