

SHDC Report September 2021

Waste/Recycling Collection

The situation continues to be challenging, the current difficulties faced by many Councils across the country around staffing levels, particularly drivers, continue to impact on FCCs ability to collect our waste and recycling. The brown bin service remains suspended.

We will give an oral update at the respective Parish Council Meetings once we have had a chance to evaluate the situation on Monday.

Covid Enhanced Response Area



In response to high COVID rates, South West local authorities, including the South Hams, have been added to a list of areas receiving an enhanced response package.

Being designated as an enhanced response area will help with support measures for education settings and increased national communications support, clearly outlining the continued risks of COVID-19 and the need to take personal action, such as the wearing of face masks and social distancing. Additionally, prioritised access to Wastewater testing, sequencing, national contact tracing capacity and national support with messaging will also be supported.

The District Council will continue to be required to support this public health advice from Central Govt through its communications with residents and businesses. We have not been asked to carry out any additional tasks at this time.

Afghan refugees

South Hams District Council is appealing to landlords to come forward now to help meet the acute need for homes for fleeing Afghan workers and local families. The unprecedented pressure on local housing has been well documented this summer. There is now a pressing need to find accommodation for people fleeing from Afghanistan as well as rising demands for housing for local people who have been asked to leave their homes through no fault of their own.

Cllr Hilary Bastone, South Hams District Council's Deputy Leader explains: "As a community, we want to do whatever we can to support the government and County Council in finding accommodation for formerly employed Afghan workers and their families. The lack of affordable private rented accommodation in the area also continues to mean many families face long periods of time in temporary housing situations whilst we struggle to secure them long-term homes. The problem is that we simply don't have enough properties to meet our local needs. That's why we are asking landlords in our local communities to come forward now and help us offer a solution.

"Under the Afghan resettlement scheme, we are looking to source a private-rental sector property to offer to an eligible family. The County Council will commission support to assist the family to integrate and settle into the area. Our understanding is that the scheme will be similar to the Syrian Resettlement scheme, which South Hams District Council already supports.

"We also continue to reach out to landlords to sign up to our SeaMoor lettings scheme, which offers a full property management service. We are hopeful that the community of South Hams will show their generosity and that we will receive offers of accommodation to help those relocating from Afghanistan and those local families who are also in need of homes."

Due to the importance of access to support, there are restrictions on where Afghan families can be rehoused. As a result, the Council is specifically looking for family-sized properties in Totnes to support a family fleeing from Afghanistan.

However, many local families are also desperately seeking homes where they can settle and bring up their children. If anyone has a property anywhere in the District that is available to rent please email seamoor.lettings@swdevon.gov.uk to find out more about the landlord support available.

Find out more about the options and support for landlords provided by SeaMoor Lettings: www.southhams.gov.uk/SeaMoorLettings

eCargo Bike Grant



Earlier this week, SHDC contacted businesses across the South Hams and reached out to Parish Councils to share details of the Government's eCargo Bike Grant.

£400,000 has been made available by the Department for Transport in 2021/22 for the purchase of eCargo bikes, to support businesses switching to a sustainable transport solution.

- Funding covers up to 40% of the total cost of an eCargo bike, up to a maximum of £2,500 for two-wheel models and £4,500 for three-wheel models.
- You can apply for up to five eCargo bikes per organisation.
- Limited companies, sole traders, partnerships, charities and not-for-profit organisations are all eligible to apply. Public, community or third sector organisations are also eligible provided they are legally constituted and have the appropriate formal structure.

The deadline for applications is 14 December 2021.