

August notes for Parish Councils

Community Broadband

You may be aware that South Hams and West Devon Council have jointly funded a two year Community Broadband Project to help drive broadband provision in areas with poor connectivity.

Broadband provision in South Hams is falling rapidly behind the UK average, partly due to our dispersed rural communities and the challenging topography of the landscape. During the pandemic digital connectivity has been proven to be critical and a lifeline for all.

Communities are heavily reliant on digital apps and online services for their healthcare support, businesses fight for their survival through online sales and those who are isolated turn to the internet for a social connection with their communities. We need to ensure our rural communities are not left behind in this digital age. This project will help residents and businesses to navigate what has become a highly complex system of broadband suppliers and providers, and Government subsidy schemes.

We have now established contacts with the main organisations and broadband industry so are ready to publicise the project within the community. We are inviting people to get in touch if they are looking for better broadband and people willing to be community champions to drive broadband provision within their community areas. We are directing all contact via the new broadband webpage and online contacts form in the first instance so we can build this database.

We would be grateful if you could publicise this project within your ward and invite people to enter their details at the link below if they would like faster or more reliable broadband. If you are aware of broadband projects in your area I would also be very grateful to hear about what is happening.

<https://southhams.gov.uk/community-broadband>

At this stage we are not clear how much interest this publicity will generate, and so need to manage expectation that this is currently a fixed 2 year project with one officer to field responses. The intention will be to identify community champions in areas with poor connectivity outside of any existing fibre rollout plans and assist them in establishing if the interest in their area will make a viable fibre group. I also imagine a lot of enquires will be helping residents and businesses to understand what options they have, and hopefully identifying when a supplier will be bringing fibre to their area.

We are currently contacting all Members and Parish and Town Councils to spread the word, before we then look to other communications channels. This is going to remain an evolving project, so will no doubt need to adapt as we identify what the community needs are. Please also get in touch if you think there are gaps in the webpages, or project in general as it progresses.

Many thanks

Gemma

Award-winning Team Supports South Hams Businesses Through Challenging Times

South Hams District Council has scooped a Regulatory Excellence Award for supporting businesses during the EU-transition.

The Council won the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) award for its role in the Heart of the South West Better Business for All (BBfA) partnership. The organisers of the Regulatory Excellence Awards praised the partnership for delivering ‘outstanding regulatory support at a local level.’

The BBfA partnership operates under the direction of the Devon Strategic Environmental Health Officers group and is designed to support local business to meet regulatory requirements. It was crowned winner in the Better Business for All category of the awards for its role in bringing partners together from local authority economic development, trading standards and environmental health teams and business representatives. The partnership also produced and delivered guides and webinars for the business community and acted as a one stop shop for all things EU-Transition.

Cllr Judy Pearce, Leader of South Hams District Council said:

“This award is a great achievement that recognises the excellent standards that the Better Business for All partnership has set through a joint working approach.

“The EU-transition was a huge challenge to the Council and many local businesses. For example, we worked with our main exporters of fish products to ensure that their catch could be exported safely to Europe and beyond, negotiating a huge amount of red tape to ensure food safety standards remain high.

“The last 18 months have been a challenging time for residents and businesses alike. Hopefully we are now seeing most of our businesses recover with an influx of visitors over the summer period. The Council’s Environmental Health Team have been very busy too. We have visited the majority of local businesses, initially providing advice how to keep staff, visitors and customers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also worked with event organisers to ensure that events are safe and we’ve supported our Public Health Colleagues with advice on infection control measures where outbreaks of COVID-19 have occurred locally.”

EU-transition case study: Fishing industry

All UK-flagged vessels supplying fishery products for export to the EU must be registered as a food business with their local authority and have undergone a hygiene inspection. Local preparations started in early 2020 with the inspection of fishing vessels over 10m in line with Government advice.

South Hams District Council worked with the exporters to make sure that they were all registered with the online certificate process on the Government Gateway and exporters were kept up to date on any business readiness webinars available.

In the South Hams we have 29 registered fishing vessels and 100% of inspections were carried out.

One of our exporters – G.H.M at Salcombe - requested the first of our EU certificates. An Officer visited Salcombe fish quay on Monday 11 January 2021 in order to see the consignment and issue the Export Health Certificate. The first consignment arrived in France and onto Portugal with success!

About Better Business for All (BBfA) brings together businesses and regulators in local partnerships to identify the issues facing local businesses and provide support to them. Most local authorities are involved with the programme, preparing and implementing action plans and sharing good practice. The partnership has traditionally focussed on the food-industry as well as health and safety, fire safety and licensing activity.

In recent times the group has co-ordinated EU transition and COVID information for businesses, as well as providing webinars, additional guidance, inspection pro-forma and a forum for Regulators to share initiatives and discussion.

About the Regulatory Excellence Awards

The Regulatory Excellence Awards recognise outstanding work and innovation in combating coronavirus, helping businesses trade safely while protecting consumers. Paul Scully MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Minister for London, provided the opening address.

He said: “Thank you to all the organisations that have entered this year’s Regulatory Excellence Awards and for the cooperation and partnership working you were involved in with the Office for Product Safety and Standards. This year it is particularly important we celebrate outstanding regulatory practice in supporting businesses and protecting consumers.”

There were five award categories: Coronavirus, Better Business for All, Primary Authority, Innovation and Technical, and Product Safety.

www.gov.uk/government/news/opss-regulatory-excellence-awards-2021-winners-announced

Garden Waste Collections Impacted by Driver Shortages

FCC Environment (South Hams recycling and waste contractor) has asked South Hams District Council to suspend all garden waste collections from today (Monday 16 August). The Council has reluctantly agreed to this to enable FCC Environment to focus on general waste and recycling.

Many other councils around the country have had to do the same in recent weeks as the national shortage of LGV and HGV drivers continues.

Although they would like to be able to collect all waste, including garden waste, FCC Environment know that they must focus all of their resources on the statutory waste and recycling collections. This includes food waste, which can become very unpleasant if not collected in warmer weather.

Cllr Keith Baldry, South Hams Executive Member for the Environment said: “This is not a decision we have taken lightly, but the impact of the national shortage of drivers has meant that FCC Environment has no choice now but to move their resources to ensure they are focused on the vital collections. These are general waste, clinical waste and recycling.

“Therefore drivers that were collecting the garden waste will be redeployed onto the recycling and waste collections.

“As a Council, both for members and officers, this has been one of the hardest decisions that we have ever had to make and we know that it will not be popular. We are also sincerely sorry for the recent disruption to collections.”

FCC Environment Operations Director Steve Longdon said “This is an acute challenge which the waste and recycling industry is facing across the UK, one which has been well documented in the national media and which is also affecting many other industries. We are raising this issue at the highest levels in Government to gain support to attract and train new drivers into the sector but this is a long term problem for us all. We are closely monitoring the situation in the South Hams, working in tandem with the council to minimise disruption and apologise to residents for the inconvenience we know this will cause to them.”

Suspending garden waste collections is allowing FCC Environment to redeploy staff to support vital rubbish and recycling services.

It is anticipated that garden waste collections will be suspended for a minimum of four weeks. South Hams and FCC Environment will continue to review this as the national driver shortage position develops.

Residents are being asked not to put garden waste in the grey wheelie / residual waste bin.

The Council is offering advice on what residents can do with their garden waste:

Compost: More on home composting

Recycle centres: All three recycling centres located in South Hams, operated by Devon County Council, take garden waste. Full details, including opening hours, [here](#).

Please do not burn your garden waste. The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service firmly advises against having bonfires, given the risks of fires spreading, the likely nuisance for neighbours and the potential diversion of emergency services. Check out their downloadable bonfire leaflet [here](#).

Visit our website here for FAQs [here](https://www.southhams.gov.uk/waste-suspension): <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/waste-suspension>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/southhamsdistrictcouncil>

Devon Interim Carbon Plan Consultation Summary Report Published

In December 2020 the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership invited the public to comment on the Interim Devon Carbon Plan, an evidence-led plan that sets out a roadmap for Devon to achieve net-zero carbon. The consultation was open from 7th December 2020 to the 15th February 2021.

The results of the public consultation are available to read as a short summary and in full. View the reports by following the links below.

<https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/summary-consultation-report/>

<https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/full-consultation-report/>

The Devon Citizens Assembly has also now concluded and we will be expecting their recommendations in the coming weeks.

IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) on 9th August, here are some of the key messages;

Every inhabited region on Earth is experiencing the effects of climate change to some degree.

The human causes of climate change are indisputable, the IPCC has upgraded the language used to describe humanities role in driving climate change from ‘clear’ to ‘unequivocal’.

Recent changes in the climate are widespread, rapid and intensifying and unprecedented in thousands of years.

Global surface temperature has increased by 0.95°C to 1.20°C from 1850–1900 to 2011–2020.

Unless there are immediate, rapid and large scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to 1.5C will be beyond reach.

Advances in the understanding of climate sensitivity has meant that there is substantially more confidence in future warming scenarios. AR6 argues that we will pass 1.5C in the early 2030s and 2c between the early 2040s and 2050s (If emissions continue to increase at the current rate as opposed to reduced emissions pathways).

Warming can cease if we reach net-zero, to limit global warming to below 2°C, CO2 emissions would have to decline by about 25% by 2030 and reach net zero around 2070.

The full report can be read here <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

Fit and Proper Person for Licensed Residential Caravan Sites

The fit and proper person requirement will make it an offence for a site licence holder to operate a park home site unless they, or their appointed manager, are a fit and proper person to do so.

Under some circumstances we have the power to appoint a fit and proper person to manage the site, with the owner's consent.

We have carried out work in this area in preparation for the new legislation. There are six sites in South Hams that are currently licensed by the Council, who are required to make an application these are;

Bittaford Park, Ivybridge, 55 homes

Deer Park, Stoke Fleming, 32 homes

Battisford Park, Plympton, 8 homes

Crossways, Kingsbridge, 11 homes

Weblands Farm, Avonwick, 5 homes

Each site has been notified of the new legislation and sent an application pack to return by the October deadline.

We will chase up any non-returns if necessary.

Landlords that have a single unit of “mobile” accommodation have not been requested to provide details. We are awaiting clearer guidance to the legislation before doing this.

For more, visit: <https://southhams.gov.uk/park-home-sites>

We’re Listening – Influence Decisions for South Hams

South Hams District Council is running a series of consultations that give residents and local businesses a chance to have their say on Council decisions that will influence everyday life across the District.

These are the consultations that are currently open.

Co Cars

What is it about? Local residents, businesses and community organisations are being asked for their views on establishing a community-led electric car and bike club for the South Hams via a short online survey.

When does it close? 24 August 2021

How to have your say: Take the survey at <https://bit.ly/ElectricSHams>

Enhancing biodiversity

What is it about?

This is a consultation to explore what the public think about the Council enabling re-wilding of some of its green spaces. As a District Council, South Hams currently manages about 50 hectares of green space which is cut every couple of weeks.

The Council is considering rewilding on a small proportion of this land, 10Ha for a biodiversity led approach, and 3.5Ha for wildflower meadows. The majority of the land, (36 Ha approx) such as active play spaces and football pitches will need to be kept short.

When does it close? Midnight on Thursday 5 August 2021

How to have your say: www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/enhancingbiodiversity

Better Lives For All

What is it about? We're developing a new long-term strategic plan for the District. Looking to take every opportunity to support businesses and local people, the strategy outlines six core focus areas that will underpin the Council's work over the next 20 years. These are:

Adapting and mitigating climate change and increasing biodiversity

Improving homes

Protecting, conserving and enhancing our built and natural environment

Stimulating a thriving economy

Strengthening community wellbeing

Delivering quality Council services

What do you think of our focus areas? Is anything missing?

When does it close? Wednesday 1 September 2021

How to have your say: Complete our formal survey at www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/betterlivesforall

As part of the consultation there are other ways to help shape the plan and tell us what you think about the South Hams.

Take our short surveys for residents, businesses and visitors
www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/better-lives-for-all-survey

Show us the South Hams you see in our photo competition
www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/photographycompetition

Woodlands Park, Ivybridge

What is it about?

We have £25,000 to spend on new play equipment for Woodlands Park, Ivybridge and we want to hear from you. This is your chance to tell us what kind of equipment you'd like to see and what your children would most enjoy.

When does it close? 6 August 2021

How to have your say: www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/woodlands-park-ivybridge

Proposed Amendments to Parking at Follaton House, Totnes

What is it about?

South Hams District Council are proposing changes to the management of the Carpark at Follaton House, Totnes and would like to gather the views of the people who use it.

When does it close? 5 p.m. on 12 August 2021

How to have your say: www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/parking-consultation

Cllr Nicky Hopwood, South Hams District Council Executive Member said: “With all consultations, the more people who get involved the better as it gives us a truly representative picture of local opinion. Please do spend a few minutes completing our surveys to have your say and influence the decisions we make.

“To make it as convenient as possible, we have a number of different ways to share your thoughts. Look out for our polls on Facebook, fill in our quick online surveys or take the time to have your say on our bigger, formal corporate strategy. Every view will be collated and considered so we know our next steps are the right ones.”

If you're not able to complete the surveys online, please contact 01803 861234 and we will be happy to send you a paper copy.