

Council news round-up March/April 2008



This news round-up is being sent to all Town and Parish Councils. You may wish to include these highlighted topics in your parish magazines. For more detailed information, you can go straight to the Council web site for agendas, reports and minutes by following this link – http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/index/your_council/committee_minutes_and_agendas.htm

Communities Power Pack

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/743378>

This Power Pack has been created by Communities and Local Government with the help of **Involve** to aid local groups organise and facilitate discussions on the topic of empowerment. Your feedback will be used by Communities and Local Government to inform and shape empowerment activities, including the Empowerment White Paper (due to be published in Summer 2008). The pack (see web link above) contains suggestions for the format of the meeting, advice for facilitators and organisers as well as detailed information about key empowerment issues.

Involve (www.involve.org.uk) is a not-for-profit and non-partisan organisation which exists to put people at the heart of decision-making. It believes that better public participation can help solve some of the UK's most pressing challenges and lead to the genuine empowerment of people.

The Government is committed to involving and empowering ordinary citizens. Now the Government wants suggestions on how it can make this commitment a reality through the Empowerment White Paper. It is seeking feedback from you.

- What kind of democracy do we want to live in?
- How much power should central government have and on what issues?
- How much power should local government have and on what issues?
- How much power should local communities have and on what issues?
- Which decisions should be made locally.

The pack will help you to gather and discussion comments and suggestions on empowerment.

Public Speaking at Committee and Council meetings

The Council is looking at how to introduce public speaking at its meetings. The Council's constitution will be amended at the annual meeting of the Council on 14 May 2008 to enable this to happen. The intention is to introduce this arrangement to all Committees. (The arrangements for public speaking at Development Control Committees have yet to be agreed but will be introduced at the earliest possible opportunity).

Home owners' handbook

(Graham Symington – Housing Asset and Business Development Officer – 01395 516551)

A new hand book for Council leaseholders and tenants has recently been issued by the Council. The booklet provides leaseholders of Council domestic properties with useful information about their lease, the property they live in and the services provided by the Council as the freeholder. The handbook was in response to suggestions from customers and a number of leaseholders were involved in its development.

Concessionary bus fares scheme – thank you to parish and town councils

(Enquiries to buspass@eastdevon.gov.uk or phone 01395 571500)

Over 29,000 passes were sent out to residents before the start date for the national free bus fare scheme, which came into effect this year on Tuesday 1 April. The Council is proud of this achievement which received a great deal of positive publicity. It would not have been possible without the hard work and support of the local parish and town councils, who helped publicise the new scheme. Without this help, those residents who were eligible for passes might not have been aware that they could benefit from the scheme. By displaying the posters, local councils helped to attract applicants to the scheme whilst helping to get the message across that existing pass holders did not need to reapply.

As you know, EDDC has also led the way and added two further improvements to the scheme. Companions are included on the passes for eligible disabled residents, to enable them to be accompanied, free, by a carer or relative whilst they are travelling and we have also extended the hours of use for our residents so that they may travel from 9.00 am to 12.00 midnight Monday to Friday and all day weekends and Bank Holidays.

Thank you to all of you who helped with this exercise. We do hope you will continue to publicise the scheme to residents who you think might be eligible. If you need any more posters or leaflets, please contact us.

Local Government Re-organisation – EDDC proposes 4 unitary councils in Devon (Mark Williams, Chief Executive, 01395 517408 www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

The Council looked at all options for re-organisation and consulted with local people. The preferred option submitted to the Boundary Committee was for four unitary authorities in Devon. It was felt that this option could transform local government for the benefit of Devon citizens, the businesses located here and the partners (including central government) with whom local authorities work.

The four unitary authorities proposed would be:

- ❑ Exeter/Eastern Devon with a population in the order of 300,000
- ❑ Barnstaple/Northern Devon with a population of 240,000
- ❑ Plymouth/Western Devon with a population of 310,000 (taking in Tavistock and Ivybridge)
- ❑ Torbay/South Devon with a population of 275,000

These unitary authorities would reflect travel to work areas for Barnstaple, Exeter, Torbay and Plymouth.

Between 14 April and 4 July, the Boundary Committee will consider the initial ideas (concepts) for unitary local government in Devon that have been submitted by the 11 existing councils and will seek information from those authorities and other stakeholders. On or around 7 July, the Boundary Committee is expected to publish its draft proposals for consultation through to 26 September. After this period of consultation and consideration of the submissions, the Boundary Committee will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government in December. The Chief Executive would be happy to attend meetings of towns and parishes to discuss the matter in more detail.

Bargain compost bins

(Enquiries to www.recyclenow.com/compost or phone 0845 077 0757 quoting reference HCA2)

EDDC has joined up with the Recycle Now Home Composting Campaign (a not-for-profit scheme backed by government) to encourage people to reduce the amount of organic waste they send to landfill. Compost bins are available at low prices because the campaign means that bins can be bought in large quantities direct from manufacturers. A standard size black compost bin (330L) can be purchased for only £20.00 (compared with the regular price of £50.00). Free home delivery. Other sizes are available.

New recycling service being rolled out to parts of East Devon

The first phase in a major change to household recycling and waste collections in East Devon starts on 2 June – which appropriately enough is the start of Recycle Now Week.

Collection days across the district will be changing as EDDC prepares to launch an upgraded recycling service to include weekly collections of kitchen food waste from homes later this summer. Waste and recycling collections will both happen on the same weekday.

From the week beginning Monday 2 June, most homes throughout East Devon will find that their day for collections has changed. That change, once made, will stay constant over the coming years, as recycling and waste collection improvements are phased in across the district.

Leaflets are being delivered to every home in East Devon during May, so that residents are fully prepared for their waste and recycling bins to be collected on a different weekday than before. In a few cases, the day may stay the same as before, but for the vast majority of households the bin and/or recycling collection will move. Leaflets will indicate which weekday applies to each locality.

The change in collection days is designed to make things run more smoothly when SITA, the contractor collecting waste and recycling from East Devon homes, starts operating the additional collections in Axminster, Beer and Seaton, plus the rural areas nearby, as part of Phase One.

Phase Two, in an area still to be decided, will start early in 2009.

Every home in Phase One will be issued with a new food waste bin and a wheeled bin for other household refuse in July. Householders will continue to use the existing lidded green boxes for their recycling materials which will now include plastic bottles. Collections of food waste and recycling will be made weekly. Collections of non-food and non-recyclable waste from wheeled bins will be fortnightly.

An information road-show will be visiting the towns and villages that are part of the Phase One improvement area during the first week of June (see table below).

Date and Time	Town	What's on offer	Venue
2 June 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Axminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer in Tesco Car Park, Axminster
3 June 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Seaton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer in Co-op Car Park, Seaton
5 June 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.	Beer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer in Town Car Park, Beer
5 June 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Colyton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer in Village Hall Car Park, Colyton
6 June 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.	Musbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer at Village Hall, Musbury
6 June 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	Uplyme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual display of leaflets and equipment Staff on hand to answer questions Ward Members in support 	Trailer in Uplyme Village Hall

More information is available on the EDDC website at: <http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/refuse.htm>

There is also a telephone helpline: **01395 571 515**

Members of EDDC's StreetScene team will also be available to speak to or visit residents who have any concerns about the new system, or perhaps have special needs.

Changes in parking enforcement in East Devon

With effect from 5 May 2008, responsibility for parking enforcement (on the highway and in off-street areas) was transferred from the Devon and Cornwall Police to Devon County Council. District Councils (including East Devon) are now handling the day-to-day work on behalf of the County Council. Police officers will still deal with dangerous parking, obstruction and other more serious matters. The intention of the change of responsibility is to enable the Police to tackle more serious crimes. The change will see the introduction of a fairer penalty system. More serious contraventions, such as parking on double yellow lines, will be penalised by a higher band of fines, whilst a lower band will apply for lesser contraventions such as motorists overstaying their parking time. The aim will be to address traffic congestion and improve road safety. Income from Penalty Charges will be re-invested in the provision of the service and any surplus will be spent on transport schemes.

Active Devon

www.activedevon.org

You are recommended to log into this site to find out about physical activity and sport in Devon. Information includes coaches, clubs, latest events, news, activities and venues. We are encouraging sport and activities clubs and organisations to register.