

Parish report from your District Councillors

SEPTEMBER 2022

Waste Update-



Garden waste collection subscription service moves closer in South Hams as SHDC prepares to take back control of refuse service.

WE WILL UPDATE THIS AT YOUR MEETING

The Executive of South Hams District Council has agreed that residents wanting to have garden waste

collections should be charged for the service from spring 2023, with the current service potentially set to cease from 31 October. The final decision will now be made at South Hams' Full Council meeting on Thursday 22 September. If Full Council agrees to cease the service, the Council would collect all brown bins on their last collection day in October. With rising costs and a continued driver shortage across the nation, the Council is considering every option to ensure that the core waste and recycling collection service can remain as smooth as possible when it comes back in-house on 3 October.

The Council will inherit increased operating costs and have to contend with inflation in the price of fuel and wages, as well the need for additional resources. Introducing a charge for the garden waste collections – a discretionary service, not a statutory one – would ease the overall cost pressures on the Council. As well as easing financial pressures, ceasing the current service from 31 October would also ease pressure on the core waste and recycling collections, helping to keep those as stable as possible in the early months of the transition. Previously the Council had not charged separately for the service, but the decision brings them in line with most other districts in Devon, who already charge separately for garden waste collections. Plymouth City Council recently took the decision to end their garden waste collections early this year to ease their own budget pressures. **Cllr Keith**

Baldry, South Hams Executive Member for the Environment, said: “We know that the potential removal of the unpaid garden waste collections will be disappointing news to many of our residents, particularly given the cost of living crisis that the country finds itself in. However, to enable us to keep delivering and improving the core waste and recycling services, it is clear that charging for garden waste collections has now become a necessity. Residents can take their garden waste to all three recycling centres in the South Hams. Full details, including opening hours, are available online here:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/centre/> Alternatively, people can find out more on home composting possibilities here: <https://www.recycledevon.org/in-the-garden/how-to-compost>

Officers working on the waste project team are making sure that the service is safe, legal and compliant when SHDC resumes full control from 3 October.

In parallel to this, work is ongoing to analyse the collection rounds data, to see if there are any small improvements that can be made in the short term, with an aim to deliver longer term improvements as soon as we can.

The Council will inherit the same problems as FCC on day one; the same rounds and the same staff shortages. While we will look to improve the service as soon as we can, there will still be challenges. It isn't just the waste collection service, it is also the trade waste, bulky / clinical waste collections and the recycling banks, along with the street scene services such as litter bins, street and toilet cleaning services.

SHDC wants to work with Towns and Parishes and other partners to resolve difficulties and will be contacting all councils to ask them to let us know of the recurring problems in their areas. There is a communications plan in place, so we can share the latest updates with residents as and when they happen. Local councils will receive an email inviting them to share their issues in the week beginning 5th September. The decision to terminate the contract was taken mutually with FCC and followed continuing dissatisfaction by residents over the failure to restore the garden waste collection service to an acceptable level, and the halt to the roll out of the new recycling box scheme to parts of the district. The decision is likely to add significantly to the council's costs for this service

Plymouth freeport boundaries



Tax-break industrial sites could be set up anywhere in the South Hams or on Dartmoor as part of Plymouth's new freeport, it has emerged. The Government has set a vast boundary for the project which stretches from Devonport to Dartmouth, Salcombe to Okehampton, and incorporates all of the moor and the entire South Hams.

Ministers have revealed the extensive boundary for the freeport on a map, leading to concerns being raised from some environmentalists and critics of the freeport programme. It came as a surprise because it had been said that the freeport would involve just three Plymouth sites: at Oceansgate in Devonport, Sherford and Langage. But it has now been explained that these are what are termed "tax sites", where businesses can benefit from a range of tax benefits including paying less when buying land and avoiding National Insurance payments for newly employed workers. The three sites are also what is called "customs sites", where businesses don't have to pay tariffs on some goods they import.

There can only be three tax sites, and there must be at least one customs site, or "free zone", in any freeport. But the freeport company could seek to create more customs sites within the extensive outer boundary.

However, the Plymouth and South Devon Freeport stressed it is "categorically not the case" that the entire area on the map has been earmarked for development or has any special planning status. A spokesperson said: "The outer boundary does not confer any special planning or regulatory status." The freeport explained that any new customs site would still need to fit within a "rigorous planning process", including the suitability of the area for any businesses, and existing local authority restrictions and prohibitions. In Dartmoor's case this would mean it having to fit with it being within a national park and an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB).

Farming Crime Survey



Devon and Cornwall Police, in association with the University of Plymouth and the University of Winchester are conducting a survey of farmers and landowners to examine their experience of crime and policing. The work, which is funded by the Seale Hayne Educational Trust, will be used to inform and shape future approaches by Devon and Cornwall Police to engage with and police rural communities.

Government Funding for Electric Vehicles



The Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS) is a voucher-based scheme that provides eligible applicants with support towards the upfront costs of the purchase and installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints. The WCS is open to businesses, charities and public sector organisations that meet the applicant and site eligibility criteria.

The grant covers up to 75% of the total costs of the purchase and installation of EV chargepoints (inclusive of VAT), capped at a maximum of:

- £350 per socket
- 40 sockets across all sites per applicant - for instance, if you would like to install them in 40 sites, you will have 1 socket available per site. For more information contact SHDC.

Sustainable South Hams



Sustainable South Hams is the primary network in the South Hams for sharing knowledge and inspiration with community groups on local climate and nature events and projects. It has received seed corn funding for 2022 from SHDC to facilitate this endeavour. In order to monitor and empower this initiative it is important that the parish-specific information on the new [SSH website](#) is accurate.

Please check your parish information on the “**Find a Group**” section of the above website, featuring the parish map for South Hams. Parishes on the map are colour coded to denote whether they have a **Climate or Nature group**, and whether they have **Declared and Emergency** or have a **Carbon Reduction Plan** or a **Nature Recovery Plan**. If you have any queries about this process please contact SSH at info@sussh.org. This SSH parish map with the information provided by your parishes will also be embedded in the [SHDC Climate and Biodiversity website](#).

Citizens' Advice needs volunteers

Citizens Advice South Hams is recruiting for volunteers; the organisation is anticipating that many more people will come forward asking for help during the difficult winter months ahead.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please share the **Citizens Advice South Hams website** with them.



