

## **District Councillors' Report to UPC – Alison Dewynter and Victor Abbott Oct 2025**

### **Feedback on Issues Raised by the PC and Residents for action by District Councillor:**

#### **A. Sale of Churchill Cottages**

SHDC officers have replied to my enquiries, LiveWest have no contractual obligation to replace properties sold with new social housing in the same location.

### **News from South Hams DC of note to PC and residents:**

#### **1. The Future of Local Government**

The Labour Government is committed to reshaping local government. In our area this involves replacing the current two-tier system of county and district councils with new unitary authorities that serve larger populations. These unitary authorities will take on the responsibilities of both District and County Councils.

The government criteria for this change are as follows:

1. Establish a single tier of local government
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks
3. High-quality and sustainable services
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs
5. Supporting devolution arrangements (the transfer of powers and funding from central government to local areas)
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Proposals for the structure of the new authorities must be submitted by 28 November 2025, and the decision on the final structure will be decided by central government. Proposals should be based on current district boundaries but modification to these boundaries will be considered. Plymouth's proposal to request its boundaries expand to encompass thirteen Parish Council footprints, is an example of such a modification.

Different structures are being proposed by different bodies, but they generally include only councils currently in Devon.

South Hams District Council support a model of three councils replacing the current system. This is the so-called 4:5:1 model because the new councils will be based on 4, 5 and 1 existing councils:

The 4 is a new council made up from the existing South Hams, West Devon, Teignbridge and Torbay Councils

The 5 is made up from East Devon, Mid Devon and North Devon, plus Torridge and Exeter

The 1 is Plymouth City Council on its existing footprint.

Although I do not represent Devon County Council, a recent press release announced their proposed model as a 1:8:1 model (or 1:9:1 depending on whether you include Devon County Council in the count):

1 is Plymouth

1 is Exeter

8 is all the rest of Devon (South Hams, West Devon, East Devon, Mid Devon, North Devon, Teignbridge, Torridge and Torbay)

Government guidelines state that the new council authorities should have been 30 and 100 councillors. SHDC have estimated that that a minimum of 66 councillors will be needed to sit on all committees for the new structure (based on the 4 5 1 model they are proposing).

## 2. South Hams Energy Assembly taking place on 18<sup>th</sup> October

Tickets must be booked in advance using the QR code below or at this address:  
<https://www.sussh.org/energy-assembly>



The poster for the South Hams Energy Assembly features a central illustration of a coastal town with a wind turbine. The title 'SOUTH HAMS ENERGY ASSEMBLY' is prominently displayed in green. Below the title, a tagline reads 'A gathering to connect, support and inspire action for more energy-resilient communities'. The poster lists activities: TALKS, DISCUSSION, EXHIBITION, NETWORKING, WORKSHOPS, and TASTY LUNCH. It also provides the date (Saturday 18th October), time (9:30 am to 3:30 pm), and location (Kingsbridge Community College). A QR code is provided for enquiries and booking, along with the email [ruthlw@sussh.org](mailto:ruthlw@sussh.org) and the URL [bit.ly/energy-assembly](https://www.sussh.org/energy-assembly). At the bottom, logos for Sustainable South Hams, South Hams District Council, South Dartmoor Community Energy, and octopus energy generation are shown.

**SOUTH HAMS**  
**ENERGY ASSEMBLY**

*A gathering to connect, support and inspire action for more energy-resilient communities*

**TALKS**      **DISCUSSION**  
**EXHIBITION**      **NETWORKING**  
**WORKSHOPS**      **TASTY LUNCH**

*All welcome - community groups, councillors, businesses, and individuals.*

**DATE**  
Saturday 18th  
October

**TIME**  
9:30 am  
3:30 pm

**PLACE**  
Kingsbridge  
Community  
College

**ENQUIRIES  
& BOOKING**



[ruthlw@sussh.org](mailto:ruthlw@sussh.org)  
[bit.ly/energy-assembly](https://www.sussh.org/energy-assembly)

 **Sustainable South Hams**       **South Hams District Council**       **South Dartmoor Community Energy**       **octopus energy generation**

### 3. The South Hams Way

The new South Hams Way is a 100-mile hiking trail that circumnavigates the South Hams area of South Devon. The route is divided into ten sections of roughly 10 miles each following existing footpaths, lanes and byways. The sections are deliberately centred on community hubs where there is public transport access, shops, refreshments and accommodation.



Created for walkers by South Hams Ramblers, it travels through four very different types of landscape and terrain including moorland, coast paths, estuaries, river valleys and countryside. Its highest point is 1,281ft, just above the Avon Dam reservoir on Dartmoor, and its lowest is sea level.

While the route can be picked up anywhere, the recognised 'start' is from Borough Park in Totnes.

If you have any questions about the trail, please contact Alan Mighall (Chair) or Debbie Board (Group Walks Programme Coordinator) by email on [southhamsway@gmail.com](mailto:southhamsway@gmail.com).

For details of all details of the trails including maps, GPX files for navigational apps and route guides to download or follow on your smartphone visit [www.southhamsway.org.uk](http://www.southhamsway.org.uk)

### 4. Saltmarsh Project

A new short film about The Saltmarsh Project is now available to watch on the Bioregional Learning centre's YouTube channel and website. The film shows the restoration and educational work undertaken along the River Dart, including at SHDC's Longmarsh site.

[YouTube channel](#)

[website](#)

### 5. Support for Care Leavers

Care leavers in Devon can get 100% off their Council Tax bill until they are 25.

[www.southhams.gov.uk/council-tax/reductions-discounts-and-exemptions/care-leavers](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/council-tax/reductions-discounts-and-exemptions/care-leavers)