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### **Proposed Closure of footpath at Joney’s Cross, Hawkerland**

You may remember that a planning application, 21/1392/ful, was brought to my attention by a parish councillor from Colaton Raleigh as part of plans to improve car parking across a number of sites on the pebblebed heaths, I support this principle.

Planning application 21/13992/Ful showed that EDDC wished to close the short footpath from the Joney’s Cross car park to the A3052. Walking south to north, this footpath allows walkers to stand on a grassed area where they at least have good visibility of the speeding traffic. The proposal was that walkers should share the existing bridle path that exits onto a blind bend on the service road. Colaton Raleigh parish council raised concerns about this; our parish council also had concerns, as did our PP3 footpaths officer Ted Swan. I sent my comments into EDDC after the consultation had formally closed once it was brought to my attention and they were published on EDDCs website. But because I know that not all members of the planning committee read documents other than the Officers report when considering planning applications, I also emailed all members of the planning committee with my concerns and asked to speak on the day as an adjoining ward councillor. This was considered to be ‘lobbying’ by some members of the planning committee and ‘raising concerns’ by others.

When the Planning Committee met, certain long standing planning committee members queried why I should be allowed to speak, as an adjoining parish councillor even though historically adjoining parish councillors are consulted on some applications. They queried if this would be setting a precedent (its happened before and indeed sometimes neighbouring wards are formally consulted). It was clear they didn't want me to be allowed to speak. They spent more time querying why I should be allowed to speak it than it would have taken me to have my say. The Chair suggested that the officer should present his report, members should speak and if any of my points hadn't been covered I could make them then. I felt this was very fair.

Rather pleasingly, senior planning officer Chris Rose had read my comments and already done work behind the scenes and agreed with all relevant parties that the existing footpath could remain. All that remained for me to do at the meeting was to thank him for his very fair and helpful input and comment that it was good to see common sense prevail. The parish council also asked that in future it should be consulted on planning applications such as this that affect residents in our ward, especially where we border so closely.

## **Road safety issues**

Our DCC councillor Jess Bailey has requested a meeting with Highways officers to discuss what action could be taken to avoid the bridge by Woodleys being hit again and the costly ensuing repairs. Having initially had a response from a DCC officer that stated the bridge had only been hit four times over a number of years and therefore was not an issue, in a further email the officer agreed to a meeting to discuss a number of highways safety concerns through the village, not least the desire to see a 20 mph limit through the village, improved crossing areas and safety around the school as per residents concerns detailed in our new Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Four Elms Hill**

Can you believe this went back to HATOC again on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November for an officers report? I sent in some questions for the committee:

I queried whether at the same time as painting double white lines down the length of the hill as previously agreed:

- would white lines be added to the camber, (as per Goosemoor Hill)?
- would the red and very worn out markings on the road on the approach to the hill be repaired and renewed?
- Would the battered bollard which is close to Otter Reach on the A3052 would also be repaired whilst the road was closed?

The road closure was scheduled for 5 days and we know from the last time around it will take no more than two nights and I suspect only 1 night to complete the double white lines down the entire length of Four Elms Hill so there would be plenty of time to complete these works.

DCC Councillor Jess Bailey attended the HATOC meeting in person as did EDDC Cllr Paul Hayward and fully expected to be able to ask the officers supplementary questions about the proposed works on the hill and nearby areas. The Chair of the HATOC meeting Cllr Stuart Hughes shut down any discussion that would answer the above questions. Cllr Hughes did say in an email to me that he would raise those issues bullet pointed above with the local Highways officer but this was first done in 2019 and again since then with no result so far. It's no wonder DCC is haemorrhaging your money with the piecemeal approach to repairs.

I also pointed out to HATOC members that the A30 at Monkton had recently had new double white lines put down and a comprehensive job was done which included white camber lines, red warning

strips with additional yellow distance markers within. You will by now know that the double white lines have been put down and I understand the red warning road markings refreshed but the road surface not repaired..... DCC seem determined to flaunt their incompetence in Newton Poppleford.

### **Exmouth to host three-evening live music event next summer**

It has been announced that McFly are performing at this event on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022. Tickets are already on sale. Search EDDC concert Exmouth and follow the links for tickets. Other headline acts are yet to be announced at the time of writing.

### **Do you ever wonder how our local MP has voted?**

Our Local MP is Simon Jupp (Conservative). I have written to him on numerous subjects including my concerns about the privatisation of the NHS and particularly with regard to GP surgeries being run by USA profit driven companies such as Centene, animal welfare and in particular animal testing and live exports for the meat market, agriculture and environmental issues to name but a few. He usually replies in neutral language that follows the Conservative party line.

I wrote most recently about the amendment to the Environment Bill which would have seen raw sewage banned from being dumped in British rivers and oceans. I think he may have received a few emails on this subject. He did not support the Amendment and I queried why. In his reply he said the sewage systems were old and that it would take massive investment to rectify this and there was no easy solution. I pointed out that if SWW weren't paying out profits to their shareholders, they could be investing in updating the infrastructure. 22 Conservative MPs did rebel and vote for the amendment on behalf of their residents and the environment. You can look up the voting record of any MP on the 'They Work For You' website.

### **Cabinet Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021**

On the theme of sewage discharge, recent weather patterns have seen a surge in sewage discharge into the seas and rivers, and many of our local towns and villages have also been particularly affected by this. DCC Cllr Jess Bailey raised a question at the start of the Cabinet meeting and this is a quote from the Minutes:

*Cllr Jess Bailey spoke of the subject of sewage discharge in the River Otter and its threat to the beavers that had recently been reintroduced to the river. She asked the Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment if he agreed that the discharge of untreated sewage by SW Water into East Devon rivers was unacceptable. She asked that SW Water be invited to explain to how it was going to improve its infrastructure so these discharges no longer happen. The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment thanked Cllr Bailey for her question. He agreed it was a good idea for SW Water to attend a meeting and subject to the chair of the scrutiny committee thought that would seem the most appropriate committee. He explained that the problem was the older combined drains systems where surface water was combined with sewage. In a storm event the treatment plants could not cope and the polluted storm water was discharged into rivers and sea. Through talks with both Teignbridge and Exeter councillors on this very subject they were all similarly minded. Therefore a combined approach from all 3 councils on the subject could prove to be worthwhile as all its sewage ended up in the same area of sea. He hoped a solution could be agreed and set in place very quickly.*

I was grateful to Cllr Bailey for raising this issue and would certainly support SWW being asked to attend a Scrutiny meeting to answer questions on how they intend to address sewage management.

## **Strategic Planning Committee 9th November 2021**

The subject of infrastructure (or lack of) has come up also in Strategic Planning meetings where work on the new local plan is well underway. The existing Local Plan has allocated three quarters of new development in the west end of the district. Cllr Mike Howe of Clyst Valley Ward stated that the Tythe Barn, Sky Park Exeter extension and west end area of our district relied on the Blue Ball pumping station sewage system which is already at capacity and yet building is still continuing. His own village of Clyst St Mary had been flooded with sewage 11 times so far this year and at times residents had been unable to use their own toilets for over 60 hours at a time due to development upstream. At a recent meeting with Cllr Howe, SWW said they would be providing temporary mobile toilets to address the issue in the short term. Cllr Howe felt EDDC should not be accepting any more development in the west end of the District until SWW sort out the sewage capacity. This could take 10 years or more. In reply Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management, stated that it would be impractical to refuse planning on these grounds as East Devon would no longer be able to show a 5 year housing supply making the district vulnerable to imposed development.

Cllr Howe also point out that roads are already over capacity on the outskirts of Exeter especially when there is an accident anywhere nearby. We know ourselves what happens in Newton Poppleford when the A3052 is blocked and the surrounding roads are at gridlock and there have been numerous issues with surface water flooding in Newton Poppleford which SWW just cannot seem to resolve. This is aside from the points made by Cllr Bailey about discharge of sewage into the River Otter noted above.

### **Local Plan - HELAA**

A call for sites ran from January to March 2021, providing the opportunity for individuals and organisations to put forward to EDDC sites that they think have the potential to be developed for housing, economic or other uses in the forthcoming years of the new Local Plan. This is known as Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).

359 sites were put forward across the district. Sites from the 2017 GESP HELAA and the 2021 HELAA will be considered. Some developers will be invited to speak about their proposal at a special meeting set up in January.

Here is an extract from the minutes of the meeting when concerns about sewage were raised:

#### ***Minutes:***

*The report before the committee set out the rationale for accommodating requests by developers to present to the committee their proposals. The timetable, although later than originally planned, was felt to be a better fit for hearing proposals after the committee had considered the working draft of the Local Plan.*

*The committee considered the meeting format of receiving the presentations, and criteria for those presentations in order to maximise the benefit of the event.*

*A separate issue, although not directly related to the agenda item, was discussed following a request by Cllr Howe for any development in the West End to be held back until the extensive sewage issues were resolved by South West Water. He outlined the experiences of raw sewage by his constituents, and his efforts to seek further information from SWW through a meeting with them and the local MP.*

*Discussion on this issue covered:*

- *Sympathy with residents in many areas of the District where the sewage system was not adequate to cope with demand and storm events*
- *Urgent issue to resolve for residents now, and to plan for future development, particularly relating to the Blue Ball pumping station*
- *Preventing sites coming forward at the West End would have implications for the five year land supply and the remainder of the District*
- *Importance in discussing future growth with all key stakeholders, so that work to resolve the issue would also offer up solutions to deal with rise in demand as the District population increased, and ensure that the necessary infrastructure was in place for that growth*
- *Issues were apparent for large scale works on sewage systems across the District;*
- *Taking a motion to full Council on the issue*
- *Referring SWW to the Scrutiny Committee*
- *Ensure robust policy in Local Plan on sewage disposal.*

## **A new approach to producing the new Local Plan**

It has already been established by the current administration that individual EDDC councillors should not engage with developers over their proposed sites, and if approached to do so they should refer the developer to the process for site selection. The EDDC councillor should also contact Ed Freeman, Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management and let him know they have been approached. This is to avoid previous claims of unfair treatment and avoid private arrangements and promises being made outside of the democratic process.

A presentation of a draft local plan will be made to the Strategic Planning Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

A meeting will be set up in January 2021 for developers to present their sites to the committee and the meeting will be recorded live for public viewing. This open and transparent approach was not used in the development of the previous local plan, leading to concerns amongst some about how certain sites were put forward and decisions made.

Based on the above discussion of the issues officers have sought to balance the intention to be open and transparent with the need to make efficient use of Officer and Member time and propose the following format for the January meeting:

- A single full day meeting (10am to 5pm) with a 1 hour lunch break and 10 minute comfort breaks in the morning and afternoon
- 20 minute slot per site (comprising 10 -15min presentation followed by questions from Members) Based on a 7 hour day this would give a maximum of 20 presentation slots;
- An agenda to be published beforehand with interested parties invited to register to present to the committee by a stated deadline.
- In the event that demand exceeded the number of slots then a cascade applies whereby sites are refused a slot based on the lowest scoring sites in the suitability scoring being excluded
- A list and timetable of presentations to be produced taking sites in settlement hierarchy order from top to bottom and then alphabetically through each tier
- The meeting to be held virtually and broadcast on you-tube.
- The above arrangements would hopefully enable appropriate engagement with site promoters and developers and make efficient use of officer and Member time.

It is considered that even if Members have returned to meetings in person by that time then this meeting could still be held virtually as no items would be presented for decision. A virtual meeting would also be easier to manage given the number of likely attendees and the likely use of power point presentations.

## **Role and Function of Settlements within the Local Plan V3 Final Draft–meeting 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

If you search for 'Role and Function of Settlements within the Local Plan V3 Final Draft' on the EDDC website you can read the full report which does contain some very interesting information about the different towns and villages including Newton Poppleford which will be taken into account in developing the new Local Plan . The purpose of this once again is to ensure the process for development of the new local plan is as open and transparent as possible. A meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> November which included EDDC councillors and members of parish councils to discuss the best approach to settlements in the new local plan. The question was should EDDC continue with its long standing approach of BUABs, and to examine the principles behind its approach going forward. In terms of planning for the future, things that needed to be taken into account are the demographics of a particular village or town, what employment opportunities there are to avoid out commuting, what facilities are available, flooding problems, what infrastructure is in place (not least sewage systems), transport links, what are the options for affordable housing and so on. There is a desire to limit the need to travel to work, schools, medical facilities and reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, congestion and improve air quality. A settlement hierarchy has been suggested, with larger towns at the top, reducing down to smaller settlements in tier 4. Newton Poppleford would be in Tier 4, a service village.

Here is an example of something from the report that relates to Newton Poppleford:

*3.17 The lowest employment density (around 0.3) can be seen at Feniton, Whimble, Dunkeswell, and Newton Poppleford. This means that these places have three times as many residents available to work than the number of jobs that are available. These settlements, alongside several others with a low employment density, can be described as 'dormitory' settlements where most people have no choice but to commute to work elsewhere. This makes them relatively unsustainable places to live.*

The question was should there be new ways of looking at the way development is determined in settlements. For example do Built up Area Boundaries (BUABs) work or should a different approach be taken? BUABs in future plans will be called Settlement Boundaries. Some options were put forward and they were discussed in 8 breakaway rooms before the meeting resumed as a whole for feedback.

I queried how deeply some of the issues would be explored. For example, what if a village has a school but the school is full? what if there are buses but they run empty and thus routes are consistently cut because the fares are prohibitively expensive (eg £8.60 return to Sidmouth from Newton Poppleford per adult, £13.50 return to the doctors at Ottery St Mary via Exeter taking 1.5 hours each way)?

A resident wrote to me on this very subject just recently asking what we could do about the unaffordable price of bus fares for families without a car. These issues were raised by concerned residents when the Newton Poppleford and Harpford Neighbourhood Plan was produced and adopted after referendum this year. I would like to see a community bus service set up, there is one in Elmbridge centre called Chatterbus which works really well and runs as a charity.

In the meeting it was stated that government policy now states brownfield sites should be favoured over building on green fields. The scale of development should sit alongside the existing development, not overwhelm it, another question was should the different tiers have different requirements? This was food for thought, though might not be popular with the Planning Inspector.

BUABs/Settlement boundaries give greater control of development and exception sites, which require a formal Housing Needs Assessment (run by an independent body as happened for the

Neighbourhood Plan), are the insurance to ensure the needs of a settlement are met. A whole range of options were discussed and will be brought forward and used towards the draft plan. The draft plan goes out to public consultation probably in summer 2022.

See the full draft document here:

[1a. Role and Function of Settlements report\\_v3 final draft for SPC.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Overview Meeting – Thursday 1th November 2021**

One of the main items to be discussed was the public toilet review but owing to the report coming out quite late it has now been posted to an extraordinary meeting next Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6.00 pm. Do tune in if you are interested as it will be live streamed as always.

There was a report and update on the rollout of broadband in East Devon.

One councillor put in 3 items for consideration at future meetings:

### **Review of EDDC members allowances?**

Cllr Miller suggested that his research showed that East Devon District Council pays the lowest allowances to its councillors and the allowances have not been raised since 2009 I believe. He argued that if we want a more diverse range of councillors to come forward rather than the traditional predominantly male, white, retired and wealthy councillors (all of whom are prepared to be whipped and vote according to the party line rather than apolitically and independently) then the allowances need to be increased because of the time it takes alongside traditional employment. I made the point that is wasn't just about allowances that might need to change, but also the archaic belief by a number of long standing councillors that we should go back to face to face meetings under the government policy of the Local Government Act of 1972 which states that councillors must attend in person and 'open to the public' also means the public should attend in person. This has been challenged previously. However, during the pandemic last year the government suspended that Act for a year, allowing remote meetings to take place. This is improved attendance at all meetings across the board and meant that even those working in other employment and those with caring responsibilities (family and child responsibilities, those with a disability, caring responsibilities, pet owners, those on holiday or away from home for work purposes) can attend meetings from wherever is convenient for them. Furthermore I looked up councillors claims for travel and subsistence 2017 – 2020 which amounted to **£89,449.83**. Travel claims the year of lockdown ending 2021 were **£1077.59**, a stark contrast in finances, not to mention the reduction in carbon emissions from travel at a time when we need to be more conscious of these things. Modernising the system is the way to get a more diverse range of councillors coming forward.

The consensus in the meeting was that whilst it may be useful to undertake a review of allowances to see where this council stands compared to other Devon councils (bearing in mind the hours put into the job), even if the review showed that allowances could be more generous, now was not the time for a rise given how many families are struggling financially at the moment. Also we need to be lobbying the government to update the 50 year old 1972 Local Government Act and join the modern world by making the more inclusive remote meetings legal. I think this would make a big difference to those still working and with other commitments. If remote meetings were to become legal, the money saved on travel expenses and subsistence could go some way to increasing councillor allowances, if deemed appropriate at the time.

### **Register of Senior Officer Interests**

This was part of Cllr Millers proposal

*At the last Standards Working Group meeting, Cllr Ingham suggested that officers had attended corporate events and potentially accepted gifts and hospitality. I have also been told of a senior officer attending cricket matches with a senior Councillor of the former administration, which if true ought to be prevented in future to avoid any suggestion of a conflict of interest. In my view, this is something that would concern a reasonable member of the public, and a process for declaring such interests and have these available would be very beneficial. At Councils, senior officers have a large amount of delegated authority to take major decisions affecting the District - this includes spending up to £20 million from the Commercial Investment Fund.*

All councillors have to complete a register of interests as a legal requirement and at meetings they must declare if they have an personal or pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda. Councillor Miller suggested for reasons as outlined in italics above, that senior officers should have to do so as well. He said that other councils do this and gave examples. The meeting agreed that this matter could be quite complicated involving job contracts and unions and referred the matter to the Personnel Committee.

### Review of CIL/Section 106 funds

Cllr Miller queried whether district councillors should have more say and involvement in how these funds are spent. He felt that sometimes parish councils spent the funds without reference to the ward councillor who is ultimately EDDC's representative in the system which can amount to many thousands of pounds. I have not found it to be the case that the parish council spend money without reference to the ward councillor but I think we are lucky in this ward with our parish council who are always open and inclusive in my experience. Nevertheless there are clearly differences in approach between the parishes and a suggestion that perhaps not all councillors fully understood the system. So it was agreed a report would come back to overview to cover the above.



### Bonfire Night and Firework display

The parish council, in partnership with the PTA, put on another magnificent and very successful bonfire night on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November. The event is so popular, over 650 tickets were sold in advance. I believe stall holders were all local organizations and they made a healthy profit and contributed a proportion of their profits to the parish council towards the cost of the event. Parish council members worked so hard on the night and special thanks must go to the bonfire

building team which was very short of helpers this year; the tiny team worked all day from 8.30 am building the fire and worked through until clearing up at the end of the event. Not least huge thanks must go to parish council Chairman Chris Burhop for ensuring this popular annual event returned to our local calendar.

I know there is some controversy about the noise and distress caused to animals (wild and domestic) and vulnerable children and adults with fireworks. I feel it is better to have one local formal display with the times advertised in advance and of a specific duration so owners and carers can plan accordingly and it is hoped this will discourage the use of multiple private firework displays taking place at random and unexpected times. I would certainly support a ban on fireworks being on sale to the general public. It would be helpful if fireworks could at least be silent, because to my mind it's the noise that is most upsetting and the noise adds nothing to the display but I don't think this has



yet been perfected. The RSPCA are running a campaign to ask that there should be a 95-decibel noise limit on fireworks. From research I understand that fireworks are fundamentally explosives and as such cannot be silent. I thought EDDC had banned firework displays on its own land (with some possible special event exceptions) along with banning the release of highly polluting Chinese lanterns. I incorrectly put this into Decembers parish magazine report. It turns out the recommendation was only to only allow fireworks with a 90-decibel noise limit on them on council owned ground but due to the covid lockdown and disruption to meetings this was not followed up and never went to overview to set the policy. This is being resurrected and discussed and voted on again.

A concerned resident has sent me a document about fireworks from the RSPCA with suggestions for Motions to Full Council to control their use. EDDC and the parish council already do some of the things suggested such as insisting public displays are advertised in advance so people can plan accordingly. The other suggestions are for noise limits to 90-dbs for fireworks sold to the public for private displays and encouraging local stockists to only sell 'quieter' fireworks. I suspect profit will win over public safety on this one. I'm tempted to think these RSPCA suggestions don't go far enough in terms of private displays. I would be happy to see them banned or require a licence.

### **Regular Saturday Community Breakfast – Newton Poppleford Pavilion.**

What a brilliant idea this is. I stopped by the pavilion on 6<sup>th</sup> November to see just how popular this relatively new breakfast is working and the answer is it is very popular indeed especially with the sports clubs, youngsters and parents alike but also for anyone else who enjoys a great start to the weekend. Congratulations to the team who were working their socks off in the kitchen, some of whom had also been on duty the night before at the Firework display and some on duty again that afternoon at the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal Afternoon tea. Parish Councillors Susan Tribble and Makala Tillotson seemed to be working hard at every event I attended that weekend and I wondered if they had been there all night. You can stop by anytime between 9.00 and 12.00 I believe on any Saturday morning and try the breakfast for yourself. There's a wide range of breakfast options.

### **Royal British Legion Poppy Day afternoon tea – Newton Poppleford Pavilion Saturday 6th November 2021**

This was a most fabulous event and congratulations must go to those who baked and donated cakes, raffle prizes, games and items for sale. Great company, a fantastic afternoon tea and money raised for a very good cause, what better way to spend an afternoon. The pavilion made a great venue.

### **Remembrance Sunday – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

Regretfully I was unable to attend the annual remembrance event held outside Harpford Church this year (followed by the service in church) but thanks must go once again to Brian Woodley for organising wreaths to be placed on behalf of the British Legion and Newton Poppleford and Harpford Parish Council as he has done for so many years and for our vicars for leading the church services across the parish. This is such an important event in our calendar.

### **Christmas late night shopping – Sidmouth – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce have announced that late night shopping will return to Sidmouth High Street on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021 Here is the link for more information

[Sidmouth Late Night Shopping - Sidmouth Town Council](#)

## **Sidmouth Christmas Food and Craft Village and illuminated gardens**

This is free and open daily from 1 pm until 8.00 pm. Connaught@christmas illuminated gardens – open from 4.30 – 9.30 pm, last entry 8.30 pm. Tickets are available at half hour intervals through the website:

[Connaught At Christmas - Sidmouth Town Council](#)

## **Resignation of our parish clerk Paul Hayward**

I was so happy for him but so sorry for us to hear that our simply outstanding parish Clerk and RFO Paul Hayward is leaving the parish council and becoming Locum Deputy Clerk and RFO for Axminster Town Council. Paul has been an incredible asset to the parish council since his appointment in early 2017 when I was still on the parish council. He has transformed the administration of the parish council from a rather old outdated, disorganised and haphazard paper based system to a fully digital system. This took hours and hours of trolling through old files and thousands of random bits of paper that I'm sure took many hours over his contracted hours especially in the very early days. Prior to his appointment I recall the parish council action plan often did not change from one month to the next much to the frustration of the councillors. Paul makes full use of IT systems and packages to present information so that council is clear where it stands and ensures this goes onto the parish council website which he has also transformed. He ensures that information is publicised via social media to reach the widest possible audience. He is very well qualified in working through his clerking CiLCA qualification, as a modern clerk should be, and has been able to guide the council very clearly on constitutional matters, financial regulations, policies and procedures. He transformed the governance of the Newton Poppleford Playing Field foundation, ensuring that the charity is properly run and a separate body from the parish council who are the Trustees. In previous times these boundaries were often blurred making auditing difficult. Indeed boundaries formerly were blurred on many levels. Paul is a stickler for following procedure to ensure the council fulfils its legal obligations and ensures that all decisions are open, transparent and democratically made by voting members of the parish council. He in turn carries out the actions promptly and efficiently. Tracking and tracing S106 and CIL funds via EDDC can seem like a full time job in itself as far as I can see. He has been proactive in exploring and publicising many opportunities that the parish council can take advantage of; for example guiding councillors through opportunities to ensure the parish is well equipped with defibrillators, overseeing the planning application and installation of the Air Ambulance night landing site. He has completely digitized the burial records for both cemeteries so there is no longer any confusion about who is buried where; this was a massive responsibility around a very sensitive area and is a great legacy to hand over to his successor. I am sure residents have found him polite responsive, helpful and proactive. He will be a very hard act to follow.

I am sure the parish council will miss him and wish him well in his new venture. I have certainly valued his counsel and advice on many matters both at parish and district level. I will continue to enjoy working with him on EDDC where he is Ward Member for Yarty, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder Economy and Assets as part of the Democratic Alliance administration.

## **Local issues raised (mentioned in detail above):**

- Extremely expensive and prohibitive local bus fares
- RSPCA fireworks restriction recommendations

With grateful thanks as always to residents for helping to raise local issues so they can be addressed. Val Ranger , Ward Councillor, Newton Poppleford and Harpford  
Tel 07475 201 340 or email [vranger@btinternet.com](mailto:vranger@btinternet.com)..