

Report from Hilary Bastone – (My June notes for Parish Councils)

THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:-

Home for Ukraine Update – June 2022

Artist Donates Covid-Inspired Sculpture

New affordable homes completed in Ivybridge

New electric car charging points in Dartmouth a step on the road to net zero

Community Recovery Grant Book Launch

Going Local 2022

South Hams Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum

Waste Statement

SHWD features in The MJ

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THIS MONTH'S TOPICS IN MORE DETAIL:-

Home for Ukraine Update – June 2022

The team are continuing to step up plans for supporting the 371 Ukrainians that are looking to come (or have already arrived) in South Hams and West Devon.

We've been:

Continuing initial property checks for new additions to the scheme

Carrying out welcome visits for Ukrainian guests (and planning for a subsequent two visits)

Developing a plan for how we support the sustainability of host/guest relationships

Develop a rematch scheme for placements that have broken down

Plan for the end of the initial 6 months of the scheme

Continue to deliver our wraparound support offer (through CAB and CVS)

This week a lot of the focus for the team has also been on understanding the impacts on the change to the Homes for Ukraine scheme which will now allow hosts to match with unaccompanied Ukrainian children. This is a big change given previously the Ukrainian Government had been explicit that Ukrainian children must not be placed with UK families

without a Ukrainian adult. Clearly this will have significant safeguarding implications and we are awaiting further guidance from Government but what we do know is:

There are currently 700 applications for unaccompanied children on hold – we don't yet have data for how these are spread across Councils

Anticipate that the visa process will open for those children (and others who may not have registered) within the next two weeks

The expectation of hosts is that the placement must be for 3 years or until the Child turns 18, whichever is soonest

The thank you payment of £350 per month will be available from District Councils for up to the full three years

To ensure we can provide a continued level of support for our Ukrainian guests and hosts, we need to increase our resourcing and are delighted to be welcoming Tatiana to the project team in early July. Tatiana has arrived in the UK through the Homes for Ukraine scheme and is keen to work with us in co-producing our wraparound support offering for Ukrainian guests. She will also help to ensure that resources and support offered by our partners CVS and CAB is tailored and translated in to Ukrainian.

We will soon be looking to recruit a further two case-workers for the next 6 months to enable us to complete welcome visits as soon as possible and to plan them for the coming months.

Artist Donates Covid-Inspired Sculpture

A new sculpture symbolising the impact of the Covid pandemic and lockdowns has been unveiled in Totnes' Lamb Garden.

A sculpture titled 'Locked down world' has been unveiled in Totnes. The Bath stone sculpture symbolises the Covid virus holding the world imprisoned.

The artwork has been placed on the wall of South Hams Council's' garden near Leechwell Street. It was created by local artist Anne Henriksen, who hopes that the sculpture will act as a reminder of the event that had, and still has, a deep impact on many people.

Anne first started carving the stone sculpture during the first lockdown, as a reminder to not take life, friends and hugs for granted again.

She wanted to donate it to Totnes because of her love for the town. A Swedish native, Anne made Totnes her home thirty years ago when she arrived with her daughter in 1991 and they have lived in, or near, Totnes ever since. Anne trained at Plymouth College of Art and Design and after working as a taxi driver, she is now enjoying her retirement creating sculptures.

South Hams District Council's Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Jonathan Hawkins, said: "Thank you to Anne for taking the time to create this thought-provoking piece of artwork which I'm sure will benefit many people affected by this awful pandemic.

“It is really important that we take the time to remember the impact that Covid has had on so many people’s lives. The artwork in this quiet corner of Totnes will offer residents and visitors a place for peaceful reflection.”

Part of the old sheep market, the Lamb Garden was opened on 18 February 2011 by the then MP for Totnes, Dr Sarah Wollaston. The space was transformed by Totnes Trust.

They created raised beds for vegetables and herbs, a forest garden with benches, together with a beautiful pergola and lawn area. Sue Holmes, a member of the Trust, along with some companions, continue to volunteer their time to tend the gardens, even after the end of their formal work there. They do an amazing job, which is appreciated by all who visit this relaxing space.

The space would have been used as a place for Totnes residents to visit during lockdowns for a place to stop, think and just be. Something crucial to the mental health and wellbeing during a difficult time. The addition of the sculpture in this secluded place will help as a reminder of what is important in life. To take time to listen to the birdsong, nature and enjoy family and friends.

Sculpture, Anne Henriksen said: “I wanted to make a piece of work that I could give to Totnes, who welcomed me and my daughter thirty years ago. It was created so that we wouldn’t forget this time of Covid and lockdowns, and the effects that it had on us all.”

Sue Holmes, volunteer gardener, said: “The garden became a haven, not just for wildlife but also for people seeking a bit of sanctuary during lockdown. This is why I am so pleased that Anne’s sculpture to commemorate that time is being placed here.”

More of Anne’s work can be seen at www.annehenriksensculpture.com.

Go to the Council’s Communities page, for lots more information on what you can find in the South Hams: www.southhams.gov.uk/communities.

New affordable homes completed in Ivybridge

The first homes on a new affordable housing development in Ivybridge have been completed.

Once complete the scheme at Rutt Lane on the Saxon Gate development will provide 40 new homes for rent and shared ownership. The site has been developed by Wain Homes and LiveWest, in partnership with South Hams District Council. It is expected the first homes will be ready to move into in the next few weeks.

Cllr Hilary Bastone, Deputy Leader of South Hams District Council, visited the homes last week. He said: “The Council is always delighted to see new affordable homes schemes like these come forward, particularly in light of the Housing Crisis that we declared last September. This new development has a good mix of shared ownership and affordable rent properties coming to market, helping people from the South Hams get into a wonderful new home that they can afford.”

Natalie Groves will be moving in to one of the houses with her two children. Her new shared ownership home will be her first step onto the property ladder. Last week, Natalie looked around her new family home for the first time.

Natalie said: “It doesn’t feel quite real yet! I don’t think it’s really sunk in. Once I’m in it might feel a bit more mine but at the moment it’s not quite real.

“It means so much. We’ve had a pretty rough six months, me and the children, so it’s going to be amazing to have our own home. My children are so excited to get this and so am I. I can’t wait to be in!”

The development will include a range of homes, from one to three-bedroom properties. The homes will be a mix of 28 for affordable rent and 12 for shared ownership.

The development will benefit from both Homes England strategic partnership funding as well as £5.8m funding from LiveWest.

Michael Howells, Assistant Development Manager for LiveWest, said: “There is a huge need for affordable housing in the local area, we are delighted that the development will go some way in addressing this. It is ideally located to accommodate local businesses and commuters via the A38 or rail and is surrounded by the South Hams with outlooks onto woodland.”

A spokesperson for Wain Homes, said: “We are really excited to be working with LiveWest at Saxon Gate and many other developments across the region. Our values, commitment to quality and customer service mirrors that of LiveWest and we look forward to the first homes being handed over.”

New electric car charging points in Dartmouth a step on the road to net zero

The first of 80 new Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points planned for 38 public car parks across Devon are now ready for public use in Dartmouth’s Mayors Avenue Car Park.

EV charge points at the South Hams District Council owned car park are now available to be used by the public. It’ll be possible to charge two vehicles at one time; the two charging bays are fully accessible, converted from three regular parking spaces, available for the sole use of electric vehicle charging.

Cllr Tom Holway, South Hams District Council’s Executive Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity, said: “Since declaring our Climate Emergency, South Hams District Council has been committed to working with our partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to aim to reduce carbon emissions across the South Hams district to net zero by 2050.

“Infrastructure projects such as this are vital to being able to reach that goal. We need to be able to encourage residents and visitors alike to make more sustainable choices; projects like these facilitate those choices and help to make net zero a realistic and achievable target.”

The charging point scheme is being rolled out across 38 public car parks in the county over the next 12 months. The scheme is being delivered through a partnership of Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council, North Devon Council,

Teignbridge District Council, East Devon District Council and ScottishPower on behalf of Devon Climate Emergency (DCE).

The remaining sites will be installed in phases this summer.

Powered by the renewable energy through a green tariff, the charge points are compatible with all makes of EVs and will fully charge a 50 kWh battery in two to four hours, providing a range of up to 200 miles depending on vehicle specification.

The rate of charge is dictated by the vehicle's inverter however these chargers can deliver enough electricity for up to 88 miles of travel in one hour. This means the points are ideal for both shorter stops, such as shopping trips, and regular charges by residents. As these points are for public use, they are also available for visitors of Devon wishing to charge their electric vehicle.

The cost to fully charge a 50 kWh battery, providing a range of up to 200 miles, would be in the region of £17.50.

Councillor Andrea Davis, Devon County Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport said: "When seeking to reduce Devon's carbon emissions it is essential that we provide the tools which will enable our residents to access certain lifestyle changes. On-road transportation makes up a large percentage of Devon's carbon emissions, meaning taking petrol and diesel cars off the roads could make a significant impact towards our goal of net zero by 2050.

"Providing reliable electric vehicle charging points helps us to facilitate our community's involvement in reducing their personal carbon footprints, from which everyone will benefit."

ScottishPower's Smart Solutions Director, Chris Carberry said: "ScottishPower is excited to be working with Devon and all the project partners involved in the Deletti programme. This is one of many such projects that demonstrates our commitment to speeding up the transition to cleaner electric transport, improving air quality and over time, driving down cost, all to deliver a better future, quicker for everyone."

Through the scheme, nine car parks in the South Hams will get new charging points, including in Totnes, Kingsbridge, Salcombe and Modbury.

These charging points are part of the larger DELETTI programme, a £1.3 million project which is being largely funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

It's an essential part of Devon's Carbon Plan, the county's road-map to net-zero, which is being published by the DCE this summer.

The Plan calls for the 'decarbonisation' of on-road transportation which causes almost 30 per cent of Devon's carbon emissions.

Community Recovery Grant Book Launch

Earlier this week Cllr Hilary Bastone attended a book launch in Dartmouth for Devon with Kids.

They used their Community Recovery Grant to produce and market a children's colouring book based on the South Hams' area. Cllr Bastone got involved and joined in with the colouring too!

Going Local 2022

The 'Going Local' 2022 event enables local suppliers to meet procurement officers from councils within the South West.

Suppliers are able to get advice from procurement specialists, learn how to access opportunities to bid for public sector contracts and much more.

This year it is being held at Bicton College on Thursday 21 July.

Attached is the press release which has been sent to local media - please feel free share this event within your local area.

South Hams Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum

The next South Hams Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum will take place on 14 June from 2pm to 3pm.

This next meeting will be all about active travel; the aim is to have a bit of an open discussion about what's happening in forum members areas and networks, needs, ideas and how we as a council can support.

Waste Statement

FCC statement

FCC Environment understands South Hams residents' frustration and annoyance with the continued disruption to the waste and recycling services. We would like to sincerely apologise for the failure to deliver the service you expect and deserve.

In particular we would like to say sorry for the difficulties experienced with the reintroduction of the garden waste collection service. There are reasons for this but we want to clarify that when the service was rolled out we had recruited sufficient staff required under the contract to deliver the service but since then staff have left the contract and we have been unable to replace them. We are operating an average absence level of 14% and, along with other issues which have made ongoing recruitment challenging, this has made delivering the service problematic. Notwithstanding these issues, the residents have a right to expect a good and reliable service.

At all stages, FCC has sought to work with the council to improve and resolve the situation and this remains the case.

We are fully committed to ensuring that everybody has a garden waste collection service on a reasonably regular basis whilst the ongoing issues are resolved. In addition, we are looking at

how we can adjust our collection rounds to ensure that the same households are not missed each time.

For comments and feedback please reply to info@fccenvironment.co.uk marked for the attention of Press Office.

SHDC response

In response to their statement, we have issued our own brief one in return. As follows:

A spokesperson for South Hams District Council, said: “The Council has taken legal advice and has written to FCC demanding that they rectify the situation as a matter of priority. The situation has gone on far too long and it urgently requires a resolution for residents.

Unfortunately, the Council is unable to provide further details at this stage, but they will provide an update as soon as they are able to.

At all stages, the Council has sought to work with the contractor to improve and resolve the situation.

SHWD features in The MJ

The MJ (Municipal Journal) has featured an article on our investment in Netcall's Liberty Create platform, showcasing how the system is creating monetary savings and is the backdrop for further innovation.

The article also highlights how SHWD won the Best Transformation Team at the iESE Transformation Awards 2022.