

Diptford Parish Council Meeting, 12th October 2021

South Hams District Council Report October 2021

Waste 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.

Market Traders' Grant



Having successfully delivered the first two tranches of the business grants programme (ARG – Additional Restrictions Grant) and received the 3rd tranche of funding, officers will be delivering the final two schemes to ensure the money is used where it is needed by the end of the financial year. Those two schemes are:

- The market traders support grant
- The community recovery fund

The market traders support grant is very simple and will ensure that regular market traders receive either £500 or £1000 (depending on frequency of trading). The application form is very simple and we anticipate it being concluded by the end of October. We will be going direct to the market traders in our Comms to let them know how to apply.

There is a small amount of business grant funding left over, and any money that is not spent will go back to BEIS, so it is in the interest of our local economy to ensure it is delivered. We have designed the Community Recovery Fund to fund projects that deliver more for the community or for the economy. Applications will be invited from businesses that can multiply the money to benefit the area in two ways.

Funding for Farmers and Land Managers

The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme was launched across all AONBs and National Parks in July this year.

The programme will run from July 2021 to March 2024. It will fund projects that:

1. Support nature recovery
2. Mitigate the impacts of climate change
3. Provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
4. Support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses

Please see the attached flyer for further information.

Diane Lethbridge, South Devon AONB Unit for enquiries within S D Aonb

For enquiries within DNP further information can be found in the [Guidance for Applicants to the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme \(FiPL\)](#).

Electric Vehicle Charging

The Council has joined the Devon and Torbay Residential Chargepoint Scheme project which is a partnership with other local authorities and being led by Devon County Council to install electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) in the Council owned car parks

As a result of the Devon and Torbay Residential Chargepoint Scheme, electric charging points will be installed in the following car parks subject to the necessary surveys being carried out:

- ☒ Steamer Quay car park, Totnes
- ☒ North Street car park, Totnes
- ☒ Duncombe Park Car Park, Kingsbridge
- ☒ Lower Union Road Car Park, Kingsbridge

The Council have taken significant steps across the district to enhance the network of EV charging points available to residents and visitors alike. We have already completed or are in the process of installing the following:

- ☒ A38 Corridor Rapid Charging – Two EV charging bays have been installed in our Glanvilles Mill car park in Ivybridge as part of Highways England project to provide EV charging points along the A38 corridor. These are available for use now for rapid vehicle charging.
- ☒ Follaton House – EV points have been installed at the Offices at Follaton House, Totnes for use by staff, members and tenants.

Deletti Project – a collaborative project led by Devon County Council involving the Council and other local authorities such as East Devon, North Devon, South Somerset and Teignbridge Councils. The project secured Regional Development funding to deliver 22kW EV chargers with two outlets to serve two parking bays simultaneously for installation across a range of car parks. Heaths Nursery car park, Totnes. Quay car park, Kingsbridge . Mayors Avenue car park, Dartmouth. Creek car park, Salcombe . Park & Ride car park, Dartmouth . Fore Street car park, Kingsbridge . Victoria Street car park, Totnes . Pavilions car park, Totnes . Poundwell Meadow car park, Modbury.

Tenders will be invited to supply, install and maintain the EV charging points based on a lease of the sites for 10 years at a nominal rent.

The Council will retain the ability to charge parking fees in the normal way for spaces which become EV charging points.

Officers will continue to identify and work with partners to explore ways to deliver EV chargepoints in the future. **Parish and Town Councils also have the opportunity to apply for funding to install EV chargepoints on their own land should they wish to do so.**

Local Housing

South Hams District Council at its Full Council meeting on Thursday 23rd September took the decision to declare a Housing Crisis, in response to the almost complete lack of any rented accommodation available for six months or longer that local people and those working in the area can access, and the excessive rise in house prices locally due to second home-owners and those moving in from other areas where house prices are even higher.

It's important to note that some of these actions won't apply in SHDC parishes within Dartmoor National Park, which has its own definitive housing policy. We await clarification.

It is fortunate that we have a new Housing 5 year Housing Strategy and Housing Actions in Better Lives for All, but as an expansion of them South Hams District Council should:

- 1 Lobby government through our MPs and the LGA to allow council tax to be charged on plots with planning permission after a determined period, even if they haven't been built out, so that developers are encouraged to build out sites without delay.
- 2 Lobby government through our MPs and the LGA to review the regulation of holiday accommodation, to ensure all holiday accommodation is suitably regulated and made subject to local planning policies and taxes. We should appeal to Airbnb for a 90-day rule as applicable in London and lobby MHCLG for a separate planning class for short term lets and a proper licensing system to cater for them.
- 3 Institute an immediate thorough review by the council of all holiday lettings in the District, including, but not restricted to, whether they have planning permission, whether they are paying council tax or business rates, as appropriate, for the accommodation, whether they comply with safety regulations, and to ensure they are paying appropriately for waste disposal.
- 4 Ask the JLP Team to review the thresholds and percentages of affordable housing on sites, and whether it would be appropriate at the Plan Revision to increase these so that the percentage of First Homes imposed by the government becomes in addition to the present 30% affordable homes rather than part of it.
- 5 Promote regular Landlord Forums and run a further campaign to publicise the advantages to landlords of Seamoor Lettings.
- 6 Work closely with our main Registered Providers to ensure best occupancy of stock, so that where tenants are prepared to downsize, not only are they given a priority banding to be able to access a smaller property but support to help them move available.
- 7 Use some of the affordable housing reserve to increase payments made to anyone downsizing to help make moving more attractive and affordable.
- 8 Use any Section 106 affordable housing contributions as soon as possible to help fund developments anywhere in the District where the terms of the Section 106 Agreement permit this.
- 9 Campaign for changes to the Broad Market Area to better reflect the costs of rents in the South Hams.
- 10 Promote the development of an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing such as ZEDpods,

to show that developments like this can be both stylish and great to live in. They can offer many advantages over traditional build and could help, amongst other things, to alleviate the shortage of one bedroomed accommodation in the District.

- 11 To actively seek opportunities to invest in Council owned social housing with high sustainability specification, to support those on a low income who are unable to afford 'affordable' rental housing; and
- 12 To lobby Government to allow local councils to be able to charge up to 200% Council Tax on second / holiday homes as they do in Wales.

Covid Enhanced Response Area Discontinued



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

This has now been discontinued as our area is no longer considered a high risk

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. Please direct your local businesses to find more information about the scheme [here](#).