

Environmental Health Neighbourhood Assessment



'Your environment and your health'

Lympstone

Autumn 2009



www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Environmental Health carried out a Neighbourhood Assessment in Lympstone at the end of October 2009. They worked in partnership with Exmouth Police and together carried out a door to door survey in the village as part of a district wide initiative to raise awareness about services available to residents.

The team also enquired whether residents had any comments about the Council's services they receive and whether they had any concerns or complaints about their neighbourhood. A Red Cross representative joined the team to offer a life saving course in the village. Residents were also encouraged to take up a free Police home security check and a fire prevention assessment.



▲ Officers from Environmental Health, Street Scene, Housing, the British Red Cross, Building Control and Devon and Cornwall Police working together.

An open surgery was held on the same day at the village hall, where Environmental Health Officers and Police were available all day to discuss local concerns with residents. The Council's REACT team were on hand to clean up any reported incidents of discarded litter and dog fouling around the village.

Over the last year the Environmental Health Service has dealt with around 38 cases in Lympstone including:

- Nine consultations on the environmental impact of proposed developments arising from both planning applications and building control applications
- Five investigations of alleged noise nuisance from music, four from barking dogs, one from a car alarm and one from an intruder alarm
- One complaint about dog fouling in a public area, two allegations about a neglected dog and one regarding a straying dog
- Three investigations about food premises and two food related enquiries
- Three food premises inspections carried out
- One health and safety fire enforcement consultation
- One alleged odour from a septic tank, one damp housing conditions, one public health concern about cats and one assistance with a disabled shower adaptation
- One request for a smoking exemption for the artistic integrity in a local theatre production
- Two licensing consultations, one referral concerning a spray booth and one bonfire complaint

During the Neighbourhood Assessment hundreds of properties were visited and 73 residents were interviewed.

Approximately **79%** of those spoken to said they were satisfied with the services they currently receive from EDDC, but the main areas of concern within the village were as follows.

Waste and recycling collection

A number of residents said they were dissatisfied with the current recycling collection and called for plastics and cardboard to be included in their recycling. Others said they were concerned about the prospect of fortnightly landfill collections. Weekly recycling collections were introduced to the east of the district in 2008. They have been very successful and have greatly increased the quantity of recycling. Phase five of the scheme will include Lypstone, and is planned to be introduced in November 2010.

There will be weekly recycling collections, which will then include the collection of food waste and plastic bottles. Landfill waste will then be collected fortnightly. New bins will be delivered to all householders in October 2010 and information literature will be distributed by the beginning of September 2010. A number of roadshow events will also be held during the first week of September 2010 to answer any queries or concerns.

Some residents said they thought the Council should take garden waste as part of their normal collection. Several residents said how fortunate they felt to have Lypstone garden composting service provided by volunteers in the village. SITA also offer a garden waste collection service. They will deliver five green garden sacks at a cost of £6, which can be used when required. Once full, these sacks can be placed out with the regular refuse collection.

As an alternative, StreetScene can provide home composting advice.



Full details of all collection days can be obtained at any time on the Council's website at www.eastdevon.gov.uk/my_neighbourhood, or for any concerns about your refuse and recycling, please call Street Scene on **01395 517528**.

Dogs

Many residents reported dog fouling as a problem within the village. The worst affected areas highlighted were the boat yard area, Candy's Field, the rear of the car park and the public footpaths. There were a few complaints about dog barking and the dog warden has been asked to visit one property to discuss this problem with the owner. This investigation is ongoing. There were calls for more dog wardens to visit the village regularly and frustration about dog owners who throw bags of dog excrement in hedges and trees.

All complaints have been logged to the Council's Enforcement Officer, who has visited the village on several occasions in plain clothes and spoken to dog walkers. EDDC introduced new Dog Control Orders on 1 October 2009. It is now an offence for any person in control of a dog to fail to immediately remove the faeces, on all land to which the public have access. The only exception is Forestry Commission land.

Anyone who witnesses dog fouling in a public place is asked to report this to the Enforcement Officer. The dog's owner will be contacted and a Fixed Penalty Notice with a fine of £80 may be issued for a first offence. Further offences, or failure to pay the fine, could result in a fine of up to £1000.

Please call Environmental Health on **01395 517457** to confidentially discuss any dog related concerns.

Speeding and parking

Many people were concerned about cyclists speeding through the village and some said the traffic had increased since the cycle path opened. There were calls for the police to enforce speed limits, especially for cyclists. Some people suggested the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit, others felt bikes should be forced to have bells fitted for the safety of all road users, as several residents said they had witnessed near-misses involving bicycles.

The police have noted the complaints about speeding. They confirmed they will be attending the village with their Speed Indication Device to try and establish the extent of the problem. New bikes are now always sold with a bell and the police encourage cyclists to use their bells whenever pedestrians and other cyclists are around. This is also covered in the cycle training that the police offer through local primary schools.

The police ask that residents who wish to raise any issues with them should contact them via their PACT group. Meeting dates and minutes are displayed on Parish Noticeboards.

They also asked residents to report all incidents regarding cyclists, in writing, to Paul Wilson at Devon County Council Highways, Little Moor House, Falcon Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter EX2 7PL. This will help them to identify any potential problem areas.

A small number of people said they were concerned about dangerous parking in the village and there were reports of parking on double yellow lines at the junction of Cox Hill and Quay Lane.



Planning

Numerous people said they were unhappy about a possible new development at Courtlands. The concerns were mostly about the effect two hundred new properties could have on the village, and that it could result in Lympstone being effectively joined-up with Exmouth.

The concerns were passed to EDDC's planning section who confirmed there is no planning application in at present for this development, and that they are already aware of local objections on this proposal. At the present time the developers are carrying out pre-application consultations with the local community.



Planning also confirmed that if a formal planning application is received, they will notify those local residents who live immediately adjoining the site, as well as putting notices in the local newspaper and on site. There will then be the opportunity for people to write in with their objections if they wish.

The question was raised about Jackson Meadow and whether it has been formally adopted yet and who is responsible for cleaning it. Devon County Highways confirmed that this road has not yet been adopted and it is unlikely to be adopted for another year. The owner or developer of the road is responsible for cleaning it until that time.

The British Red Cross

The British Red Cross are helping communities to help themselves by coaching and mentoring First Aid Educators to spread the knowledge within their own communities.



Some residents expressed a wish to see lighting installed in Candy's Field. The Parish Council confirmed that the lighting columns have now been installed, but they are still waiting for Western Power to make the connections to the electricity supply. There were plans to carry out this work as soon as the wet weather allows.

During the survey the Red Cross representative asked residents whether they would consider attending a first aid course in the village, and around 27 residents expressed an interest. They will now organise a first aid training course in Lypstone. This training may also include the new REDiPlan home emergency planning session, which helps people to plan ahead for emergencies.

First aid tip for burns

In minor burns cases, cool immediately with cold running water or harmless liquid. Do not touch the burn or apply lotions. Dress the burn loosely if needed, cling film is excellent. Seek medical aid if burn is larger than one inch.

If you are interested in taking part in a life saving course, please call Suzi White on **01823 273712** for further details.



Street Lighting

One partially sighted resident was very concerned about their personal safety when arriving in Lypstone by public transport late at night after the street lights have been turned off. They asked whether they could remain on until 12.30am to assist them when walking back home in the dark. This matter was referred to Devon County Council for their consideration, who confirmed they were planning to turn all the street lights in the village off at 11.55 pm in the near future. They have now reconsidered their decision and have suggested they may be able to leave the lights on until 12.30 am. The matter is now to be discussed further with Lypstone Parish Council to ensure their views are considered before a final decision is made.

Energy Action Devon/Cosy Devon

Residents were offered information relating to the grants available for energy efficiency measures and eighteen residents were given further details. The Cosy Devon scheme offers free or greatly discounted loft and cavity wall insulation to all homeowners and private tenants. If you would like more information or a free, no obligation survey, call **0800 512 012** to speak to an advisor at Energy Action Devon.

Bonfires

Regular bonfires can cause nuisance to neighbours. A small number of people in the village said they were bothered by smoky bonfires at inappropriate times.

If you do plan to have a bonfire, please ensure only small amounts of dry material are burnt, and do not light a fire when the wind is likely to carry the smoke over roads and other people's property. Remember to warn your neighbours, as smoke can be an irritation and harmful to people with chest or heart problems. Bonfires can be dangerous and should never be left unattended. If you wish to discuss a problem about a bonfire, or for more advice, please call Environmental Health on **01395 517457**.



Building Control

The Council's Building Control Officers ensure the safety of people in and around buildings and are involved in both new work, and where existing structures pose a danger to the public. They are contactable in an emergency 24 hours a day.

During the Neighbourhood Assessment residents were asked whether they had any concerns about building works or possible dangerous structures in the village and there were no reported concerns. If you wish to speak to an Officer about building works or structures in the area please call Building Control on **01395 517482**.

Litter

Most people felt the village was free from litter and in good condition, however a few highlighted a litter problem in areas such as the path near Candy's Field, Underhill Crescent and Church Path. There was also praise given to the local Women's Institute who, it was said, carry out a monthly litter clean up. There were calls for the roads to be swept more frequently, especially around the shops in the centre of the village. Some people said they were annoyed by neighbours who frequently feed the seagulls. Residents are asked not to feed seagulls, as this encourages the birds into the residential area causing nuisance from fouling and noise.



Housing

A local authority tenant enquired about the possibility of a house swap. Anyone who wishes to swap their council property will now have to register their application online by logging on to the Devon Home Choice website at www.devonhomechoice.co.uk as paper applications are no longer being accepted by EDDC. Alternatively a tenant can register with the mutual exchange register at www.councilchangesite.co.uk, or visit Homeswapper at

www.homeswapper.co.uk, or place an advert in their local shop for a mutual exchange.



A resident reported having trouble managing the bath and shower with their disabled relative and was concerned about their home insulation. A Housing Officer has been in contact to discuss their current insulation and they have been referred to

Cosy Devon to discuss which grants are available. They were also referred to Devon Care and Repair for assistance with the bathing requirements and, if eligible, will be given help with a bathroom adaptation.

A lady who was worried about her elderly boiler has been referred to Heat Devon for advice and, if eligible, may be entitled to financial assistance towards a replacement energy efficient boiler. A referral has been logged for a Council tenant who requested safety grab handles on her bath. An Officer will be visiting the tenant shortly.



Crime and anti social behaviour

50 out of the 73 residents interviewed confirmed that they knew who their neighbourhood beat Police team were and were aware of the PACT panel. Many praised their PCSO, who was Sarah Trahurn at the time, for her work and high visibility.



There were a few concerns about graffiti and minor vandalism in the village. The information signs on the cycle path had recently been defaced with graffiti. The cycle path signs and information map were cleaned by StreetScene's REACT team. However, the graffiti on the large wall design needed specialist cleaning to avoid further damage. Police were looking into who was responsible for the graffiti.

A few residents said they were bothered by noise at times from Candy's Field Play Park and there were some reports of bullying. Some also expressed a wish to see a greater police presence in the village, especially at weekends and evenings.

Residents were offered a free home security check by the police, and eleven people requested this service. Exmouth Police will carry out the checks and give security advice.

Home Safeguard

Details of the Council's Home Safeguard scheme were distributed to eligible residents. This 24 hour personal emergency response service is based in Sidmouth and is available to anyone who needs to summon help urgently, such as vulnerable or housebound individuals. It allows residents to call for help and be immediately linked to staff in Sidmouth who will discuss any problems and call relatives or emergency services if necessary. If you would like to know more about the Home Safeguard service, please call **01395 519739** for further details. Or visit www.eastdevon.gov.uk/homesafeguard.

Fire Safety

During the door to door survey residents were offered a free home safety visit by Devon and Somerset Fire Service, and eleven householders took up this offer. This service is available to anyone who wishes to improve fire safety within their home. A Fire Officer will visit the property to carry out a short assessment, give advice and may be able to supply a battery smoke detector.

If you would like to request a free fire safety visit, please call Freephone **0800 7311 822** or text Info Line on **07800 002 476**.



Details of the Care and Repair scheme were discussed with residents. This home improvement agency can offer advice, support and help to the over 60s and people with disabilities. They can make home visits to assess the need for repairs, improvements or adaptations.



Care and Repair also offer a 'handyperson scheme' which provides assistance with an assortment of small repairs around the home, whilst ensuring that work is done professionally and at a reasonable cost. Many residents said they were unaware of this scheme and information leaflets were requested by twelve residents in the village. For further details about assistance from Care and Repair, please call **01395 514790**.

Miscellaneous

There were concerns about the general poor hygiene and cleanliness in a cafe in Exmouth. An Environmental Health Officer has now carried out an inspection of the premises and is satisfied with the standards of cleanliness found.

Concerns were raised about the repairing of vehicles on the road. This is an ongoing complaint, which is already being dealt with by Environmental Health, as it is an offence to carry out repairs to vehicles on the road. The situation is now being monitored.

Some residents said they felt there were too many holiday homes in the village. Others said they felt too remote from EDDC and were concerned about the regeneration in Exmouth.



Many said how concerned they were that Lypstone may be joined to Exmouth in the future.

A resident asked whether there is an Environmental Trust Scheme regarding landfill sites in the area.

This scheme is run by the operator of the site, which is Viridor. Viridor Credits distribute some of the money that they would otherwise pay as Landfill Tax on rubbish it disposes of at its landfill sites. For more information about the scheme please visit www.viridor-credits.co.uk/?contentId=18 or call **01823 624 656**.



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How to get in touch

If you have further comments on the neighbourhood assessment please call Debbie Challice or Andrew Ennis on **01395 517457** or email dchallice@eastdevon.gov.uk.

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