

## Parish report from your District Councillors

NOVEMBER 2022

### WASTE - Improvement in performance across the board for October



Since taking back control of the waste service from FCC on 3<sup>rd</sup> October we have seen a marked improvement in staff attendance, resulting in almost no missed collections for the month of October. Recently all the brown bin rounds have been running, compared with an average of only 50% in recent months under FCC. SHDC is now once again responsible for all waste collection services,

together with street and public toilet cleaning. The move is likely to result in the council incurring additional costs of several million pounds in the next few years as a consequence of the mutual termination of the contract with FCC.

A major review of all collection rounds is currently taking place, the plan being to move all residents currently on recycling bags to the new boxes by next Spring. This review should allow for better deployment of vehicles and staff, to make best use of our resources.

### Preparations for subscription garden waste service

As well as easing financial pressures, ceasing the garden waste (brown bin) service from 31 October will 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 from FCC.

The Council will ensure that all households will get their brown bins emptied on or around their last scheduled collection day before the service is ceased. For a long time South Hams District Council has been able to provide the garden waste service without charging a subscription fee but doing so from spring 2023 will bring us in line with most other districts in Devon, who have charged separately for garden waste collections for several years.

The current garden waste service will cease from **31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER**

The proposed new service will start from **MARCH 2023**

The subscription will be **£49 per bin**, with a maximum subscription of two bins per household.

If you want to sign up to the new collection service go to the website

**[www.southhams.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/gardenwaste)** or call **customer services on 01803 861234**

**IMPORTANT You MUST subscribe to this service between 1<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 and 22 JANUARY 2023**

This will be a yearly service, collection every two weeks, suspended for four weeks over Christmas.

**If you don't want to sign up for this service** no further action is required.

You can keep your brown bin, we would encourage you to re-use it as storage in the garden. If you want it removed go to [www.southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste) and select '[contact the waste team](#)'

**Cllr Keith Baldry, South Hams Executive Member for the Environment, said:**

"We know that nobody will want to pay a subscription fee for the service, but the inescapable truth is that rising costs have forced our hand. Ultimately, we must protect our core statutory services. Ceasing the collections over the winter will help us do that as we transition to an in-house waste collection service. We consider that the fee of £49 represents good value for money. The subscription fees will purely cover the cost of the service and there will be no profit made. We will provide residents with information in due course on how they can sign up and subscribe for the service.

We would also encourage more home composting, residents can find out more on home composting possibilities here: <https://www.recycledevon.org/in-the-garden/how-to-compost>

For those who decide to not sign up for the service, they can take their garden waste to all three recycling centres in the South Hams, or seek out one of the growing number of Community Composting projects locally. Full details, including opening hours, are available online at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/centre/>  
Keep up to date on the latest at: <https://southhams.gov.uk/recyclingwaste>



## **PLYMOUTH and SOUTH DEVON FREEPORT**

SHDC Full Council agreed at a special meeting on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October to apply to turn our Freeport areas (Sherford and Langage in the South Hams, part of the Dockyard area in Plymouth) into one of the Government's new Investment Zones.

These bring greater tax benefits for employers, to encourage inward investment and high quality jobs. In some cases in the future planning and environmental controls may be slightly relaxed, but the two sites above are currently subject to all current planning and environmental legislation as they progress through the planning process. Details of how the change of category will affect planning



procedures etc. are yet to be announced by the Government. It is very unlikely that any other sites will be approved in the SHDC area other than the two at Langage and Sherford.

The issue was hotly debated by Council Members, the vote being 13 in favour and 11 against.

## COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

A total of £1.68million was made available by Government to SHDC to support businesses that have been affected by COVID-19, but have been ineligible for other business rates support.

Councils were responsible for developing and implementing a scheme based on local need, however we were unable to award relief to ratepayers who were entitled to Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme. Relief can also not be given to unoccupied properties.

The Council has awarded rate relief totalling £1.61million to 509 business properties following a meeting of the Council's rate relief panel on 23 September. The amount of relief awarded is equivalent to 26% of the 2021/22 business rates liability, based on rateable value. We have primarily been able to support businesses in the manufacturing, wholesale and supply chain sectors. Ratepayers benefiting from relief will shortly receive a new bill with a covering letter explaining the terms of the award of the relief. As the relief must be applied to the 2021/22 business rates liability, most businesses will find that their account for 2021/2022 will go into credit. This will be transferred to the 2022/23 financial year thus reducing the amount of business rates payable. Should a ratepayer request that any credit be refunded, a refund will be raised.

## Council Tax Reduction Scheme

South Hams District Council Executive agrees to ask the public for their opinion on changes to their Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Consultation opens Monday 17 October and will run until 27 November. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme is a scheme which is run by councils across the country. It recognises that households have different pressures and depending on where you live, your income, how many people live in your home, how many children you have and what benefits you already claim, you could have your council tax bill significantly reduced.

Each year councils must review their scheme and decide if they are going to make changes to it or leave it the same.

At a meeting on the Council's Executive (Thursday 13 October), the Executive agreed to go out to public consultation on the proposed changes, which

would start in April next year and that reflect the extra pressures that many households are feeling right now.

The Council are inviting the public to tell them what they think of those proposed changes, before deciding if they should make them happen.

**Cllr Nicky Hopwood, South Hams Executive Member for the Cost of Living, said:** "This is a banded or graded scheme, which means the lower your income, the more pressures your household has, the greater the reduction you get.

## Bird Flu

Following a number of detections of avian influenza in poultry and wild and captive birds across the southwest of England a regional Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) was declared on 31 August in Cornwall, Devon, Isles of Scilly and part of Somerset.

From 17 October the [Prevention zone](#) was declared across Great Britain.

All bird keepers must follow strict biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the threat of avian flu.

We have received notification of a confirmed case of Avian Influenza (HSN1) within a private flock of geese at a setting located in Dartington. The flock has been culled. This is the third notification within the Dartington area.

## Annual Rough Sleeper Estimate

All local authorities are required to submit a 'snapshot' estimated figure on the number of rough sleepers in the local area during a specified night between 1 October and 30 November.

South Hams will be submitting an Estimate based on the number of people believed to be sleeping rough on the night of Monday 14 November through to Tuesday morning of 15 November.

We will also conduct a 'snapshot' count in Totnes as our main hotspot for people sleeping rough.

We choose to submit an estimate as the most accurate way of arriving at a number because due to the large geographic area of South Hams, a full count would not be able to encompass all the areas involved.



