

# Report from your District Councillors

## January 2026

### Community Engagement Round-Up



#### Erme and Yealm Caring Alliance

The latest meeting organised by our partners SHVCS, the Erme and Yealm Caring Alliance, took place on Wednesday 10 December 2025. The meeting saw a wide range of attendees provide updates on their organisations and activities.

If you would be interested in attending in future, meetings are scheduled for:

- Tuesday 20 January - Kingsbridge and District Caring Alliance
- Wednesday 11 February - District Caring Alliance (taking place at Follaton House)

For further information email [southhamsvcs@outlook.com](mailto:southhamsvcs@outlook.com) or contact the Community Development Team.

### South Hams Community Awards 2026

From Monday 5 January 2026 you will be able to nominate individuals and organisations in your community for recognition through the South Hams Community Awards.



The Categories are:

- The South Hams Young Persons Award (for under 18s)
- The South Hams Community Champion Award (for over 18s)
- The South Hams Community Organisation Award
- Climate and Biodiversity Champion Award

Nominations can be made online throughout January through our website; we will circulate a link when nominations open in January. Please share details of the award with interested parties; it is a great way to show appreciation for those doing good in the community. For a reminder of last year's Awards, please see our website.

### Ongoing Consultations

The following consultation and engagement activities are taking place this month:

- December - **Local Plan:** Initial information gathering from landowners, developers and agents.

Here is a list of consultation and engagement activities that are being planned for 2026. Please be aware these activities and dates are subject to change:

- Jan and Feb - **Local Plan**: Engaging with statutory consultees to formally announce our intention to start a new local plan followed by a 6 to 8 weeks engagement process, scoping the plan.
- January - **Budget**: consultation with businesses to gather their views on the South Hams District Council 2026/27 budget proposals.
- January - **Parking Permit review**: statutory consultation required by legislation to consult on the changes to parking permits.
- February & March - **LGR**: Government run consultation on Local Government Reorganisation proposal(s) for Devon. Starts early February and will run for 7 weeks.
- February to April - **Kingsbridge Economic Plan**: consultation and engagement events to identify potential projects.
- TBC March - **Conservation Area Appraisal, Totnes**: consultation to gather views on a new CAA plan for Totnes.

## Support directory - severe weather

Our [Support Directory](#) webpages offer advice to residents on how to keep warm and stay safe during severe weather, like the ice and snow at the start of this week and the strong winds we saw yesterday.

We have pages on:

- [Winter advice](#)
- [A warm spaces directory](#)
- [Energy saving tips](#)
- [Fuel, energy & bills](#)

There are many other helpful sections too, so take a look and see how it can offer advice and support to your residents.

## Partner Updates

### GWR Customer and Community Improvement Fund

GWR has announced it is inviting bids to its Customer and Community Improvement Fund for the financial year 2026/27.

The fund is designed to support small and medium rail related projects that can be completed over the course of the 2026/27 financial year (or the **2026/27 academic year** for in-school projects).

You can visit their dedicated webpage now at <https://www.gwr.com/about-gwr/what-you-can-expect/community/community-investment>, which includes a link to their guidance booklet where they have case studies of previous projects as well as guidance materials to help applicants prepare strong bids.

The deadline for submissions is **12:00 noon on Monday, 2 February 2026**.

Bids must relate to the railway and address an area of social need. - proposals that do not connect in some way to customers (or potential customers), stations, railway property, rail services, rail education, or careers in rail will not be considered. A strong bid will

address an area of social need and demonstrate community involvement and the potential for lasting benefits. Match funding is advantageous but not necessary.

They welcome applications of all sizes however the fund needs to cover their entire network, so they are particularly interested in small and medium projects. The maximum bid amount is £25,000 and last year the average awarded amount was £12,500.

For more information or to discuss your ideas before making a submission, please email GWR at [Community.Fund@GWR.com](mailto:Community.Fund@GWR.com)

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## Advice on keeping safe from the fire service

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service has released some advice on how to stay safe during severe weather conditions.

This includes advice on what to do in severe winds, snow and icy conditions, floods and more.

[Visit the D&S Fire Service website](#) to find out more.

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## NHS Winter Update - Key Reminders

High levels of seasonal illness, including flu, and vomiting and diarrhoea bugs, mean ambulances, hospitals, GP surgeries and other NHS services can come under severe pressure at this time of year.

People are being asked to help by continuing to choose the right service for their needs and by taking simple steps to help them and loved ones stay well.

- Use NHS 111 for advice
- Call 999 only for life-threatening emergencies.
- Check [online](#) for minor injury units and urgent treatment centres.
- Support vulnerable people and help with hospital discharges.
- Pharmacies can help with minor illnesses. Find local pharmacy at '[find a pharmacy](#)' map.
- Don't visit hospitals if you're unwell.
- Follow simple self-care tips from [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

More info: [www.onedevon.org.uk/our-work/services-and-support/health-pressures](http://www.onedevon.org.uk/our-work/services-and-support/health-pressures)