

# Parish report from your District Councillors

## December 11<sup>th</sup>

### Progress of new recycling service



The rollout of the Devon Aligned Service (DAS) for our recycling and waste collections began on 20 November. It has gone as smoothly as we could have wished, with only a small number of complaints.

Residents can support us by reporting a missed collection on our website. The way we will measure the success of the service is via Whitespace (computer programme), which is why it's so important that missed collections are logged online. Reporting online allows us to address missed collection data in real time and improve our service. We will try to collect missed collections within two working days of receiving the report. Residents can [visit our 'Missed Collections' page](#) to let us know if we haven't collected their waste and recycling. Householders still presenting recycling bags or extra cardboard will receive a note explaining where they have gone wrong. It is hoped to reintroduce the collection of extra cardboard within a few weeks. Some residents may wish to make a complaint about a different aspect of the service. Complaints should generally be logged online - find out more here: [www.southhams.gov.uk/your-council/comments-and-complaints/complaints-and-feedback](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/your-council/comments-and-complaints/complaints-and-feedback)

### Devolution Deal for Devon and Torbay



Devon County Council has received confirmation that the Government has given the green light for plans for a devolution deal. The proposed plans would create a Combined County Authority (CCA), a partnership between Devon County Council, Torbay Council, Exeter City Council and other district councils across Devon. Plymouth City Council have decided not to join the partnership.

Importantly, the deal would not change any of the councils' established democratic structures and our responsibilities for the delivery of local services would remain unchanged. The deal would include new funding to support skills training and new jobs for the growing green economy.

This is part of a wider package of powers and funding being negotiated for transfer from Whitehall to local government in Devon and Torbay. There will be an eight-week public consultation on the proposal to create a Combined County Authority which would have responsibility for any powers devolved from Whitehall.

## Summary of the Policy Statement on Local Authority Funding

A Policy Statement has been issued by the Government on the Local Government Finance Settlement for next year, 2024/25. It is pretty much as we were expecting and in line with the assumptions and financial modelling that was in the last Budget report to the Executive on 30 November 2023.



## Support for families on healthy relationships

As part of our support of the national campaign '16 Days of Action against Domestic Violence', we have recorded a 20 minute 'Let's Talk' about Healthy Relationships for parents and carers of teenagers. This is hosted on our YouTube channel - [Lets Talk Devon](#). The session provides parents and carers with tips and techniques to support their teenagers in developing healthy relationships and recognising unhealthy ones. We would be grateful if you could share this link far and wide and follow us on [social media](#) and share our posts.



*South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership*

## New Planning IT System

At the end of November South Hams Council introduced a new Planning IT system. This does not apply to parishes or parts of parishes within Dartmoor National Park. The new system will bring a range of benefits and improvements to our Planning Service. It will bring efficiencies to officer work streams and lead to quicker decisions for our customers.



## Single Person Discount Review

The Council has begun a Single Person Discount Review of those receiving a 25% reduction in their Council Tax because they are the sole adult occupant of their property. Just over 14,000 occupants in the area receive a 25% Single Occupancy discount, which reduces 2023/24 Council Tax bills by over £7million. The Single Person Discount Review is being carried out Devon wide and funded by Devon County Council. Due to the numbers involved, it will be performed by a company called Capacity Grid, part of a larger company called Liberata, who will match Single Person Occupancy data to other information, to identify cases where there may be the potential of a second occupant.



Those residents will receive a review letter and once issued there will shortly be available a link on our website (and only our website):

- [www.southhams.gov.uk/spd-review](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/spd-review) - for residents to complete the review form and provide confirmation that they are the sole occupant. For residents who are not able to get online or need additional assistance, they can call **Capacity Grid** on freephone **0808 168 8923**, where someone will be happy to help with completion of the form.

## South Hams Community Action

At their AGM, the trustees of the South Hams Council for Voluntary Service announced that with immediate effect, the CVS would be rebranded **South Hams Community Action**. During the AGM, the South Hams Community Action team set out their ambitious plans for the organisation. We are looking forward to working with them over the coming years.



## Free Skills Training for Residents

Having up-to-date skills in an ever changing workplace jobs market is a great way to stand out from the crowd!

For residents looking to kickstart a new career, upskill or change roles, the Skills Bootcamp might be the thing for them.

The Skills Bootcamp offers FREE, flexible training in a range of exciting sectors for those aged 19+ living in Devon - so our residents automatically apply for the scheme.



## Rough sleeper estimate

Each year, we are required to submit an estimate of how many rough sleepers are out on any given night to the Government. This year our estimate was over the night of 6 November into 7 November. For 23/24, the official number of people verified as being out was five. Four of them were in Totnes, while one is in South Brent. This remains unchanged for 22/23, when the figure was also five. However, they are not the same people. The severe weather emergency accommodation is activated when the temperature is predicted to be zero, and people remain accommodated during this period. We also accommodate on amber weather warnings.



## AONBs renamed National Landscapes

All designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales are becoming National Landscapes, including South Devon. The new name reflects their national importance; the vital contribution they make to protect the nation from the threats of climate change, nature depletion and the wellbeing crisis, while also creating greater understanding and awareness for the work that they do.



This is a significant milestone for the UK and the next step in fully realising the National Landscapes' vision to be the leading exemplars of how thriving, diverse communities can work with and for nature in the UK: restoring ecosystems, providing food, storing carbon to mitigate the effects of climate change, safeguarding against drought and flooding, while also nurturing people's health and wellbeing. You can find out more on [the South Devon National Landscapes](#).

## Support with energy bills

Lower income households could benefit from free energy efficiency upgrades to their homes this winter with our support. Please help spread the word of our Homes Upgrade Grant, available to homeowners with an annual income of less than £31k, who have heating that isn't mains gas and an EPC rating of D,E,F or G. We are working with partners South Dartmoor Community Energy to survey eligible homes across the District and provide energy efficiency measures, personalised to the needs of the property. If you know of any residents who may be eligible for support, please ask them to [apply online to SHDC](#).



## Thermal Imaging Camera Hire

**Service** As part of our commitment to help reduce carbon emissions in our area and help people improve the energy efficiencies of their homes, we have four thermal imaging cameras available for use by town and parish councils, or local communities on a free to borrow basis.



Following a successful trial undertaken by Bigbury Net Zero over the winter of 2022/2023, which was supported through our Climate Engagement Fund, we have been using the result to develop a thermal imaging camera hire scheme. **Applications to hire one can be made by Town and Parish Councils or organised community groups only.** Cameras are available to borrow for up to two weeks. It's expected that applicants will use the cameras with local residents to survey several homes within the hire period.

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