

John Birch
SHDC Member for Totnes
Report to the meeting to be held on
Monday 1 December 2025

I report on the following.

Local Government Reorganisation

On 17 November SHDC published *Reimagining Devon: Believe in Better*. This document sets out in detail SHDC'S case for its proposed 4-5-1 model for local government reorganisation in Devon.

As well as releasing *Reimagining Devon: Believe in Better*, SHDC also published a [press release](#), [video](#), and the [Reimagining Devon website](#) promoting the proposal. The submission to government will be made on 28 November 2025. As previously reported South Hams District Council has joined forces with other district councils in Devon to respond to the government's request to come forward with proposals to reorganise local government in the county.

South Hams, East Devon, West Devon, Teignbridge, Mid Devon, North Devon and Torridge district councils, in consultation with Torbay Council, have been working together to shape a proposal. Torbay continues to work on its own submission.

These seven districts' proposal, known as the 4-5-1 model is as follows:

- A unitary authority for West Devon, Teignbridge, South Hams and Torbay
- A unitary authority for North Devon, Torridge, Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter
- Plymouth remaining a standalone unitary authority

In putting forward the proposal the districts' leaders say that it reflects Devon's natural communities, travel-to-work areas, economic geographies, and represents a unified voice for the county for now and for the future.

The district councils have consulted widely with residents, partners, businesses, and other key stakeholders to ensure the proposals reflect the needs and ambitions of Devon's communities.

SHDC Consultation and Engagement activity

Here is a list of consultation and engagement activities that are being planned over the next few months.

- November - **Local Plan**: Initial information gathering from landowners, developers and agents
- January - **Rope Walk, Kingsbridge**:
- January and February – **Budget**: consultation with businesses

- January - **South Hams Parking Permit review**: consultation
- February to April - **Kingsbridge Economic Plan**: consultation and engagement events
- Spring – **Local Government Reorganisation Government Consultation**
- To Be Confirmed - **Conservation Area Appraisal, Totnes**: consultation

Keep our green spaces clean

Fly-tipping — the illegal dumping of waste — is a serious issue that damages our environment, endangers wildlife, and spoils the places we all enjoy.

Fixed Penalty Notices have recently been issued for multiple fly-tipping incidents across South Hams including Roborough, Cadover, Totnes, and Deancombe. These cases involved a range of dumped items including household furniture, toys, black sacks, and loose domestic waste in Roborough; wooden furniture, mirrored panels, soft furnishings, and a punch dummy in Cadover; and shelves, bedding, crockery, clothing, and metal cookware in Totnes, where CCTV footage was obtained. At Deancombe, the waste included rotten OSB boards, plastic debris, and loose gravel and mud.

SHDC has the following messages which it is asking town and parish councils to endorse and pass on:

- Fly-tipping is illegal, harmful to the environment, and costly to clean up. Residents are urged to dispose of waste responsibly and use licensed waste carriers.
- Reporting fly-tipping helps SHDC to respond quickly and remove dumped waste, deters repeat offenders and protects our shared spaces and supports enforcement efforts — including issuing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to those caught fly-tipping.
- Fly-tipping is a crime - offenders can face fines of up to £500 through FPNs, and in some cases, prosecution.

With councils and residents working together we can keep our parks, paths, and green spaces clean, safe, and beautiful.

Cllr John Birch
SHDC Member for Totnes
26 November 2025