

Brendon Parish Council
County Councillors report

January 2025

Happy New Year

Local Government Reorganisation

The English Devolution White Paper was published on just before Christmas.

Extract from the ministers letter probably gives some explanation as to where we are heading as residents in a two tier area;

Local government reorganisation My intention is to formally invite unitary proposals in January 2025 from all councils in two-tier areas, and small neighbouring unitary councils. In this invitation, I will set out further detail on the criteria I will consider when taking decisions on the proposals that are submitted to Government. I intend to ask for interim plans by March 2025. As set out in the White Paper, new unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. For most areas, this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more. However, there may be exceptions to ensure new structures make sense for an area, including on devolution. Final decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. We will ask you to work with other councils in your area to develop unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area, rather than developing competing proposals.

Statement from Andrea

Following publication of the Governments Devolution White paper it is clear that considerable change is going to happen in Local Government in Devon.

We have two options;

- 1. Do nothing and the government will impose changes**
- 2. Engage with government to get the best result for the residents of Devon.**

I believe that engagement with the government is the best option.

While I may not agree with al the government’s proposals, I need to do everything I can to ensure that the changes will make local government sustainable for the long term and able to withstand shocks like the pandemic and the world financial crisis. At the heart of all this must be a stronger voice to inform the government of the issues my residents in Combe Martin Rural and the residents in the wider area of Devon face.

Changes for disposal of upholstered furniture- reminder

New environmental requirements will mean that from **Sunday December 1** we will only be able to dispose of their upholstered furniture at one of eight of our specially designated Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

It follows the introduction of new requirements from the Environment Agency which require our recycling centres to have segregated facilities to handle Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS). WUDS include sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, recliner chairs, upholstered kitchen and dining room chairs, upholstered garden furniture, stools and foot stools, office chairs, futons, bean bags, floor and sofa cushions.

These items contain large quantities of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs or forever chemicals) and other hazardous chemicals in the textiles and foam. These chemicals are often used as fire retardants; they persist in the environment, can accumulate in human and wildlife fatty tissues and can be harmful to health and the environment. All WUDS need to be sent for incineration separately where these chemicals are destroyed.

We are now required by the Environment Agency to ensure that all WUDS are segregated and transported separately from other waste. This segregation will require additional containers and facilities to be provided at HWRCs. However, due to space constraints, only a limited number of sites in Devon will be able to accept WUDS. This means that the majority of our recycling centres will not have the facilities to accept these items.

The HWRCs that will be able to accept Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating from Sunday December 1 2024 are: –

East Devon; Knowle Hill in Exmouth

Exeter; Pinbrook Road, Exeter

Mid Devon; Ashley, Tiverton

North Devon, Seven Brethren, Barnstaple

Torridge; Bideford

South Hams; Ivybridge

West Devon: Okehampton

Teignbridge: Brunel Road, Newton Abbot

WUDS cannot be accepted at any other Devon HWRC after December 1 and residents will need to ensure that they take their WUDS to a site that can accept them or book a bulky collection with their district council who will charge for the service.

To be very clear we will have to go to Barnstaple with any Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (upholstered furniture, chairs, sofas, floor cushions etc)

Super Saturdays

On Saturday 11th, 18th and 25th January 2025, single bus tickets across Devon and Torbay will be capped at £1!

The Super Saturday fare is available when boarding at any stop in Devon or Torbay.

This fare offers great value for both short and long journeys across the County. Here are some examples of the many longer journeys you could do for just £1:

- Exeter to Bideford on service 5B – a distance of 45 miles
- Ivybridge to Exeter on service 38 – a distance of 35 miles
- Okehampton to Holsworthy on service 6 – a distance of 20 miles
- Lynmouth to Barnstaple on service 309 / 310 – a distance of 20 miles
- Seaton to Exeter on service 9A – a distance of 20 miles
- Newton Abbot to Brixham on service 12 – a distance of 14 miles

Use our [Interactive Bus Map](#) to find out where buses go and the times they run.

Energy Efficiency support available

Householders who want to make their homes more energy efficient but are unsure of what steps to take next can get free impartial advice from trusted local experts at [Energy Saving Devon](#).

The Energy Saving Devon Advice Service provides personalised consultations, helping residents to make informed decisions about improving energy efficiency in their homes. This could include a free home visit from a local energy advisor to help you understand which energy saving measures are best suited to your home, advice on grants you may be eligible for as well as solutions to issues such as damp and mould, condensation or under heating.

Energy Saving Devon is a partnership of all the local authorities in Devon, local community energy organisations and other strategic partners, administered by Devon County Council. The Energy Saving Devon team will be able to advise you on the suitability of your home for measures such as insulation, energy efficient windows, heating and hot water systems and renewable energy systems like solar panels.

Retrofitting these measures can make your home warmer and more comfortable as well as providing healthier living conditions, lower energy costs and lower carbon emissions.

To find out more, or to book your free home visit, contact your local community energy organisation by phone or WhatsApp on 0800 999 1439, or email energysavingdevon@devon.gov.uk

Please beware of rogue traders who may approach you directly. You will never be asked to make an upfront payment by Energy Saving Devon. If in doubt, please contact the Energy Saving Devon advice line.

The DCC website is very useful for reporting highway problems and the reports go straight to the contractor.
[Report a problem - Roads and transport](#)

Alternatively, the highway contact number is 0345 155 1004

If it's a river flooding the environment agency can be contacted on 0345 988 1188

Winter road updates; <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/safe-travel/winter-travel/>

Travel Devon website; [home - Travel Devon](#)

Andrea Davis

County Councillor

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