

# Environmental Health neighbourhood assessment



## Upton Pyne Winter 2008/09



[www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)

“ I feel very fortunate to live in this lovely village

“ my neighbours are wonderful

“ I can't imagine living anywhere else

Environmental Health organised a neighbourhood survey in the village of Upton Pyne on 30 October 2008. Officers carried out a door to door survey to enquire whether residents had any comments about the Council's services, and whether they had any concerns or complaints about their neighbourhood. They also offered advice and information about other facilities available including crime and fire prevention, energy efficiency, small repairs assistance and emergency help.



The survey was intended to be carried out in partnership with the local Police and Fire Services. However, the assessment coincided with the severe floods and storms in Ottery St Mary and all emergency service officers were redeployed to assist there.

Every property in the village centre was visited and contact cards left where there was no reply. All the residents interviewed confirmed they enjoyed living in Upton Pyne and many said how fortunate they felt to live in the area. However some residents did have concerns and the main issues were as follows.

## Waste and recycling

Several people requested an increase in the frequency of their recycling collections and many asked for plastics to be included.

Weekly recycling collections were introduced to 12,000 homes in the east of the district earlier this year and this is scheduled to be extended to all homes over the next two years. Plastic bottles and food waste will then be included in the collection.



One resident was unable to remove her garden waste and requested assistance.

Details have been sent providing information about using SITA's 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.

Following a request during the survey, a replacement recycling bin has been provided to a resident in Glebe Close. The question of where to recycle plastic bags was raised, and at the present time they can only be taken to the large supermarkets as East Devon District Council are not currently able to recycle them. Reusable bags are recommended where possible and most supermarkets now sell bags for life.

## Dog fouling

There were a small number of complaints relating to dog fouling in the village. Areas reported as the worst affected were the grass verge adjacent to Glebe Close and Orchard Close, and the footpath to Bramford Speke.

The Council's Enforcement Officer has been visiting the area and will continue to carry out patrols at various intervals. Anyone who witnesses dog fouling can report the offence to EDDC on **01395 517457**.

The offender can be prosecuted, which could lead to a fine of up to £1,000, or they may be offered a fixed penalty, which is currently £50. The Council are in the process of introducing a Dog Control Order, which will make it an offence to allow a dog to foul any land to which the public have access and increase the fixed penalty to £80. More information on the Dog Control Orders can be obtained on the website at [www.eastdevon.gov.uk/dog\\_wardens](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/dog_wardens).



Installing a dog bin in the village was suggested by many in an effort to alleviate the problem. The Parish Council will be considering the cost of this option in the future.



## Public transport

Carmel coaches currently operate one return bus service per day from the village into Exeter. Several residents expressed a wish for an increase to this service. It was felt this would have the benefits of reducing congestion and emissions in Exeter whilst saving costs on car parking charges. A spokesman for Devon County Council said there are no current plans to increase the frequency of this bus service, due to funding costs. However, they said they would consider increasing the service when future funding is available if they received a formal request from the Parish Council.

## Litter

Discarded litter in hedges and on footpaths around the village was raised by a small number of residents. All areas of complaint were passed to StreetScene and their REACT team carried out a deep clean of the village on 10 December. The overgrown hedges on the main road near the village hall were considered a nuisance and a request was logged with Devon County Council to cut these back. A representative of Devon County Council has visited the area and the hedges have been cut.

## Rats

Numerous people reported sightings of rats around their properties. However the majority of residents felt this was inevitable in a rural farming community and were not unduly concerned.

Rats can pose a health risk to humans and carry diseases including; Salmonella, Weil's disease (Leptospirosis) and E.coli. The typical signs of a rat infestation around the home are:

- scratching noises, droppings and a distinctive odour
- damage to wood, plastic and cables
- ripped food packaging
- nests in warm hidden places using shredded material

- burrows in gardens, compost heaps, under sheds and decking.



To discourage rats from your property ensure bird feeders are secure and any spilt seed or nuts removed. Cooked food should not be added to compost heaps and it is advisable to use a secure refuse container with a lid.

If you are concerned about rats around your property, the Council offers a pest control service through Rentokil at a reduced cost of £23.50 per treatment. Please call **01395 571517** to request a visit or discuss any problems in your area.

# Energy efficiency

**Complementary low energy light bulbs were distributed to around 40 householders and all residents were asked about their heating methods and insulation.**

22% of residents felt they required additional loft insulation whilst 94% of properties visited were double glazed and 74% had gas central heating.

The Council has recently announced the launch of Devon Warm Zones, a three-year project that aims to help households across the region cut their fuel bills, reduce carbon emissions and improve their health, through the use of energy efficiency measures.

Delivered by Westcountry Energy Action, who are working with E.ON, one of the UK's leading power and gas companies, the programme will begin in the Exmouth area and roll out to the rest of East Devon in 2009.



The programme aims to raise awareness of the grants and discounts on energy efficiency products and services available to households across East Devon, as well as giving advice to help people to reduce their energy consumption. It is hoped that with this advice and support households could be helped to reduce their energy bills by up to 30%.

More information about the Devon Warm Zones scheme is available at [www.devonwarmzones.org.uk](http://www.devonwarmzones.org.uk) or from the Devon Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on Freephone **0800 512012** or at [www.devon-energy-advice.co.uk](http://www.devon-energy-advice.co.uk).



**Would you like to know more?**

For more information call Warm Zones free on **0800 512 012** or visit the website at [www.devonwarmzones.org.uk](http://www.devonwarmzones.org.uk).

## Crime and security

Almost every resident said they felt extremely safe in Upton Pyne and many said how caring their neighbours were. There were a few minor incidents reported of crime and antisocial behaviour in the village and one resident had experienced a break-in to a vehicle parked outside his property. The full details of all complaints were forwarded to the Police.

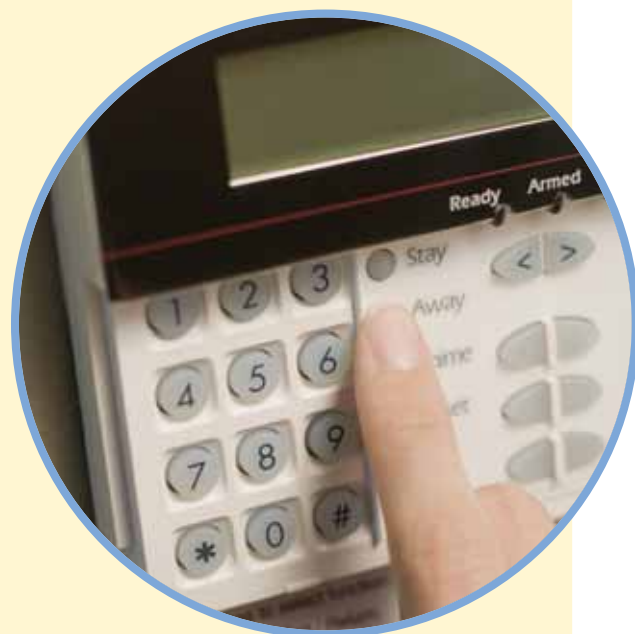
Householders were offered a Police home security check and anyone who requested this service will be contacted by the local Police. If you would like to obtain this service now, please telephone **01395 571570** for more information.



## Home security advice

**The following actions will help to improve the security around your home.**

- ✓ Fit mortise locks to all front and back doors and locks to all downstairs windows.
- ✓ Keep your house and car keys safe and away from doors and windows.
- ✓ Fit a professionally installed burglar alarm.
- ✓ Keep garage and garden sheds locked with security locks and keep any tools secure and out of sight.
- ✓ If you are replacing doors or windows, ensure they are certified to British Standard BS7950 (windows) or PAS 24-1 (doors).
- ✓ Trim back any plants or hedges that a burglar could hide behind.
- ✓ Don't leave curtains closed during the daytime.
- ✓ Use timer switches to turn on some lights when you are away.



## Play park

There was a request for a toddler swing to be installed in the local play park in Glebe Close thereby enabling younger children to use the park, as there are currently only two swings for older children. Following discussions with the Parish Council and Housing Officers, StreetScene considered the various options to determine whether it would be possible to install additional toddler swings. A decision has now been made to install two additional toddler swings and it is hoped this work will be carried out in the near future to improve the play facilities within the village for pre-school children.



The type of additional toddler swings to be installed shortly

## Fire safety

93% of householders interviewed confirmed that they had a working smoke detector. Details of a free home fire safety visit by Devon & Somerset Fire Service were distributed and a number of householders requested assistance and advice. The home visit 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 and may be able to supply a smoke detector. If you would like to request a home safety visit please call Freephone **0800 7377 288** or text Info Line on **07800 002476**.



## General Fire Safety Advice

- ✓ Maintain smoke alarms, change batteries annually and test weekly.
- ✓ Do not leave candles and tea lights unattended.
- ✓ Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- ✓ Switch off and unplug electrical appliances last thing at night.
- ✓ Do not leave washing machine, tumble dryers and dishwashers on at night.
- ✓ Close inside doors to slow down the spread of fire.
- ✓ Turn heaters off and put up fire guards last thing at night.
- ✓ Plan an escape route for all the family and keep exits clear.
- ✓ If a fire starts, keep low where the air is clearer and get out without rescuing valuables and stay out. Call **999** as soon as you are clear of the building.

## Speeding traffic

Many residents expressed concern about speeding vehicles travelling through the village and in the surrounding lanes, and some felt a 20 mph speed restriction should be introduced. All concerns and comments were referred to the Police who confirmed that they are in the process of negotiations with the Parish Council and Partner Agencies concerning this issue. It is now hoped that a 20 mph speed limit will be introduced in the early part of 2009 through the village.



## Housing complaints

A small number of housing concerns were raised by the residents of Glebe Close. One tenant reported cracks to internal walls and ceilings and an inspection will be carried out to assess any problem. There were also several enquiries relating to the installation of replacement front doors. Tenants will be visited to assess their needs as the Council is



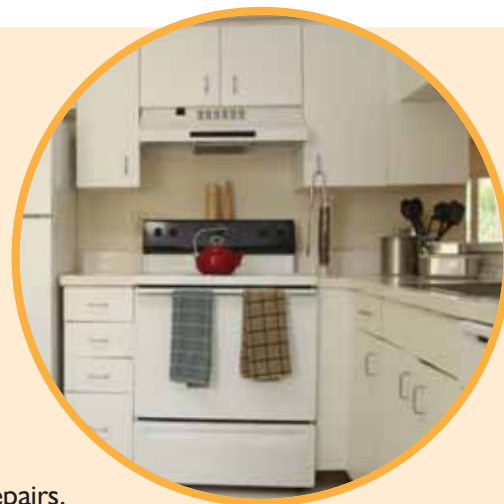
currently implementing a programme to replace front doors across the district. The properties in Glebe Close, which were built in 1965, are part of this ongoing programme which is expected to continue throughout the next few years. Any other specific complaints have been referred to the appropriate Officer, who will be contacting householders individually.

**Devon  
Care &  
Repair**

Home Improvement Agency

Details of the Care and Repair scheme were distributed to residents during the neighbourhood assessment. This home improvement agency can offer advice, support and help to the Over 60s and people with disabilities. They also offer a 'handyperson scheme' which provides assistance with small repairs, whilst ensuring that work is done properly and at a reasonable cost.

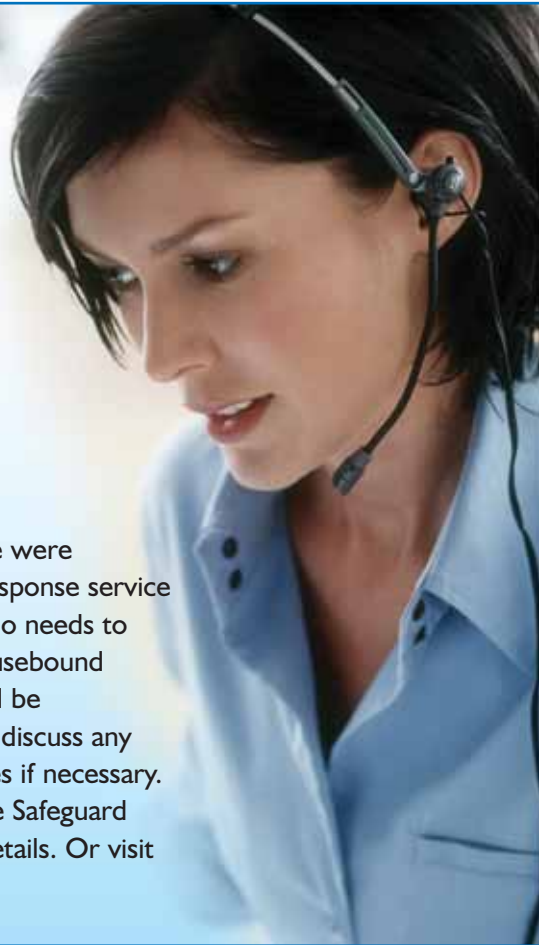
Many residents were unaware of the handyperson scheme which can help with an assortment of small repairs around the house. Details of the schemes were distributed and two elderly residents requested security chains to their front doors. For more information please call **01395 514790**.





## Help and peace of mind

Details of the Council's Home Safeguard scheme were distributed. This 24 hour personal emergency response service is based in Sidmouth. It 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](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/homesafeguard).



*The friendly neighbours and great community spirit all help to make Upton Pyne a good place to live*

## 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](mailto:dchallice@eastdevon.gov.uk).

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