

Cllr Paul Arnott

District & County Report May 2026

Great achievement for EDDC's Waste & Recycling Service

East Devon has been ranked top nationally for the lowest amount of residual household waste per household in the latest recycling and waste league table. This is a significant achievement and reflects the consistent commitment of residents alongside the dedication of collection crews and the wider recycling and waste team. The district has now retained a top ten position in the national league table for at least the last five years, demonstrating sustained high performance in recycling and waste reduction.

The latest result underlines the effectiveness of East Devon's approach and provides a strong foundation to build upon as the delivery of recycling and waste services transfers later this year to council-owned company EdenServ. The council anticipates that the same high standards of performance and customer focus will continue through the transition and beyond.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who recycles and plays their part in keeping East Devon in great shape.

East Devon District Council invites views on draft Local Nature Recovery Plan in the Ave Valley

East Devon District Council is inviting residents, visitors and local stakeholders to take part in a public consultation on the draft East Devon Local Nature Recovery Plan. The consultation will help the Council understand how people experience and value nature in East Devon and what matters most to local communities. It will also help shape how the East Devon DC Countryside team can continue to support people and wildlife in the future. This work supports the Council's declaration on nature recovery and its enhanced biodiversity duties. The consultation closes on the 22 of May at 5pm. Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to take part in the consultation and share their views <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/edlnrpconsultation>.

The draft plan sets out priorities and proposed actions to guide nature recovery across the district. It is structured around five themes: lowland heathland, wetlands, woodland and hedges, species-rich grassland and urban fabric. These themes are based on detailed habitat mapping for East Devon which highlights important habitats and helps identify where action could be focused.

Nature recovery supports a wide range of local priorities. These include action on climate and biodiversity, flood resilience, public health and wellbeing, access to greenspace, air and water quality and place-making. The draft plan has been developed to support realistic and achievable action through existing services, policy, partnerships and influence. This approach reflects the context of local government reorganisation and restricted funding.

The draft plan supports the recently adopted Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy which provides a county-wide framework for coordinated action. Once the consultation has closed, feedback will be used to shape the final version of the East Devon Local Nature Recovery Plan. A detailed action plan will then be developed. This will set out desired outcomes, timelines, key partners, resource implications and priorities.

East Devon working cross-county borders for Stronger Flood and Erosion Protection in the South West

EDDC is positioned for stronger and more cost-effective flood and coastal erosion protection across the county, following a decision by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council's Cabinet. In May 2024, East Devon District Council (EDDC) was the first to join BCP in a new South West Flood & Coastal (SWFaC) shared service, creating a centre of expertise in FCERM and hosted by BCP Council. Since then, the team has seen great success in bidding for and delivering a multitude of projects across the shared service area, as well as supporting other risk management authorities in the South West. Now, Dorset Council's Cabinet has recently voted to join the shared service, and BCP Council's Cabinet voted to approve this request.

Working together will increase our ability to monitor our changing coast, and to access more investment, deliver climate resilience for our residents and reduce reliance on external consultancy support. People living in Dorset, East Devon and BCP will benefit from an increased ability to bid for grant funding to deliver more projects and better long-term protection across the South West; whether they live in Seaton, Swanage, or Southbourne."

Health Challenges in Rural Devon: Sir Chris Whitty visits Devon County Council

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and Chief Medical Adviser to the government, Sir Chris Whitty, visited Devon as part of a tour of the country's rural towns and communities. His fact-finding mission is looking at the health challenges for people in small towns and rural areas, for an annual report he will publish for government later this year.

On his visit, he met senior officers and councillors from Devon County Council's Public Health Devon team, as well as representatives from Trading Standards and the council's Communities and Active Devon teams, at County Hall, Exeter.

Sir Chris wants to understand what the challenges are in respect of good health for people in small towns, and what local authorities, the NHS, and community partners are doing to improve it. The availability of good quality affordable housing and the issue of homelessness were among the topics highlighted by the council as a challenge in Devon.

Sir Chris was told about the challenges around rural deprivation, food insecurity, and fuel poverty. He heard about the health inequalities for people living in urban and rural Devon, the challenge of rural deprivation and exclusion, particularly in relation to access to services.

He also heard about the challenges that young people in rural areas have accessing education, training, and employment opportunities. Devon's aging population was also highlighted as a challenge, with health and adult social care services supporting one of the highest percentages of older people in the country.

This is a key area to explore. In Devon, our records show that some people are dying up to 15-years earlier than they should because essential building blocks of health – things like reliable transport, access to education and training, decent digital connectivity, and services that people can reach – are missing.

Professor Chris Whitty said:

“I was delighted to visit the Devon County Council public health team and for the opportunity to see the excellent work they are delivering, together with partners, to improve the health of people in Devon.

“Improving population health across geographically dispersed rural and coastal communities is difficult, with challenges for many residents accessing physical or digital services. Despite these challenges, the local team is doing fantastic work to support the health of their communities.”

My County Councillor Localities Budget

Applications for this funding for local projects has just been reopened for 26/27. My budget will have around £15,000 available and I am looking for local projects of £500-£1000 mainly which will support imaginative improvement to lives delivered by our amazing volunteers in the Seaton & Colyton county division.