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Welcome to our new parish Clerk

Jacqui Baldwin has been appointed as the new Parish Clerk following the departure of Paul Hayward. There is now a new contact telephone number for the office which is **07393 572608**. All other contact details remain the same. I look forward to working with Jacqui on council matters over the coming year and I am sure residents will appreciate it may take a little time for Jacqui to be fully acquainted with the range of duties this post covers; Newton Poppleford is quite complicated in some ways with the addition of their Trustees role for the Newton Poppleford Playing Field Foundation and responsibility for the cemeteries. It is a very busy and proactive parish council. Jacqui's working hours are **9.00am - 2.00pm Mon-Thurs and 9.00am - 12.30pm Fri**.

Green Spaces development officer

Russell Giblett is the new Green Spaces Development Officer. He has previously designed and managed green spaces in Sheffield and Amsterdam and look forward to working here in East Devon. His role will involve the development, design and restoration of East Devon's green spaces to make outstanding places for residents to enjoy. Now, more than ever, it is apparent how important green space is to mental wellbeing, physical wellbeing, climate regulation, biodiversity, flood prevention, education and much more. He hopes to help maximise the benefits green space can bring to the residents of East Devon. Key to making spaces people enjoy is to engage, educate and inspire the people that use them, you may come across Russell in the future, at the local school, in your local park or at an event nearby.

Omicrom Grant Scheme

The scheme went live on Monday at 17:30 for applications. EDDC received 17 applications the first evening before they sent out emails, letters and newsletter.

1116 emails were sent on Tuesday morning and a further 533 hard copy letters to advise businesses the scheme was open and they could start claiming. These were the businesses EDDC believed were eligible through modelling against the business rates list. This was followed by the business newsletter being sent to 2582 business and additional social media posts.

To date EDDC have had 498 applications and approved 136 for payment. A further 23 have been reviewed and either rejected, rejected but can re-apply or further evidence requested.

Payments should start to be made on Monday and businesses have until the 18 March 2022 to apply.

Here is more information:

[Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant \(OHLG\) - East Devon](#)

EDDC's new Climate Change officer

Catherine Causely has been in post as the new EDDC Climate Change Officer for a few months now and here is an update on what she has achieved so far:

Organised carbon literacy training to raise awareness of the impact of carbon emissions; what we can all do at an organisational and personal level.

Created two energy films in conjunction with Exeter Community Energy, funded by EDDC. The aim of these films is to help families in fuel poverty to access support by spreading the word about the help available.

'Exeter Community Energy Video1' and 'Exeter Community Energy Video2', available on YouTube, illustrate the support for residents to help them reduce their energy use and fuel costs. Fuel prices have risen substantially and are expected to rise again, so it is vital for us to promote the support residents can obtain through organisations such as Exeter Community Energy and our own financial resilience team.

The third film about Community Larders, funded by Devon Climate Emergency through the Climate Hub, was match funded by EDDC.

'Food for Thought', also on YouTube, focused on the work undertaken by EDDC Community Worker, Victoria Robinson, in forming a very successful working partnership to ensure over 600kg per week of perfectly useful food does not go to waste. This is distributed by eight community organisations to those who may need it. The central message was help us to prevent food waste and reduce the environmental impact of throwing food away.

In addition, Catherine has:

Set up East Devon Eco Groups to share funding information quickly and easily via Facebook. To date, 25 groups have joined.

Joined local environmental groups, again with the aim of exchanging information and project details.

Given a number of talks to interested groups, to build awareness of our climate change action plan and strategy and to receive feedback.

Submitted regular articles to the Residents and Staff newsletters and shares funding support with all the community pages, eg the LAD2 funding project.

Schemes in the pipeline include:

1. Three Electric Co Cars to be installed near our offices at Exmouth and Honiton

- this will enable staff to use a low carbon vehicle for essential travel.
- a secondary aim is to make these vehicles available to residents for hire outside of work hours at evenings and weekends.

Please note this is a year long trial.

2. Cycling infrastructure

- working with Transition Exmouth to measure and monitor the impact of their low carbon community funded e cargo bikes, for which EDDC will be providing the storage facility.
- providing more cycling infrastructure across major towns in East Devon, where required.
- creating some additional cycle parking for non standard bikes, eg family bikes and cargo bikes.
- adding a covered bike storage area for e bikes and evaluating the potential for charging a small sum for this secure storage facility.
- providing bike parking next to dedicated Co Car charging points in public car parks.

3. Carbon calculator - being created by Exeter University to help us make informed decisions.

It will:

- Provide reliable and useful data for the baseline audit on staff travel for work
- Enable departments to measure and set targets for reducing their business-related travel and associated carbon emissions.
- This tool will also play a part in decision making, eg where EDDC base offices or depots in future and provide carbon figures on team meetings and full council meetings.

4. Train the Trainer

- Following on from the carbon literacy training, there are plans to fund and train four staff members to deliver in-house carbon training.
- The eco training was not as well attended by councillors as hoped but there will be a need to train new starters and new councillors in future.

5. E cargo bike delivery service

- Transition Exmouth has raised over £13,000 through crowdfunding to purchase two e cargo bikes so that a local low carbon delivery service can be set up.
- data will be collected to see whether the scheme can be replicated across the district.

6. Low carbon lifestyle project

- five volunteers are trialling a six month programme of low carbon actions to understand the effectiveness and acceptability of this programme.

7. Website

- EDDC website will be updated to improve the environmental offering.
- the aim is to showcase simple strategies to help residents reduce their own carbon footprint using existing information where possible.

8. Business project

- Environmental Health will explore the potential to support businesses in the district to reduce their carbon footprint.
- this will involve the SW Manufacturing Advisory Service (SW MAS) and will hopefully provide light touch support to 50 businesses and in depth support to 15-20. This is still a work in progress, currently only one East Devon business is involved in this scheme.

9. Carbon change action plan

- In August 2022, after the publication of the Devon Carbon Plan, EDDC will need to refresh and potentially realign some actions in the climate change action plan.
- this is a working document which was always designed to be updated as required.

10. Parish and Town Council project

- the majority of councils are yet to publish their climate plans and may need assistance with producing these.
- a trial project is to be undertaken with two Parish Councils and their communities. If successful, this project will be rolled out in 2023.
- It is envisaged that different levels of support and resources will be needed as no two councils are the same.

11. Green Day

- Plans are coming together to host an event during June 2022 involving the community and community groups to identify and discuss matters which are important to them.
- Green Day will be primarily a networking event. However, there will be speakers and workshops to facilitate learning and showcase what support is available, including partner organisations such as Devon Communities Together.
- June will be East Devon's sustainability month. Interest has already been received from Town and Parish Councils.
- In addition, EDDC employees and the Housing department will be running a plastic-free week challenge, where we will encourage and support people to try to live plastic free.

A) In the run up to this event, during May Councillors and employees will be invited to get involved too by participating in the EDDC plastic free weekend experiment, so that they can understand what was easy, what was hard and what was impossible.

B) Catherine will also be working with schools in conjunction with Recycle Devon, who produce a plastic free lunchbox guide.

C) Please note there will still be a Green Day for Groups which will form part of a bigger series of events.

D) There will also be a week long eco film festival at Sideshore, in conjunction with Plastic Free Exmouth.

Finally, if you intend to hold events in towns other than Exmouth during June, please send details to Catherine Causley so that she may coordinate and publicise these on your behalf. Let's make June 2022 a month to remember!

EDDC reminds parents and carers not to miss out on £2000 childcare grants

Thousands of working families in the South West could be missing out on an opportunity to get up to £2,000 a year to help with the cost of childcare, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding parents, ahead of February half term.

Tax-Free Childcare – the 20% childcare top-up – provides eligible working families with up to £500 every three months (or £1,000 if their child is disabled) towards the cost of holiday clubs, before and after-school clubs, childminders and nurseries, and other accredited childcare schemes.

Tax-Free Childcare is available for children aged up to 11, or 17 if the child has a disability. For every £8 deposited into an account, families will receive an additional £2 in government top-up. This scheme is one of many ways the government is supporting households to raise their incomes and keep more of what they earn.

Parents and carers can check their eligibility and [register for Tax-Free Childcare via GOV.UK](#).

Under 16s encouraged to sign up to vote in Welcome to Your Vote week



Welcome to Your Vote week: **Monday 24 January – Sunday 30 January.**

This week is the first annual UK-wide Welcome to Your Vote week - the ideal time to start conversations with young people

about democracy, politics, and all aspects of voting. It promotes political literacy education in schools and youth groups to help young people, aged 14-18, to be more confident to engage with democracy and to get the conversation about politics started.

The picture above has a link to the Gov.uk/registertovote site.

At least one in 10 children experience sexual abuse before the age of 16

It's estimated that one in ten children in England and Wales will experience sexual abuse before they turn 16 years old. That's equivalent to three children in every classroom. Most children won't tell anyone at the time of their abuse. That's why it's important for everyone to know how to spot the potential signs of child sexual abuse and where to go for support if they're concerned.

[The government's new Stop Abuse Together website](#) can help you learn to spot the signs, and have regular conversations with your child which can help keep them safe, and know when to reach out for more support. If you feel something's not right, you can call the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000**. No matter what's happened, there's always someone who will listen to you and take what you say seriously. All children have a right to be safe from sexual abuse, and we all have a role to play in keeping them safe. Here is the link for more information:

[Let's stop abuse together. \(campaign.gov.uk\)](http://campaign.gov.uk)

Public Toilets

EDDC have released the following information:

Enhanced Toilet Cleaning

Since the start of the pandemic, Streetscene have carried out enhanced cleaning in all of our open public toilets across the district, cleaning the toilets 3 times a day between our winter opening hours of 08:00 – 19:00

We were allocated an additional contingency budget of £51,308 to provide 6 months of enhanced cleaning of the toilets from the 21st of June 2021 to the 31st of December 2021

As we come to the end of that 6 month period and the allocated budget comes to an end, we will be reverting to our standard cleaning regime of 2 cleans a day within operational hours from the 1st of January. Winter footfall and toilet usage are generally very low in the new year and subsequent winter months. By scaling back to 2 cleans a day in the quieter months, it allows EDDC to carefully monitor the situation and re-review in March in preparation for the spring/summer season. They have carried out Benchmarking with other local authorities to see what the wider Devon approach is, and all three neighbouring authorities have already reverted to pre-pandemic cleaning (1-2 cleans a day).

Toilet consultation

As part of the toilet review it was agreed that facilities that are currently closed (some of the Cat B's and C's), would re-open from April 2022 (although debate at Cabinet suggested earlier) subject to completed compliance checks and risk assessments. These would remain open until the future of those sites has been decided and completed for up to a year.

Streetscene will begin to make those preparations in the new year, however, I feel there needs to be a couple of caveats to re-opening those additional sites;

· While Covid case rates are high, we can't consider re-opening those facilities. We would need to see a sustained drop in figures before giving the green light in the new year. This is important so that our operational staff can service the open facilities to a good standard (2 cleans a day), and monitor cleansing standards during this period. Otherwise, we may need to request further budget for enhanced cleaning, which given the deficit may be difficult to achieve.

· Secondly we are currently carrying vacancies in Streetscene, and while ordinarily, this is part and parcel of operations we need to factor in the possibility of further staff having to self-isolate and the possible impact this will have on the toilet cleaning and the wider service. If this is the case in the New year, this would also delay the re-opening of the additional closed sites.

It's going to be a big step change reverting to standard cleaning, and pre-pandemic operation so we need to ensure we time it correctly and we can walk before we run. It's also worth mentioning that 2 of the 7 closed sites are seasonal toilets so wouldn't re-open until April 2022 in any case.

These toilets are currently open from 8.00 am to 7.00 pm:

- *West Street Car Park, Axminster*
- *Cliff Path (West End, Steamer Steps), Budleigh Salterton*
- *East End (Lime Kiln), Budleigh Salterton*
- *Station Road Car Park, Budleigh Salterton*
- *Jubilee Gardens, Beer*
- *Dolphin Street Car Park, Colyton - please note we will only be opening the disabled toilet at this site.*
- *Exmouth Bus/Train Station, Exmouth - The opening was funded by Exmouth Town Council*

- *Foxholes Car Park, Exmouth*
- *Magnolia Centre, Exmouth*
- *Manor Gardens, Exmouth*
- *Phear Park, Exmouth*
- *Queens Drive/Old Lifeboat, Exmouth*
- *Lace Walk, Honiton*
- *Harbour Road/ Thury Harcourt Place, Seaton*
- *Seaton Hole, Seaton (closed during the winter season)*
- *Seaton Wetlands, Seaton*
- *West Walk, Seaton*
- *Arches, Sidmouth - please note this facility is paid for and managed by Sidmouth Town Council, they will only be opening the disabled toilet at this site*
- *Connaught Gardens, Sidmouth*
- *Longpark, Sidmouth - please note the facility is paid for and managed by Sidmouth Town Council.*
- *Market Place, Sidmouth*
- *Triangle, Sidmouth*
- *Port Royal (Alma Bridge), Sidmouth*

The following toilets remain closed for the time being:

- *Brook Road Car Park, Budleigh Salterton*
- *Dolphin Street Car Park, Colyton - Ladies and Gentlemans toilets*
- *Imperial Recreation Ground (Royal Avenue), Exmouth*
- *The Maer, Exmouth*
- *Jarvis Close, Exmouth*
- *Orcombe Point, Exmouth*
- *King Street, Honiton*
- *Marsh Road, Seaton*
-

Recycling and Waste Collection

Here is an update on the current situation from the EDDC officer:

Our collecting capacity is severely stretched at the moment due to a combination of having to deal with record tonnages of recycling and the loss of a number of crew members each day due to self-isolation.

The very high weights of materials are generated by a combination of factors.

- *We are larger than ever before as we now service 72,500 properties*
- *Our participation rates in recycling remain very high*
- *Household consumption is high due to pandemic affects eg working from home, self-isolation and internet shopping with less consumption taking place away from the home*
- *The above has significantly changed the composition of our recycling stream particularly increasing glass, food and cardboard volumes*
- *The way bank holidays have fallen this year has given longer spells between collections for some areas*

This had led to a large number of incomplete rounds each day over the last week. These will be caught up but due to the material volumes this is taking some time.

Crews are regularly collecting tonnages of over 8 tonnes/day with some exceeding 10 tonnes/day resulting in the need to 'tip' vehicles 4 or 5 times/day.

Rest assured our operational team are deploying all of the available capacity we have each day and are planning in the catch-ups as soon as we can. Our Recycling Officers continue to make sure the system runs as smoothly as possible and trouble-shooting where necessary. We are typically working 10 and 11 hour days.

We are providing you as much update information as we can but please appreciate each day presents us with a dynamic situation so the updates may not be as comprehensive or timely as we would normally like.

The general guidance to residents on leaving containers out on our web-site still applies. As always we ask for patience whilst we manage the extraordinary situation.

Looking ahead I anticipate that the very high volumes of material will start working through the system and things will start to ease a bit towards the end of January.

Currently we have 5 or 6 crew members needing to self-isolate each day which has eroded the additional capacity we put in place to cope with the anticipated high volumes.

As the material volumes drop off in time my main concern is the level of self-isolations we may get as the new COVID variant spreads in the general population. This could prolong the high pressure period. We will need to tackle that as it arises.

Coleridge Medical Centre announces the permanent closure of its Newton Popleford surgery.

It will come as no surprise to those who have not already heard that Coleridge has now confirmed it will not be restarting surgeries in Newton Popleford. This is despite it being a real life-line for residents who cannot drive and despite the possibility of updating the surgery to bring it to modern standards by splitting the waiting room into two rooms and so on. The good news is that due to boundary changes agreed by the CCG, some people in Newton Popleford will be able to register at Sidmouth Beacon Medical practice now. This is dependent on your postcode but it is well worth checking out if you are unhappy being registered with Coleridge. If you search for Coleridge Medical Centre and catchment area you will see that a couple of roads in Harpford (Knapps Lane, Hayne Hill) and Venn Ottery and Southerton remain in the Coleridge Catchment but the rest of the village appears to be able to register with Sidmouth. Newton Popleford residents can also register with Budleigh Salterton doctors practice. Cllr Jess Bailey has asked for the closure of the NP surgery to be discussed at DCCs Health and Adult Care Scrutiny meeting on 20th January 2022 at 2.15 pm as she feels residents have been very badly let down and Chair of the parish council Chris Burhop has also written to the Sidmouth Herald outlining his concerns and may also speak at the meeting.

East Devon Economy Bouncing back

Here are some extracts from a recent EDDC press release:

The pandemic has brought acknowledgement of the link between health and outside spaces. This recognition and a need to transition to net zero carbon means businesses see wellbeing and the environment as priorities. East Devon District Council has seized this challenge and is looking towards a clean and green future. The Council is driving clean growth to reduce carbon emissions and providing greener, healthier, more vibrant places to live and work, including in its Exeter and East

Devon Enterprise Zone. Cllr Paul Hayward, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy at East Devon District Council, said:

During the first half of 2020, and as a result of Covid-19, East Devon lost more than 1,000 jobs, including the collapse of Flybe. Many of these jobs were high value and skilled roles but jobs were also lost in the lower paid sectors of our economy. These job losses had a profound effect on our residents, on our towns and villages and on our entire district economy. Our overriding priority is to strive for a resilient and sustainable economy to promote prosperity in the District. We are actively seeking to increase the levels and quality of employment, and to raise wages levels across East Devon. These efforts are starting to see results. Our plans for clean economic growth means we now have around 500k sq ft of employment space either under construction or being refurbished -- a significant proportion of this to the highest environmental standards.

Opportunities for sustainable growth in the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone are also welcome. Devon County Council has invested almost £4 million into The Future Skills Centre, providing the region with a specialist facility to deliver training for high-tech jobs in engineering, digital, construction and clean growth. Training and education opportunities for young people as well as adult learners to upskill or retrain for a new career are provided by Exeter College's new Future Skills Centre conveniently located adjacent to Exeter Aerospace. The specialist facility delivers training for future-facing high-tech jobs in engineering, digital, construction and clean growth.

Rob Bosworth, Deputy CEO of Exeter College, said:

The Future Skills Centre is thriving and has the potential to go even further now the aviation sector is building back stronger and smarter. We have installed electrification training bays, purchased new aviation engineering systems, invested in a brand new cabin trainer and are about to make a significant investment in immersive technology to aid the skills requirements of local employers. We are very excited to announce the centre is full and we are exploring expansion plans with our partners. This all bodes well for the growth points in the East of Exeter and East Devon.

Looking back to spring 2020 where this shift began, undoubtedly the loss of Flybe and associated jobs in suppliers had a huge impact on the economy. By the autumn in the same year, Dublin Aerospace had established its first overseas subsidiary business, Exeter Aerospace, agreeing to take over much of the Flybe equipment and long term lease of hangars at Exeter Airport.

William Flaherty, CEO of Dublin Aerospace and Exeter Aerospace said:

When the opportunity arose to make Exeter the home of our first UK MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul), it was an easy decision for us. The availability of the Hangars and Workshops in Exeter, combined with an exceptional pool of local aviation and engineering talent, made it a hugely attractive location for us. The years of engineering experience built up on the site combined with the support and training facilities in the area spoke volumes for the commitment of all involved in developing MRO activities in Exeter. We are proud to have the opportunity to contribute to the successful future of Exeter Aerospace by creating further jobs and training opportunities for the next generation of aviators.

The Exeter Aerospace specialist facilities provide the perfect location for maintaining aircraft for Loganair, a major airline which has picked up many of the Flybe domestic routes including Belfast, Edinburgh, Manchester, Norwich and Jersey. Both Exeter Aerospace and Loganair are providing opportunities for learning new skills and providing jobs locally, helping the East Devon economy bounce back.

Jonathan Hinkles, CEO of Loganair said:

Our decision to have our aircraft maintained at Exeter Airport, not only brings highly skilled and high-value jobs to the area, but also provides environmental savings. Previously, our aircraft flew as far afield as the United States for their essential maintenance. Bringing this work to Exeter helps us with our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2040 while also supporting local economies.

“The environment is the biggest single challenge we face and we are extremely proud of the steps we are taking to address and reduce emissions from every Loganair flight through our carbon offset programme. We have also been introducing sustainable aviation and hydrogen fuel, in addition to battery electric and hydrogen powered light aircraft, in incremental phases as technological advances allow, for the benefit of our whole network.

In 2021, the first electric commuter flight in the UK took off at Exeter Airport, as part of a successful bid to UK Research and Innovation’s £30 million Future Flight Challenge. Ampaire, a leader in electric aviation, is leading a consortium testing regional electric aviation transport.

Susan Ying, Ampaire’s Senior Vice President for Global Partnerships said:

The consortium received £2.4M for its £5M 2ZERO programme (Towards Zero Emissions in Regional Aircraft Operations), to demonstrate hybrid-electric aircraft on regional routes in the South West of the UK. The 2ZERO programme is incredibly exciting for Exeter Airport as an important regional airport. This project really puts the airport on the map as a forward-looking airport and demonstrates our commitment, along with our partners, to making the future of aviation a sustainable one. We are looking forward to doing more in East Devon including the start of an apprenticeship offering with Exeter College Future Skills Centre this year.

The pandemic has brought a dawn of realisation about nature and its benefits for our health. Quality of life and access to green space has never been more important. In addition to East Devon’s existing areas of outstanding natural space of parks, gardens and nature reserves, a masterplan has recently been put in place for the new Clyst Valley Regional Park, with ambitious plans for expansion of tree cover and new public greenspaces linked with 80km of traffic-free trails. The National Trust’s Killerton Park is at the heart of the Clyst Valley Regional Park and already provides public access to gems such as Killerton Park and garden and Ashclyst Forest. Capitalising on the 150% increase in cycling seen locally on the Exe Estuary Trail, the first sections of a new Clyst Valley Trail will open in 2023. It will provide a green link, joining key employment sites at Exeter Science Park and Skypark with Exeter and Cranbrook

HMRC gives Self Assessment taxpayers more time to ease COVID-19 pressures

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is waiving late filing and late payment penalties for Self Assessment taxpayers for one month – giving them extra time, if they need it, to complete their 2020 to 2021 tax return and pay any tax due. HMRC is encouraging taxpayers to file and pay on time if they can, as the department reveals that, of the 12.2 million taxpayers who need to submit their tax return by 31 January 2022, almost 6.5 million have already done so.

HMRC recognises the pressure faced this year by Self Assessment taxpayers and their agents. COVID-19 is affecting the capacity of some agents and taxpayers to meet their obligations in time for the 31 January deadline. The penalty waivers give taxpayers who need it more time to complete and file their return online and pay the tax due without worrying about receiving a penalty.

The deadline to file and pay remains 31 January 2022. The penalty waivers will mean that: anyone who cannot file their return by the 31 January deadline will not receive a late filing penalty if they file online by 28 February.

Anyone who cannot pay their Self Assessment tax by the 31 January deadline will not receive a late payment penalty if they pay their tax in full, or set up a Time to Pay arrangement, by 1 April. Interest will be payable from 1 February, as usual, so it is still better to pay on time if possible.

The Highway Code – Summary of the Key Changes and Revisions on 29 January 2022

On the 29th January 2022, some major changes to The Highway Code will come into effect. I wonder how many drivers regularly check for these updates? These are particularly relevant to our village which does not have the best road safety record for pedestrians or drivers.

Rule H1 – introduces a new hierarchy of road users, recognising that drivers of larger vehicles have a greater responsibility towards more vulnerable road users: Truck drivers have the greatest responsibility, followed by van and car drivers, then motorcyclists, horse riders and cyclists, before affording pedestrians the most protection. This may sound unfair but when you think about it, makes perfect sense. A mistake from a truck or van driver will cause far more harm to a cyclist or pedestrian, than a mistake by them will cause to a truck or van driver.

Rule H2 – states that drivers should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. This is arguably the most significant change being made and one that drivers need to be very aware of particularly if driving in areas with lots of pedestrians.

Rule H3 – states that drivers should not cut across cyclists going ahead when turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane, just as you would not turn across the path of another motor vehicle. You should stop and wait for a safe gap in the flow of cyclists if necessary. This is mostly obvious, however drivers should take particular care when in slow moving traffic to give way to cyclists who may be passing on the left, whether in a cycle lane or on the road.

Rule 163 – provides guidance for overtaking motorcyclists, cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians:

- leave a minimum distance of 1.5 metres at speeds under 30 mph
- leave a minimum distance of 2.0 metres at speeds over 30 mph
- large vehicles should leave a minimum distance of 2.0 metres in all conditions
- pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 15 mph and allow at least 2.0 metres space
- allow at least 2.0 metres space where a pedestrian is walking in the road and pass them at low speed
- drivers should wait behind the motorcyclist, cyclist, horse rider, horse drawn vehicle or pedestrian and not overtake if it is unsafe or not possible to meet these clearances.

In other words, “pass wide and slow” and always wait until it is safe to pass.

Rule 239 – will introduce a new technique, known as the ‘Dutch Reach’. This advises that road users should open the door of their vehicle with the hand on the opposite side to the door they are opening which naturally causes the person to twist their body making it easy to look over their shoulder and check for other road users. Drivers are then more likely to avoid causing injury to cyclists or motorcyclists passing them on the road, or to people on the pavement.

The rules for cyclists instruct that on quiet roads, in slow-moving traffic, or at the approach to junctions or road narrowing’s; they should ride in the centre of the lane to make themselves as clearly visible as possible. Where it is safe to do so, they should move over to the left if vehicles wish to overtake. Drivers should therefore expect to see cyclists riding in the centre of the lane rather than the left. If they don’t move over immediately, bear in mind that they may be aware of hazards that you cannot see. Potholes or even painted lines in wet weather create hazards for cyclists that you may not be aware of.

There are also new rules re the use of mobile phones, towing trailers, yellow hatched grid fines and so on.

To regularly monitor updates you can visit Gov.UK's Highway Code updates page:-
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/updates>

Correction to Planning application commented on last month

Straightgate quarry planning permission – this should have read - a letter of objection was sent to DCC by the EDDC Planning Committee. EDDC are not the LPA for this application and don't have the power to refuse permission. Apologies for any confusion.

Local Matters

Flood and silt management

A local resident has been in touch with the Flood and coastal risk management officer at DCC with some potentially positive news about the management of silt that comes down from Harpford Woods into the village causing a hazard on local roads. It is about time there was a more proactive approach to this problem from both the landowner and DCC who has spent many hundreds of thousands of pounds cleaning up the roads over the years. The most recent communication sounded positive for a change in approach but time will tell. My thanks go to the resident concerned.

Wood stolen – Venn Ottery

Felled timber in 6-8' lengths was stolen from private land in Venn Ottery in early January 2022. If you are offered any wood that meets this description or have any information about the theft, please contact Cllr Howard Hughes through the Parish Council Website.

Back Brook – Chestnut Way

A resident reported that the banks of this brook are being eroded. EDDC are the landowners and the matter has been reported to them. An EDDC officer has been down to the site for an inspection and noted the remedial work required. He has explained that there are staff shortages within the team and that as there is no direct risk of flooding to local properties, the work will be completed but this may take some time while there is a backlog of work.

National Trust to remove dog bins from their land

A resident contacted me to raise concerns about this and the potential for an increase in dog excrement on the commons. I understand the National Trusts view, dog bins are very expensive to empty and maintain. Most dog owners use them responsibly, but numerous dog owners don't and continue to hang their black bags on trees and bushes or just drop them, whilst others will cheerfully allow their dog to poo anywhere they like including beside the bin, and make no attempt to pick up. I think it is a question of 'time will tell' as to whether people continue to act responsibly and take their dog poo home with them or whether they will lapse. I sincerely hope it is the former.

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.