

# Parish report from your District Councillors

## August 2024

### New Community Woodland for South Hams



An exciting and ambitious woodland deal for a new 65-acre community woodland has been agreed and will be created in South Brent.

With the support of the Government's Trees for Climate Land Acquisition Fund, South Hams District Council has been able to buy the site. This is part of the District Council's priority to tackle climate change and increase biodiversity by 20% over four years. Tree planting will start later this year with a community planting event.

Leader of South Hams District Council, Cllr Julian Brazil, says: "We are so thrilled and excited about this project. As an ambitious administration this is all about what we are trying to achieve. It emphasises our priority around the climate change and biodiversity agenda, but it does so much more. We will be working with local schools, social prescribers, and other local community groups. It will leave a lasting legacy for the South Hams. We hope to plant around 25,000 trees on this site. It is the start of us planting a tree for every resident of the South Hams"

As part of the woodland, the fields will continue to be a productive landscape, with parts of the site still being grazed. As part of the varied community proposals, an orchard and a market garden will be created in partnership with local group, Sustainable South Brent to deliver the project for their local area. They are passionate about the project and will use some of the woodland for education and community food production.

Over the coming months South Hams District Council will engage with local residents over proposals for the site and consider detailed design and planting with the community, partners and stakeholders. The planting will be supported through a partnership with the Woodland Trust and their MoreWoods scheme.

The planting will be supported through a partnership with the Woodland Trust and their MOREwoods scheme, which is funded by Lloyds Bank.

Outreach Manager for the Woodland Trust, Eleanor Lewis, says: "This is an excellent opportunity for a new woodland serving the South Hams. MOREWoods is an established scheme that provides expert advice, funding and trees to landowners who want to create a woodland."

"With careful planning this site can deliver huge benefits for people, wildlife and climate, as well as incorporating local aspirations for continued local food production on part of the land. We look forward to working collaboratively to design a woodland that can deliver multiple benefits with the local community at its heart."

The next step is to share proposals with the local South Brent community at a drop-in event. This will be held on Wednesday 14 August in the Aune Room, Old School Community Centre in South Brent from 3 to 8 p.m.

# South Hams Council demands answers from South West Water



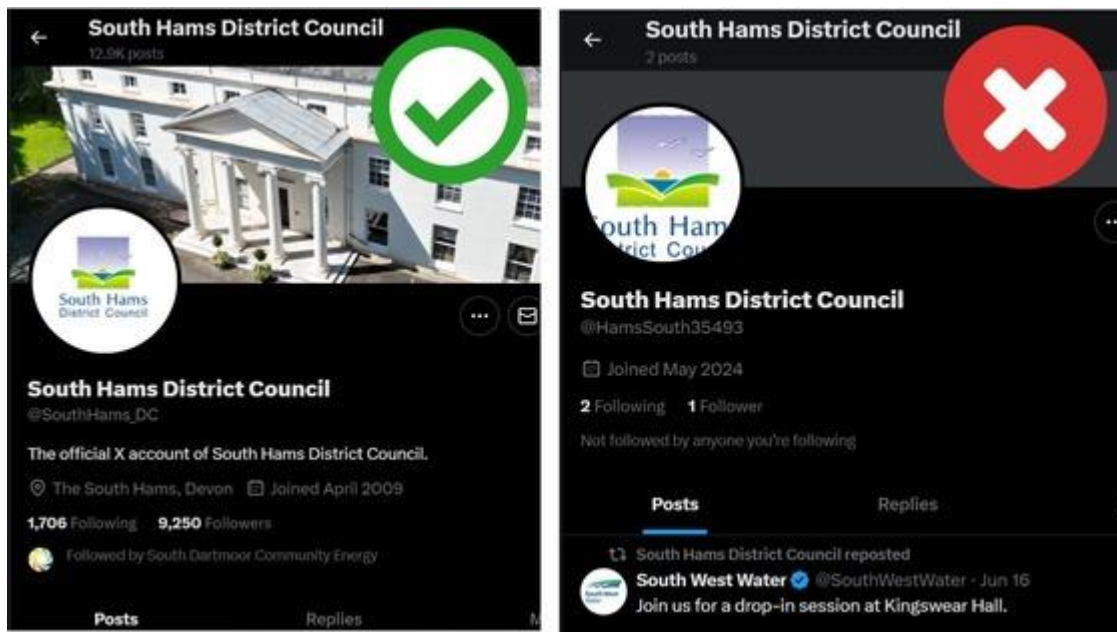
At its July meeting District Councillors unanimously resolved to demand that South West Water makes significant environmental and water quality improvements and called on the Chief Executive to attend a Water Summit with MPs, Councillors and community groups. The motion:

- Calls on the government to recognise the guiding principle in all policy that clean water is a right and not a commodity;
- Calls on the government to ban all bonuses and company dividend payments until such time as the Environment

Agency's Environmental Performance Assessment (EPA) metric is 'good' (4 stars);

- Calls on the government to limit the time to no more than five years to reach an EPA of 4 stars after which it would take the company into 'special measures' with a view to the possible creation of a public benefit company or re-nationalisation;
- Calls on South West Water to provide a detailed plan and timetable on how it intends to achieve an EPA of 4 stars and to undertake to consult with and seek the approval of all the local authorities in its service area;
- Calls on South West Water to provide a detailed plan on how it intends to reduce leaks by at least 50% in the next 5 years;
- Calls on South West Water to provide a full explanation of why it initially failed to detect the presence of cryptosporidium in the Brixham water supply, either directly or through regular monitoring for e-coli as a proxy for its possible presence;
- Calls on the government to strengthen the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate so that they are better able to monitor and provide oversight of the water services sector;
- Requests the CEO of South West Water to attend a session of this Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to answer questions;
- Calls on the board of South West Water to give serious consideration to their position if the requests of this Council are unacceptable;
- Calls on the CEO of SWW to attend a water summit of local MPs, Councillors and Community Groups to explain the cause of recent failures, provide plans for remediation and answer questions, to be held by 30 September 2024;
- And in the meantime, highlights to Devon County Council that a review is required on the impacts of South West Water's vehicles and services causing damage to other infrastructure (i.e. highways and rural roads that are not being repaired and maintained). This Council therefore calls upon Devon County Council to address (as a matter of urgency) the outstanding damage and repairs that are required to be addressed.

## Beware fake SHDC X (Twitter) account



We're aware of a fake X (Twitter) account imitating our own. [@SouthHams\\_DC](https://twitter.com/SouthHams_DC) is the only official X account for South Hams District Council.

Watch out for the @HamsSouth35493 account - we've already reported it to X as fake and will be monitoring it until it is removed.

## Decarbonisation programme

SHDC is supporting local businesses and helping them to become more energy efficient through a decarbonisation scheme. As part of our efforts to support both the economy and natural environment, we're providing funding for a specialist business consultancy, being run by Libraries Unlimited.



The funding is being provided through our Council's £60,000 share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Those who take part can also apply for Rural England Prosperity Fund decarbonisation grants, which could help to pay for implementing one or more of the measures highlighted in their decarbonisation plans. Please help sign post local businesses to more information.

They can sign up for the project by registering an interest online at <https://bipc.librariesunlimited.org.uk/decarbonisation-plans/>

They can also find out more [on our website](#) and by [watching our YouTube video](#).