

District Councillors' Report to UPC – Alison Dewynter and Victor Abbott
July 2026

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

1. Upcoming Consultation on the Next Local Plan

Between 16 July and 24 September 2026, SHDC will be running a scoping consultation to understand the challenges and opportunities that the next local plan will need to consider. Later in the year, residents will be invited to comment.

2. Ivybridge Car Park Renovation

SHDC is carrying out work to Leonards Road, Glanvilles Mill and Harford Road car parks between 1 and 29 July. The works will be done on separate days to ensure parking is still available.

More details can be found [here](#).

3. Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy: Opportunities and events

Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is hosting events, including introductory webinars, for those interested in learning more and supporting nature.

- These will be held online on 15 July at 1:00 p.m. and 20 July at 7:00 p.m. You can sign up for these events [here](#).
- LNRS are also launching a new round of ambassador recruitment and training and are looking to grow their network of volunteers across the county. Please [click here](#) for more information.
- To prepare the new ambassadors, online training sessions via Microsoft Teams are taking place on the 15 July at 7:00 p.m – 8:30 p.m. and 20 July from 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Anyone interested can [sign up here](#).

4. Reduce the Risk of Wildfires

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has issued advice on reducing wildfire risk, which would be useful to share with residents—particularly if hot conditions continue in the coming weeks.

- Most wildfires in the UK are caused by human activity.
- Every year, wildfires destroy large areas of countryside and wildlife habitats, causing long-lasting damage to the environment.
- Wildfires can spread quickly and threaten homes and infrastructure, particularly during warm, dry weather. As the weather warms up, the risk of wildfires can rise.
- Do not light fires in the countryside or other open spaces, including parks, moorland and wooded areas.
- If you spot a wildfire then move to a safe location away from the fire.
- Call 999 immediately and do not assume someone else has already reported it.
- More information can be found [here](#).

5. Crisis and Resilience Fund

The Crisis and Resilience Fund is for residents who may be struggling financially.

The fund is designed to support low-income households in the South Hams who are facing an unexpected financial shock, such as a sudden loss of income, the breakdown of an essential household item, or another urgent cost they cannot afford.

The fund can also provide housing support, financial advice and wider services to help people avoid future crises and build longer-term resilience.

Residents must be aged 16 or over and live in the South Hams as their main home.

Residents in need of support, should check the eligibility criteria and apply online using this link southhams.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/other-available-support/crisis-and-resilience-fund

The team understands that not all residents are able to complete online applications and can provide support by telephone and, longer term, hope to develop a face-to-face offering.

6. Land Transfer – Hope Wood

SHDC have approved the freehold transfer of a seven-acre field at Hope Wood in South Brent to Sustainable South Brent. This will help to secure the long-term future of community food growing and orchard management at the site.

The decision builds on the success of Hope Wood since SHDC bought the 65-acre site in 2024. Since then, nearly 25,000 trees have been planted, with grassland restoration under way, a habitat bank has been established, new public access has been created and a community orchard has taken shape with strong local involvement.

Volunteers from the South Brent community have played a major role in shaping the site, with more than 1,000 people of all ages getting involved.

The transfer will allow Sustainable South Brent to develop its plans for a thriving market garden and orchard within the field, building on work already under way and supporting local food production, biodiversity and community wellbeing.

The project is part of the wider vision for Hope Wood as a place where community wellbeing, nature and environmental improvements come together.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

7. Citizens Advice are Recruiting in the South Hams

SHDC work closely with Citizens Advice South Hams to support residents, particularly with financial pressures such as the cost of living and through the new Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Anyone interested in helping with this important work, and a wide range of other issues, may like to attend their open day.

They are looking for new staff and volunteers as the charity expands to meet demand in our area. All are welcome to attend the Citizens Advice Open day on Wednesday 1 July from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to find to meet the team and find out more with no obligation.

[Click here](#) to read their latest newsletter.

Just email their team at recruitment@southhamscab.org.uk to let them know you're interested.

<https://southhamscab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Copy-of-Volunteer-Open-Day-Poster-CA-724x1024.png>

8. Renter's Rights Act Came into Effect on 1 May 26

The Act brings in new rights and responsibilities across the private rented sector designed to create more security and fairness for tenants, while setting out clear expectations for landlords. [Click here to find out more.](#)

9. Stay Safe Around Water This Summer

Follow the RNLI's lifesaving Float to Live advice. Even when the weather feels warm, the water around the UK stays cold enough to cause cold water shock, which can affect breathing and lead to panic within seconds.

If you find yourself in difficult in the water – Float to Live

- Tilt your head back and keep your ears in the water
- Relax and try to control your breathing
- Use your hands and legs gently to help you stay afloat
- It's okay if your legs sink – everyone floats differently
- Once you are calm, call for help or swim to safety
- If you see someone in trouble in the water, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

10. Volunteer Drivers

Volunteer drivers are needed to support community transport schemes across Devon.

Anyone aged 21 or over with a full driving licence, at least two years' driving experience and access to a vehicle can volunteer, with no minimum commitment and mileage reimbursed. Volunteer drivers help residents get to medical appointments, shopping trips and social activities, with 106,561 journeys provided last year.

Members are encouraged to share the opportunity in their wards and community networks.

To find out more, visit [the Devon Communities Together website.](#)