

**South Hams District Councillor Report to Ivybridge Town Council,
22nd January – 3rd March 2024**

Six trees will be removed via the SHDC Harford Road car park with a 40 tonne crane, scheduled for 11th March. Harford Road will be closed to all traffic that day as well as the car park to allow for the trees to be lifted and processed.¹

There is still a little time for those purchasing the Brown Bin Garden Waste collections to receive a 5% reduction in the fee for 11 months of fortnightly collections. The discounted price ends on the 31st March.

The Public Space Protection Order consultation is open until Tuesday 19th March. For Ivybridge and four other towns, the link is <https://alcoholinpublic.commonplace.is/>



Due to the Cost of Living and other decisions to support groups in the longer-term, the Council has a range of support measures. These are not addressed here and now but feature in the extended paper.

- The Armed Forces Covenant
- Support for Care Leavers
- Low Income Council Tax Reduction
- Free IT and Digital Training
- South Hams Housing Offer
- Help towards Energy Bills

These are a few highlights from SHDC Council Plan:

The principal priority is to deliver core services and to that end:

¹ This will cement the opportunity to market the view to the Ivy Bridge and its history: significant dates of 1280, 1400, 1775; the earlier four Parishes; the remaining two Parish markers; and the Town's administrative development: Ivybridge Local Board, Councils, Twinning and growth.

- . the full recycling and waste collection service has been re-implemented as an in-house service;
- . the Planning Portal has been updated with work ongoing to underpin the Enforcement system;
- . Licensing continues month by month;
- . reputable governance is ensured by internal and external review by multiple councillors and external bodies.

New priorities are to address the two emergencies:

- . the housing crisis
 - Eleven houses have been bought to create temporary accommodation, and we are working with others to develop affordable housing schemes;
- . human-induced global warming by thinking globally and acting locally.
 - With the local food symposium complete, we are intending to put the SHDC internal food supply in order;
 - We are supporting environmental schemes across the District by providing funds to Sustainable South Hams (SusSH), and will become Members of the SusSH offshoot, the Erme & Yealm Rivers Association.

Following consultation and viewing by 1,200 residents, the plan will be available soon and run for four years.

Nadine Dommett and Pablo Munoz, District Councillors, Ivybridge West
Matthew Steele and Victor Abbott, District Councillors, Ivybridge East

For ITC Members to give background but not read out Monday

. The Armed Forces Covenant

Devon Home Choice (Housing waiting list)

- We do not apply local connection criteria to members of the armed forces and some former service personnel, nor do we apply it to divorcing spouses who are required to move out of MOD accommodation. In essence that means people can return to an area they may have previously lived in or wish to start afresh.
- We give additional preference to injured service personnel and former service, people leaving service accommodation following the death of a spouse or partner (it may be that a homeless application is taken in these cases if the need for alternative accommodation was urgent)
- We discount any lump sum received by a member of the armed forces for an injury or disability sustained on active service when applying the maximum income and savings to join the housing register.
- All the details are in the policy here <https://www.devonhomechoice.com/sites/default/files/dhc/Devon%20Home%20Choice%20Policy%20v11.1%20April%202023.pdf> page 37.

If a member of the armed forces had to access specialist accommodation elsewhere in the Country, and wished to return to South Hams we would assist with a deposit and rent in advance as well as offering preference on the housing register.

There are specific requirements within the Homeless Act for members of the armed forces following the armed forces covenant, that the Council of course adheres to. We have in the past taken referrals from the British Legion, SSFA and Help for Heroes, but if there is more in your conversation with the British Legion they feel we could be doing, we would be really interested in hearing from them. I recently engaged with Lee Buss-Blair from Operation Fortitude a 2 year project funded through The Armed Forces Covenant Fund, about centralised pathways for veterans to access support. We already take the approach that we support veterans who end up out of area by maintaining their local connection meaning they are able to take up offers of short term supported accommodation and know they can be helped to return to South Hams when treatment ends or they no longer require the support.

. Support for Care Leavers (<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/news/2024/council-supporting-care-leavers-employment>) by offering work placements, a guaranteed interview scheme, the ring-fencing of entry-level apprenticeships, and mentoring to help care leavers adapt to the working environment and secure permanent jobs. The Care Leaver Covenant which will help us provide additional support outside of our statutory duties:

- . a Council Tax discount for young people who have left the care system up to the age of 25,
- . free local leisure passes to support health and wellbeing, and
- . support with housing needs.

. Low Income Council Tax Reduction

. <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/available-support-and-benefits/low-income-council-tax-reduction>

. **Free IT and digital training** courses through our partners, Learn Devon (https://www.learndevon.co.uk/courses/query/W3sibmFtZSI6InNIYXJjaF9zdWJqZWNOcyIsInZhbHVlIjoInjUifV0%3D/?utm_source=learndevon&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=saferrinternetday).

. The focus of the **South Hams Housing Offer** is to provide funding for groups to research and, if appropriate, formalise into an appropriate legal entity. In addition, it can provide support and funding to bring forward sites for development (<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/south-hams-housing-offer>).

. Through our partners, Citizens Advice South Hams, residents could get help worth £300 towards the **cost of energy bills**. All support from Citizens Advice is free, independent and confidential.

They can help with complex energy billing issues, resolving matters directly with energy providers; help deal with energy supplier issues (including billing and meter problems); help residents understand how to make their homes more energy efficient; and analyse fuel bills and household finances to help save money.

https://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/UKSWDEVON/2024/02/22/file_attachments/2791312/Energy%20Vouchers%20%283%29.pdf