

Environmental Health Neighbourhood Assessment



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'YOUR ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR HEALTH'

Clyst St Mary

Autumn 2010



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East Devon District Council's Environmental Health Service organised a Neighbourhood Assessment at Clyst St Mary in September 2010. They worked in partnership with the police, and together carried out a door-to-door survey in the village.

This is part of a district-wide initiative to raise awareness about many of the services available to residents.

Residents were asked whether they had any comments about Council services they receive and whether they wished to raise any concerns or complaints about their neighbourhood. They were offered a home security check by the police and fire safety advice. They were also asked if they wished to attend a free life saving course organised by The British Red Cross in the future.

A drop-in surgery was held on the same day in The Half Moon Inn. An Environmental Health Officer was available all day to discuss local concerns with residents and to offer advice about the grants and assistance available.

Officers visited around 200 properties in the village on the day and approximately sixty-five residents were interviewed and completed the survey. Sixty-five per cent of those spoken to said they were satisfied with the services they currently received from EDDC, and the main areas of concern within the village were as follows.



*Parking Enforcement Officers and PCSO
discussing parking issues in the village*

Over the past year the Environmental Health Service has dealt with over fifty requests for service in Clyst St Mary including:

- two pest control complaints concerning rats
- ten consultations on the environmental impact of proposed planning applications and building control
- seven noise complaints and two barking dog complaints
- one fly tip investigation
- seven food premises concerns
- two pet animal and riding licence inspection
- two health and safety and two accident reports
- three dog fouling complaints
- four contaminated land enquiries
- three dairy farm consultations
- three odour and three dust complaints
- seven housing concerns and complaints

Dogs

Residents' views on dogs and dog fouling were many and varied, the most frequent complaint being that some dog walkers failed to clear up after their dogs on the Old Bridge and footpaths in the adjoining field. The fields leading from the Old Bridge are private property, and dog faeces are frequently left on the grass where cows graze. Dog walkers are reminded to pick up after their dogs on all land or face a fine of £80. A dog bin is provided at the beginning of the bridge but some dog walkers still fail to clear up after their animals.

A few residents complained that there were insufficient dog waste bins and dog exercise areas in the village generally. Additional dog bins can be provided by EDDC if requested and funded by the Parish Council. The Council currently has 351 dog bins across the district. They are emptied three times a week and 270 tons of dog excrement is collected each year from them.

The Dog Warden and Enforcement Officers have been visiting the village at various times of the day and concentrating on the Old Bridge area. Fixed penalty tickets of £80 will be issued to anyone witnessed not clearing up after their dog. It is an offence for any person in control of a dog to fail to clear up after it on all land to which the public have access. The only exception is Forestry Commission land.

Several residents said they were bothered by a barking dog left out alone in a yard for long periods. The Dog Warden has visited the property to give

advice to the owner about reducing nuisance barking. One resident was concerned about dogs generally being out of control in public areas.

If you witness any person failing to clear up after their dog, you may call Environmental Health on 01395 516551, who will contact the owner and may issue a fixed penalty ticket of £80.



Waste and recycling

A large number of residents said they wished their recycling collection included plastics and cardboard and was collected more frequently.

A new recycling scheme is planned to be introduced to Clyst St Mary in November 2010. This will include weekly recycling collections, adding plastic bottles and introducing separate food waste collections. New bins will be issued to all householders and the wheeled landfill bin will then be collected fortnightly.

One resident said she did not have a recycling bin and a new bin has now been delivered to her. The current trucks do not have the capacity to take cardboard and residents are advised to either take it to the recycling centre, use the landfill bin or home compost it.

Some garden waste can be taken by the refuse collectors. Residents may purchase five plastic garden waste bags at a cost of £6.93 from StreetScene. These can then be left out with other bins and collected with normal waste collections.

You can contact StreetScene on 01395 517528 or visit the Council's website at www.eastdevon.gov.uk for details of collection days.



Traffic and parking

Numerous people raised their concerns about vehicles parked on double yellow lines around the Post Office. The Parish Council, police and DCC Highways have designated clear parking areas and recently increased the double yellow lines outside the shop.

There were also complaints concerning the parking by some parents at school time. The Head teacher advises parents to use the village hall car park and Donna Baker, the local PCSO, has requested another reminder to go out to parents.



Parking enforcement is now the responsibility of EDDC and Enforcement Officers have visited the village several times in recent weeks and fixed penalty tickets have been issued. They will now continue to include this area in their patrols at various times of the day. The police also issued a fixed penalty ticket to a vehicle parked in Manor Park which was not displaying a valid tax disc.

It was reported by many that motorists from the A3052 used the Village Road as a shortcut and called for traffic calming in this area. A spokesman from DCC Highways said they had previously monitored traffic in this road and no vehicles were seen taking a short cut at the time. They therefore agreed not to take further action.

There were also concerns about speeding traffic in Village Road and DCC Highways took measurements in this area earlier this year. The results showed an average of 19 mph in both directions. However, they have now agreed for a full ten day survey to be carried out in the future.

There was a call for a kerbside railing across Sidmouth Road by White Lodge. A previous request for railings at this location was refused by DCC and EDDC as White Lodge is a Grade 2 listed building. Therefore railings will not be installed in this location.

It was suggested that an interactive sign should be installed on the A3052 at the Cat and Fiddle. A full report on the speed limit and use of interactive signs will be put before the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee at a meeting on 1 November 2010.

Police concerns

The majority of residents said they were not affected by crime and anti-social behaviour in the village. However a small minority had some concerns about theft from gardens and antisocial behaviour at times.

The police offered a free home security check and the householders who requested this service have been contacted and appointments made by the PCSO.

Some people said they were concerned about possible drug use in an area of the village, this is now being monitored by the police.

A request for more frequent police presence in the evenings has been passed to the neighbourhood beat manager and a resident has been warned by the police about a potentially dangerous incident that was reported involving the safety of a child.



Building Control

Residents were asked if they had any concerns about dangerous structures, buildings or ongoing works in the area.

Seventeen people said they were concerned about falling tiles and plaster from a property called Bridge House on the corner of Frog Lane. Many said they had witnessed falling debris onto the pavement, which could have easily landed on passers-by. Building Control carried out an inspection of the property and subsequently served a Section 77 Dangerous Structure Notice on the owner requiring works to be carried out to secure the structure.



One resident asked for sound proofing advice, as recent renovation work carried out by their neighbour resulted in a noise issue through the party wall.

If you wish to speak to an Officer about any building works or structures in the area, please call Building Control on 01395 517482.

Pests

The owner of a property in Winslade Park was disturbed by a noise at 3 am when he entered the kitchen and found a fox sitting on the worktop looking back at him. The fox had climbed through a small window, seven feet off the ground. The animal then jumped back out of the window and made a hasty retreat.

A small number of residents reported seeing rats in the area. East Devon District Council



operate a pest control service for rats in residential properties. This service is provided on the Council's behalf by Rentokil.

Many types of pest can be treated and the treatment for rats is available for domestic properties at a subsidised rate.

Rats require a food source, water and shelter. To reduce the likelihood of rats on your property, do not add cooked food to compost heaps. If you wish to feed the birds, use high suspended bird feeders with seeds and nuts, clear up any spillage daily and do not use bread or food scraps. Clear any overgrown areas and check for holes and runs under sheds and around fences.

To request a treatment please call EDDC's switchboard on 01392 516551 or to discuss any pest problems in your area, please call Environmental Health on 01395 517457.

Gypsies and Travellers

Several people raised their concerns about gypsies and travellers who set up within the village in the summer. Some felt it had taken too long to move the travellers from a camp set up on Parish Council land at the rear of the village hall.

There were a number of complaints suggesting that the Parish Council may have been given poor advice by the police. A police spokesman has confirmed that on Monday 13 August representatives from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary attended the Bishops Clyst Parish Council meeting to discuss the recent traveller incursion and answered concerns from the local

community. Clearly this still remain an issue for some local people and their concerns have been passed to the police for their consideration.

Bonfires

Frequent smoky bonfires were said to be causing annoyance to a small number of residents. There is no restriction on what time of day a resident may have a bonfire to burn small amounts of dry, garden waste at a domestic property, but they should not cause a nuisance to their neighbours.

If you plan to have a bonfire, please ensure only small amounts of dry material are burnt. Do not light a fire when the wind is likely to carry the smoke over roads and other people's property. It is advisable to warn neighbours beforehand to give them the opportunity to close windows and remove washing. It is preferable to take waste to recycling centres or compost it. Plastics, rubber and building materials should not be burnt.

If you wish to discuss any concerns about bonfires in your neighbourhood, please call Environmental Health on 01395 517457.

Citizens Advice

Details of the nearest Citizens Advice Bureau have been sent to a local resident who had recently been made redundant and requested advice and guidance on their financial concerns. The nearest CAB to Clyst St Mary is at Watt Taylor House, 3 King William Street, Exeter EX4 6PB. Telephone 0844 499 4101 or visit www.exetercab.org.uk.

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. They are hoping to hold a free two hour first aid course in the near future on how to provide basic life support until the emergency services arrive.

When residents were asked whether they



would consider attending the first aid course, 20 residents said they would like to attend. The course is due to be held in the next few months.

First aid tips for a Heart Attack



A heart attack is one of the most common life-threatening heart conditions in the UK. If you suspect someone is having a heart attack, sit the person down, call an ambulance immediately and, if they are conscious, give them a 300 mg tablet of aspirin to chew. The main risk is that the heart will stop beating, so be prepared to resuscitate if necessary.

If you are interested in taking part in a life saving course, please call Pamela Willerton on 0127 327918 or email pwillerton@redcross.org.uk for further details.

Litter

The majority of people said they thought the village was generally free from litter, although there were concerns about small amounts of litter left around the village shop area. Some called for the streets to be cleared more regularly by EDDC.

There was also a request to litter-pick on the roundabout and the grass verges. A resident said he regularly picks up litter in Frog Lane as he frequently witnesses drivers throwing litter from vehicles passing through. A spokesman for StreetScene said they clean the village on a regular basis but will repond more frequently to any other

specific requests for service when and if the need arises. To call StreetScene please phone 01395 516551.

Housing

A private tenant made a request to be put on the Housing Register for a Council property as they felt their present housing was too small. The Council's Housing Needs team have now sent an application for housing to the family to go on the waiting list.

Another householder requested advice about mould and damp in their property. A Housing Officer has contacted the tenant to give advice and guidance.

Miscellaneous

A crack in the pavement in Manor Park had resulted in a mound several inches high appearing. In order to highlight this trip hazard, a plastic mole was mounted over the mound. We reported this to Devon County Highways and asked them to carry out an inspection of the area and repair the pavement.



One person wished to make the Council aware that many residents do not have access to, or choose to use the internet for communication and information. We asked people during the survey how they would wish to be advised about our services and 72 per cent said they would prefer to be advised via newsletters or a newspaper advertisement, and 28 per cent of those

interviewed were happy to receive information through the Council's website.

Environmental Health has investigated a complaint concerning light pollution from the Hill Barton Estate. Immediate action was taken to change the angle of the light to reduce glare to the residents affected.

One nearby resident said they were sometimes woken by late night noise from drinkers gathering outside The Half Moon Inn on Saturday nights.

There was a suggestion that a public footpath could be created from the village to Clyst St George and a resident asked for more information about the 'Lower Clyst Project'. The Environment Agency is working on this project in partnership with Natural England, EDDC and the RSPB. The project is hoped to encourage local land owners to allow tidal flooding downstream as far as Topsham to restore habitats and help reduce flooding. There are concerns that the current banks, which have been in place for around 150 years, offer poor protection from river flooding. Tidal flooding currently occurs several times a year and there are fears this could increase as sea levels rise. The Environment Agency can be contacted on 08708 506506.

Fire safety

During the door-to-door survey residents were asked if they had a working smoke detector and whether they required fire safety advice from Devon and Somerset Fire Service. A free fire safety visit is available to elderly, vulnerable, disabled or low income families who wish to improve fire safety within their home. A Fire Officer may visit the property to carry out a short assessment, give advice and may be able to supply or install a long lasting, battery smoke detector.

Two householders requested a visit. To find out if you could be eligible for a free fire safety visit, please call Devon & Somerset Fire Service free on 0800 7311 822 or email firekills@dsfire.gov.uk.



'A convenient and friendly place to live'

'It's a lovely village, I hope we can keep it this way'

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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