



South Hams
District Council

Working for our communities

Our 2023-24 Annual Report



April 2023 - March 2024

Welcome

As the Leader of the Council, I am pleased to welcome you to the 2023/24 Annual Report for South Hams District Council.



Cllr Julian Brazil

Leader
South Hams District Council



Following the elections in May 2023, we have developed a council plan reflecting the priorities of our residents and ambitions of the new administration. This new plan sets out a clear long-term vision for our place, supported by detailed annual delivery plans. They are very much a vision for people and place, going beyond the core services of the council, reflecting the opportunities and challenges faced by residents and businesses. They embrace a broad range of ambitions and actions, many of which will be delivered in collaboration with our key partners.



We are demonstrating leadership and taking direct action to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss. South Hams was ranked 13th nationally amongst district councils on its strategic plans which were independently reviewed by Climate Emergency UK. The housing crisis continues to be a significant concern for many local people and the provision of affordable and social housing is a key priority for the council moving forward. The council has built eight affordable homes at St Ann's Chapel near Bigbury and we have also taken the opportunity to lever in Government funding through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) to purchase 11 new build homes for refugees and for use as temporary accommodation.

In March of this year, we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake

a peer review of both South Hams District Council and our shared services partner, West Devon Borough Council. Their key finding was that 'South Hams is a high performing council, which is well led and managed and is delivering consistently well on behalf of its communities'. The report pointed to the key significance of the partnership arrangements between South Hams and West Devon supported by a single workforce, and integrated systems and process, and concluded that 'it is this joint working that is at the heart of a highly productive organisation'.

The report also highlighted the council's sound financial management. The report stated that 'the council has an excellent track record of financial management and planning, which is one of its underpinning core strengths'. We are proud of the findings of the LGA report and

its recognition of our work to date, and we will continue to build on those strong foundations to make South Hams District Council the best it can be for our residents, businesses and communities.

The peer team commented on our good organisational leadership, robust governance and effective performance culture which is delivering improved outcomes. We would like to thank all of our councillors, staff and partners who have delivered this together. We have finished the year with our finances reporting a small surplus of £29,000 against budget (0.25% of a £11.738m net budget for 2023/24) which puts us in a good position for the year ahead. The council is on a stable financial footing, and this will help it to navigate the uncertainty of the future local government funding reforms.

Our Ambitions for the future ...

South Hams is a very special place, but it also has its challenges.

The lack of local affordable housing is an ongoing issue that is a top priority for the council to address. Together with the environment and biodiversity issues it will all take time to find solutions. But in everything we do, we have South Hams' communities at the heart.

To ensure we focused on the right things over the next four years, throughout 2023/24 we developed our new Council Plan.

The Council Plan was developed to build upon election manifesto commitments, what our councillors have heard from residents in their communities and through a formal consultation. All District Councillors were able to contribute to its development and shape the priorities.



The consultation consisted of a ten-week consultation made up of an online survey, short polls on social media, public engagement events – such as pop-up conversations in our markets and a paper survey for residents that aren't online.

The consultation means that we now have a clear focus for delivery for the next four years, with a plan that reflects the challenges and opportunities facing the district.

➤ [South Hams Council Plan](#)

... and support right now

While our Council Plan and ambitions set out our overall direction of travel, we know that the ongoing cost of living continues to be a real concern to our residents, many of whom need vital support right here and now. During the year we've taken steps to support our residents including:

- Awarding 4,913 residents reductions in their Council Tax to help towards paying their Council Tax bills;
- In July we made £150 payments to single income households in receipt of Council Tax reduction, those with caring responsibilities and military veterans with a further payment of up to £250 being made in December 2023 – direct financial support for 536 residents;
- Launched a further fund for residents to apply to where they found themselves in financial hardship which saw us award 1430 residents with a total of £374,662 in financial support;
- Launched a Council Tax discretionary discount of up to 100% to Devon County Council care leavers within the District up to their 25th birthday;
- Awarded £6.1m in Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief to 1,009 local businesses to support them through difficult trading conditions;

- Seen our key partner, South Hams Citizens Advice, offer help to 5,200 residents to generate £1.6m of income gain.

Looking ahead to 2024/25, it is clear that cost of living will remain a challenge. In January 2024 we took steps to update our Council Tax reduction scheme for the coming year.

To find out if you're eligible for Council Tax Reduction visit:

➔ [Council Tax Reduction](#)





Action on

Climate Change and Increasing Biodiversity

During 2023/24, the Council ramped up its efforts to take action on Climate Change and Biodiversity loss. We know that we cannot do this alone and so in July we formalised a partnership with Sustainable South Hams in order to work together on a range of projects.



Reducing the impact of South Hams marine sector

As a coastal district, the marine sector is a really important one for South Hams, and one that we've focused on through the year in terms of understanding how we can reduce the environmental impact.



Pioneering vessel recycling project

In the spring we launched a project aimed at preventing abandoned boats from ending up in landfill. Working with Creekside Boatyard in Dartmouth we are dismantling a sailing boat that has reached the end of its useful life and looking at ways to fully recycle all parts of the boat.

The findings from the study will help support local harbour authorities and coastal communities who struggle to dispose of abandoned vessels in their harbours, marinas and boatyards.



Understanding our Harbour impact

Working with the Carbon Trust, we've taken steps to really understand the carbon emissions of all marine vessels that use Salcombe Harbour. A study concluded that both Commercial and Recreational berth holders are the primary emissions sources, with Council owned vessels coming in behind them, at around 50tCO₂e per year. Now we understand the impact, it's important that we look at how we can reduce it. In the coming year we'll be undertaking feasibility studies to establish repowering opportunities for the Lower Dart Ferry, next to the waste and recycling fleet, the Dart Ferry is a primary source of the Council's own emissions.



Working together to increase biodiversity and enhance green spaces

In addition to our coastal areas, we of course have many amazing green open spaces in the District. 2023/24 has again seen a number of partners and communities coming together in a collective effort to enhance and protect these for the future.



Restoring rare insect populations

Did you know that the South Hams is home to a number of rare insects such as the long-horned bee that can be found at East Prawle. During the year our key partner, South Devon National Landscape launched a multi partner project to help restore thriving populations of some of the UK's rarest insects living along the coast between Berry Head in Torbay and Wembury near Plymouth.

The award to the partnership led by the South Devon National Landscape together with main partner Buglife, as well as the National Trust, Doorstep Arts and Southwest Coast Path Association will engage farmers, communities, schools, gardeners and businesses to make more



space for nature along the coast, targeting the needs of the rarest species with measures that also help more common wildlife.

New trees and wild flowering in Totnes

During September, we completed improvements to the Arboretum at Follaton – a much-valued green space in Totnes. 40 varied large standard trees have been planted to compliment existing trees while several hundred young trees have also been planted to create new wildlife copses. Meadowland was also enhanced, supporting an increase in biodiversity. Huge thanks to Parklife South West for working with us on the improvements!



Another Green Flag for Kingsbridge

In July, Kingsbridge recreation park again won a green flag award. The recreation park is a vital green space for the local community, bringing people together and providing opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles. It's a great recognition of the combined effort of Kingsbridge in Bloom, Kingsbridge Town Council and South Hams District Council – a real team effort to provide ongoing safe and attractive open spaces in the district.

Enabling local climate and biodiversity action

In November we launched our Climate and Biodiversity Councillor fund – each of our 31 District Councillors being allocated £2,000 a year for local community action. Just a handful of the schemes supported so far include:

- 100 trees planting in Totnes;
- A climate change outreach programme for schools;
- A wildlife interpretation board at a local allotment and wildlife project at Manor School (Ivybridge);



- River sampling equipment for Rattery;
- A wildlife pond project at East Allington School;
- A project to support Hedgehogs around West Dart;
- Conversion of batter operated speed signs to solar powered in Shaugh Prior.



Making sure our own services play their part

As we've set out, partners and communities are playing a key part in responding to climate change and increasing biodiversity, and through the year the Council has also taken more steps to make sure our own services reduce their climate impact.

A cleaner fleet for the future

Before we're able to fully change our light fleet to electric, we need to make sure that there are sufficient charging points in place. This year a Rapid Charger has been installed and is operational at our Headquarters (Follaton House). This was a big project that meant also upgrading the mains electricity grid to power the charger. The charger is for the public, filling a large geographical gap in the charging network as well as to promote staff uptake of electric vehicles and provide additional fleet charging capacity alongside the Totnes Depot rapid charger.

The charging infrastructure has also been completed at Totnes depot where our community service team have successfully trialled 3 electric vans.

An analysis of fleet EV use has been carried out to compare the operational costs with conventional fleet vehicles, the results are being used to forward plan our light fleet replacement schedule.



Tackling the Housing Crisis

Providing genuinely affordable housing is a key priority for the council, as well as combatting homelessness and making sure residents' homes are fit for purpose and free from damp and mould and we believe we have made a positive start during 2023/24.





Housing that meets the needs of residents

During the year we've seen real action on beginning to address the housing crisis within the District, from finalising our own build properties to bringing forward plans to support our communities identify sites for future development.

First council-built homes in a generation

In November, we officially completed eight new affordable homes in St Anns Chapel – the first time in a generation that the District has built its own homes. The properties include 2 and 3 bedroom homes and bungalows which are built to lifetime home standards. They have been carefully designed to be accessible and adaptable so that residents can stay in their homes for as long as possible.

The homes also benefit from state-of-the-art energy saving technology with highly insulated triple-glazed units, underfloor heating and ventilation systems which will help tenants save money on their energy bills.

Each home also offers two parking spaces, an electric charging point and access to green spaces for the whole community to enjoy.

Launching the South Hams Housing Offer

In our drive to tackle the housing crisis, in February we launched the South Hams Housing Offer which will help local communities deliver more affordable homes in their area.

One of the most challenging problems facing residents is a shortage of properties which they can afford, so the South Hams Housing Offer intends to help remove some of the barriers for communities who are trying to bring forward their own housing projects.

The offer includes technical advice, help exploring possible sites and also support for landowners looking to donate or sell land for housing development.

➤ South Hams Housing Offer

Taking action on below standard rental homes

Making sure that residents have access to safe and good standard housing is essential to their wellbeing. In June, we took steps to give residents in social and private sector housing a route to report concerns about the quality of their home. Our team will then offer support and advice to tenants and where it is a serious issue, follow up directly with the landlord for a resolution.

Housing for those who need a little more help

We know that some residents need a little more support than others when it comes to accessing safe, secure and good quality housing. Through the year we've had a focus on doing more to support those finding themselves in difficult circumstances, residents faced with becoming homeless, young residents who are leaving care and refugees within the District.



Supporting those in need of temporary accommodation

Unfortunately, there are times where residents find themselves without a long-term home. During the year, 233 households have been supported to move to permanent, secure accommodation through our Devon Home Choice waiting list. We have also secured 11 properties which the Council owns and can be used for temporary accommodation. Using some of our own funding but also government funding from the Local Authority Housing fund it means we'll have our own temporary accommodation units to support residents who find themselves in need.

At the end of the year, we also purchased a large property in the Kingsbridge area which we will be refurbishing as further temporary accommodation which will be ready from Autumn 2024.

Enabling residents to stay in their own homes

Sometimes residents find themselves in a position where their current housing is no longer suitable due to a disability. Rather than them moving to another property, the Council has funds to support the adapting of their current home meaning that they can stay in their local community.

During 2023/24 we installed:

- 154 stairlifts;
- 82 accessible bathrooms; and
- 21 complex adaptations.

As an example, during the year we supported a resident who had been struggling with their landlord for over 12 months to get changes made to their property when they found they needed ramps and low level access shower facilities. The team worked with the landlord to develop a solution which meant the resident could remain in their home but at the same time, should they move out of their property, the landlord could reverse some of the changes to meet the needs of any new tenants.

In total, £1.4m was invested in similar schemes during the year.



Supporting residents who have been in care

The Council is committed to ensuring young people living in Devon leaving the care system have somewhere safe and secure to live as they transition to independence. Most importantly that they have the same opportunities as other young people.

We are taking a lead role in partnership with other councils in Devon to make improvements in 'supported accommodation' options available, access to tenancy training & specialist support, and wherever possible support young people into suitable housing when they leave care.

We have already introduced a Council Tax reduction and a leisure pass scheme so that we can support people with managing their money and their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Playing our part in a global effort

Throughout 2023/24 we continued to support those residents arriving in the South Hams from areas affected by conflict through government resettlement schemes. The Council's resettlement team have worked with 261 individuals in 124 households, providing advice and ensuring that the homes they move in to are safe and sufficient for their needs. Working with partner organisations such as Citizens Advice and South Hams Community Action, a complete support package has been put in place for each of the arriving families.

The support package has included specific financial advice, 33 support group meetings and a job fayre attended by 50 Ukrainians which resulted in 3 immediately being offered employment.

We have also secured three Ministry of Defence properties in the district to provide much needed accommodation.

We would like to take the opportunity to again say a huge thank you to the hosts who have opened their homes to Ukrainians arriving under the government Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Energy Efficient homes

Our efforts around housing are not limited to delivering more homes, but also centre around ensuring that the homes residents have are as energy efficient as possible. This is really important, not only for the health of residents who can have warmer and cheaper to run homes, but also to contribute to reducing our climate impact.

Enabling lower income households to make greener energy choices and save money

The Council has a key role to play in facilitating energy efficiency grants for local residents. We have secured government funding to offer grants to local residents looking to improve their energy efficiency. From solar panels, better insulation, greener heating, improved ventilation and more, we are helping residents lower their energy bills and give them more control over their energy use.

During the year one Totnes resident was supported to install solar panels, an air source heat pump and energy efficient radiators as part of the project.

For the year ahead, we've set ourselves a target of delivering 55 further energy efficiency grant projects to properties within the district. This may not seem many in the scheme of things but given each scheme can cost between £10,000–£20,000, it's a significant annual investment in supporting energy efficiency.

To find out if you are eligible for support visit:

[➤ Help to Reduce Fuel Bills](#)

Trialling a new service for our residents

During the year we were really pleased to be able to launch a small but important new offering to residents on a trial basis. As the cost of energy remains high, it's important that our residents understand what they can do to improve their energy efficiency which is why we've been trialling a thermal imaging camera scheme. Working with Town and Parish Councils who kindly facilitated the loaning to residents, we're now evaluating the trial.

Where residents identify issues with heat loss from their property, they've been able to get advice and support from partners such as South Dartmoor Community Energy and Energy Saving Devon who have supported free home upgrade plans, applications for energy grants and to signpost to reputable installers of energy efficiency measures.

Due to the nature of the scheme, it can really only operate during colder months. If you're interested in the scheme, visit:

[➤ Thermal Imaging Camera Hire](#)



An economy adapting for the future

This year saw the Council continue to work across the District to support the resilience of our Economy. Through our work, we've really focused on supporting businesses to adapt and to be at the forefront of emerging sectors such as regenerative farming.

Million-pound investment in economic development

Back in 2022, the Council secured £1m of Government funding (known as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund) to support our communities work towards net-zero. Throughout this year we have continued to deliver a range of business and community support projects which include an award-winning regenerative farming project and a world leading marine vessel recycling project.

As part of our programme, businesses have been provided with free specialist support to help decarbonise their activities, and grant support is available to help them deliver projects that will reduce their environmental impact.

Our active and inclusive travel projects will see the delivery of an e-bike hub in Totnes this year, and bike storage provision across the District to make active travel more accessible for people.



Supporting our towns to shape their own futures

During the year we've worked with Ivybridge Town Council, Ivybridge Community College and other groups in the town to understand what residents want for the future of Ivybridge. Over 500 consultation responses were received highlighting the desire for more health facilities, business support, better transport and more activities for young people.

Part of the consultation involved working with sixth form students from Ivybridge Community College to ensure that the younger community can share their views and influence important decisions. The students formed their own steering group, created a young persons survey and launched their own marketing campaign to encourage other young people to get involved. The next step is to turn all of the ideas into a Community Economic Plan for the town. Alongside development of the Ivybridge plan, in the coming year we'll commence a similar programme in Salcombe and Totnes.

New commercial units for Salcombe marine businesses

In July we welcomed the first tenants to the new commercial units for Salcombe. These units deliver the right infrastructure in the right location to enable small and medium enterprises to set up permanent bases and provide year-round support to Salcombe's marine industry.

A full range of marine businesses will occupy the commercial units to support Salcombe's marine needs. The first businesses, The Wolf Rock Boat Company and Salcombe Rigging Services are now operating from their new premises. A number of the businesses moving into the units have said how having a local base has enabled them to expand their operations and support local jobs in the marine industry.





G&H | Artemis, Langleage Science Park

Plymouth and South Devon Freeport

The Council is a founding member of the Plymouth and Devon Freeport alongside Plymouth City Council and Devon County Council. During 2023/24 it has begun delivering benefits for the area. In February, working with partners, it launched a skills-based work academy to support people back into employment. It is anticipated that this will support the creation of 90 new jobs in the Freeport area.



Cycling and Walking ... a plan for the future

We know that many residents enjoy being active and walking or cycling is much better for our environment than jumping in the car! To enable more active travel in the future, throughout 2023/24 we've been developing our thoughts on a 20 year Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure plan. The proposal has been asking for the views of residents from across the District to help shape how we can improve the ability to get around the area by walking or cycling. The plan is that a document will be developed to set out how future planning and policy decisions can take cycling and walking connectivity into account – reducing peoples reliance on vehicles and making healthier lifestyle choices.



Community Services

We know that one thing that our residents expect from us is to deliver good quality, responsive community services. During the year we've continued to see improvements in our waste and recycling services as well as working with partners to deliver a number of community schemes that will be valued by our communities into the future.



Follaton House – a building for the community

In May 2023, we began the process of reopening the reception at Follaton House which has enabled those residents that are not online to engage with the Council face to face. Many of the organisations that we've been able to welcome to the building are aligned to our priorities – such as Devon County Council, the local MP's Office and Bob the Bus. So that we can welcome customers visiting us and our tenants, in the spring we refurbished the reception area to include new meetings spaces for the Council and its partners to use when working with our residents. Follaton House is now really developing into a public sector office hub! It has also meant that we have been able to rent out much more of the vacant office space and maximise the use of our space.

We're also seeing many more of our partners making use of the building for meetings such as South Hams Community Action, South Hams Arts Forum and Citizens Advice. To ensure that the facilities are the best they can be, during 2024/25 we look forward to welcoming a new social enterprise to operate a café in the building and open to the public.



Helping residents to recycle more

In a bid to reduce the District's climate impact, it's really important that we all play a part in reducing, reusing and recycling. In November we successfully rolled out the kerbside recycling scheme to the final 8,000 homes. The new service enables us to take steps to increase recycling rates for the district and included the introduction of a weekly food waste collection to all residents. This means that the Council has now achieved the government's waste reforms for increasing recycling materials 2 years ahead of the deadline. Overall performance has improved and the Council is achieving the national benchmark for service performance.



Community stoked with finished skatepark

A new skatepark in Kingsbridge has been given a green light for community use, now that fencing has been removed.

Built during winter 2023, extra fencing was the last item to be completed to make sure the skatepark was completely safe for the park's users. With this now carefully in place, we would like to thank the community's skaters who have patiently waited for the opening. They will now reap the full benefits of the park with the better weather as we head towards the spring and lighter evenings.



Marldon to get composting

In addition to reducing, reusing, recycling household waste, another important action residents can take is to support local community composting schemes. In January, we were delighted to support the launch of a community composting scheme in Marldon. With a grant of £9,000 the group will be able to buy the required equipment and cover other set up expenses. Community Composting schemes are a great way of giving communities the chance to recycle green waste in a way that is easy to access and then take the locally produced compost home for their gardens – a real win-win!



District Councillors supporting community action

Our residents and communities have lots of great ideas for their areas, and to help get some of these ideas off the ground, each year our District Councillors have a budget to support local community projects. During 2023/24, Councillors awarded a total of £45,630 to 113 individual projects. The projects supported range from Dementia Support groups, water testing for local rivers, mental health assemblies and wildflowering activities.

Many of the groups also secured other funding towards their projects, with the total cost of the community projects delivered across the District totalling over £1m!

Another way that we support local community projects is by using developer contributions which are funds paid to the Council by housing developers so that we can ensure local amenities are in place to support thriving communities. In 2023/24 we awarded £195,000 of funding to improve open space, sport, recreation and community facilities in the district. This included:

- New play equipment in South Brent, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge and Strete;
- Improvements to village halls in Blackawton and West Alvington;
- Installation of solar panels at Stoke Gabriel Cricket Club;
- Clubhouse improvements at Stoke Gabriel and Torbay Police Football Club.

All great schemes that will encourage a real sense of community in the areas.

Finally, as another way of supporting community groups we have continued to operate the Seamoor Community Lotto which is raising over £30,000 a year for good causes across South Hams (and West Devon).



Good Quality Core Services

While we've been making great progress in delivering on our council ambitions, we've had an equally sustained focus on ensuring that our core services have remained good quality and responsive to the needs of our communities.

Just some of the activities we've been up to include:

- Demonstrating our commitment to protecting South Hams natural landscape, prosecuting a resident who illegally cut down two protected trees within a woodland near Hope Cove.
- Pursuing the planning enforcement in respect of Locks Hill (Kingsbridge) where a developer continued to progress house building despite the Council telling them to stop.
- In May 2023, we ran local elections for the District Council which resulted in the Council becoming a Liberal Democrat led authority. Our elections service is the only one that must plan to offer a service to every eligible adult within the District on a single day.
- In October 2023, our Senior Leadership Team won a coveted Municipal Journal Award for Senior Leadership Team of the Year, recognising the hard work and dedication of the top team and indeed all staff working to support our communities.
- October also saw the launch of a new website for the Council, intended to be easier to navigate and to find the top tasks that our residents use. Making our website easier to use means that less residents will need to phone us, freeing up our phonelines for those residents who are not online or have more complex issues. 75% of our online transactions are now rate 4 or 5 stars out of 5 for ease of use.
- November saw us going live with a new planning portal which makes it easier for interested parties to engage with the planning process, enhancing the customer experience.
- In March we finalised the delivery of a new Salcombe Harbour workshop and offices which are scheduled for official opening early in 2024/25.
- At the end of March we invited the Local Government Association to carry out a Peer Review of the Council – a chance for sector leaders to consider how we're delivering for our residents. After 4 days, 60 meetings and over 100 views from stakeholders, the report concluded "South Hams is a high performing council, which is well led and managed and delivering consistently well on behalf of its residents and communities".



“South Hams is a high performing council, which is well led and managed and delivering consistently well on behalf of its residents and communities.”

98.4%

Council Tax collected –
thank you to
our residents!

46%

Annual average Recycling rate
– more we can all do!

178

Households supported
and prevented from
becoming homeless

12

Complaints to the
Local Government
Ombudsman, only 1 of
them upheld

12 days

On average to process a
new benefits claim

92%

Planning Applications
determined on-time or
with agreed extensions
(average for year)

86,984

Calls handled by our contact
centre with 80% being
answered in under 5 minutes

95%

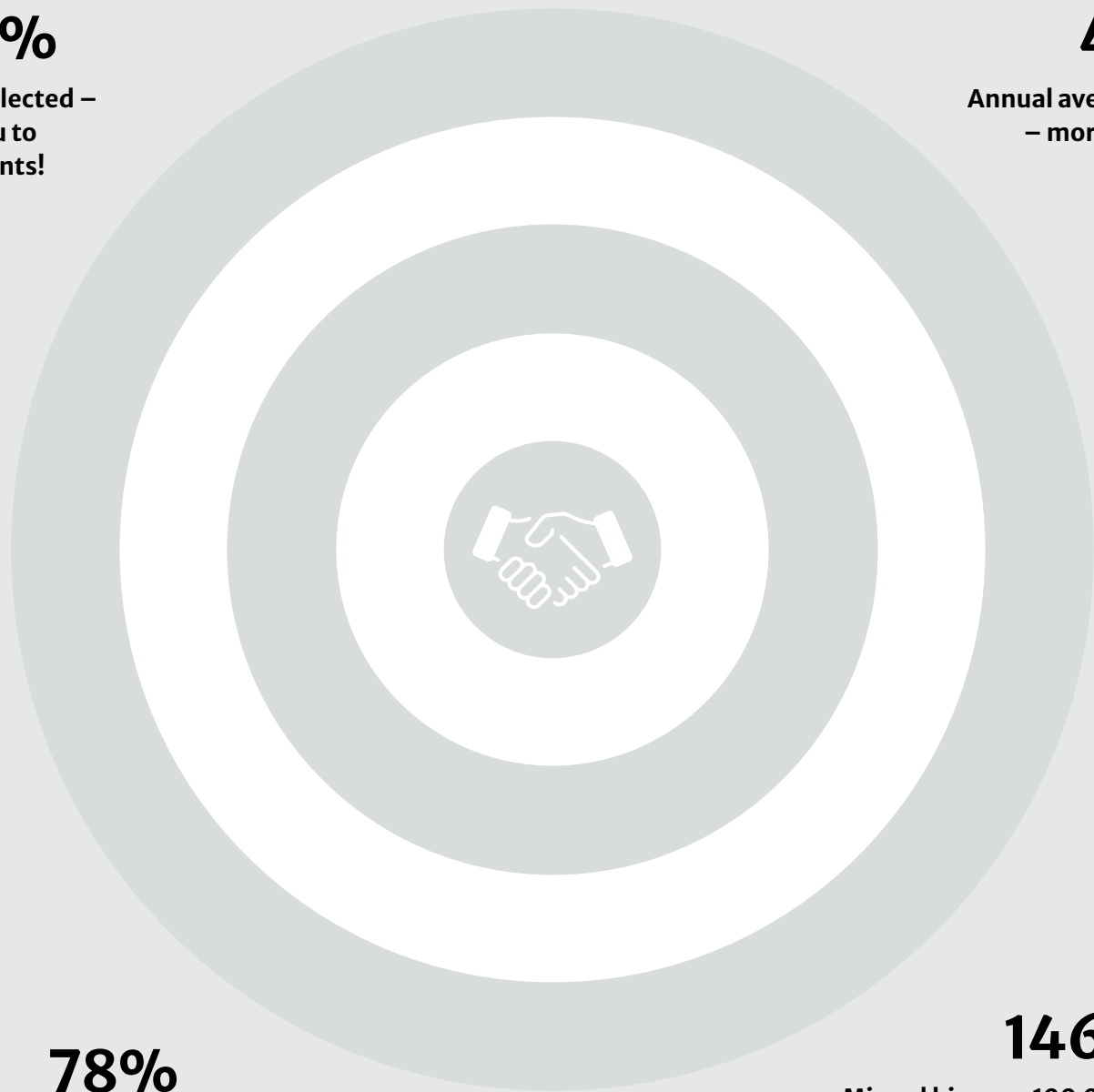
Of Council Business
Units occupied

78%

Of interactions with the
Council were online

146

Missed bins per 100,000 collections
due (average across year).. Down from
8535 per 100,000 the previous year



Well managed finances

In 2023/24, the Council generated £2.21 million of additional income and savings. This was from extra treasury management investment income (£1.1 million) by realising the opportunity from high interest rates and securing advantageous rates from reviewing market offers on a daily basis. The Council also generated additional car parking income (£0.39 million) primarily as a result of increased usage. Employment estates generated extra income of £0.309 million due to high occupancy rates and the Council secured extra business rates income from identifying renewable energy sites (0.207 million).

This additional income and savings were offset by the fact that the Council also incurred additional costs and a shortfall in income of £2.18 million. Many of the additional costs were as a result of the current economic climate with high inflation and the cost-of-living crisis. The extra costs incurred in the year included the impact of the national local government pay award (£0.56 million), the waste and cleansing service (£0.38 million) and temporary accommodation costs (£0.26 million).

The difference between the higher costs and the additional income achieved in 2023/24 equates to the overall surplus of £29,000.

| COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT | Actual 2022/23 £million | Actual 2023/24 £million |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Spending on Services | | |
| Customer Service & Delivery* (mainly frontline services such as Waste and Recycling, Grounds Maintenance and Revenues and Benefits) | 12.049 | 13.909 ¹ |
| Strategic Finance (including Pension Costs, Corporate Management and Finance) | 1.886 | 1.651 |
| Place & Enterprise (including Housing, Car Parking, Dartmouth Lower Ferry, Salcombe Harbour, Assets and Environmental Health) | 4.702 | 3.233 |
| Governance & Assurance (including Planning, Land Charges, Elections, Legal Services, Democratic Services and Insurance) | 3.055 | 3.605 |
| Cost of Services | 21.692 | 22.398 |
| Removal of technical accounting adjustments e.g. depreciation, revaluation and IAS19 retirement benefits | (8.563) | (5.462) |
| Cost of Services – excluding technical accounting adjustments | 13.129 | 16.936 |
| Income from Investments and other Adjustments** | | |
| Investment Properties | (0.911) | (0.900) |
| Interest and Investment Income | (1.146) | (1.937) |
| Interest payable and repayment of principal debt | 0.859 | 0.865 |
| Other adjustments | (1.507) | (2.825) |
| Net Cost of Services – to be met by local taxation and government grants | 10.424 | 12.139 |
| Income from local taxes and government grants | | |
| Council Tax income | (7.061) | (7.407) |
| Surplus on Council Tax Collection Fund | (0.181) | (0.332) |
| Business Rates | (2.574) | (3.024) |
| Non ringfenced government grants (including the Funding Guarantee of £0.69 million in 2023/24) | (0.665) | (1.405) |
| Total income from local taxes and government grants | (10.481) | (12.168) |
| Surplus for the year (to be added to the General Fund Balance) | (0.057) | (0.029) |



£3.9m

a year savings (since 2016) for South Hams by sharing services with West Devon

¹ For example, this figure should be read as £13.909 million

* The increase in Customer Service and Delivery net expenditure in 2023/24 of £1.9 million includes a full year of Waste and Cleansing salaries compared to six months in 2022/23, following the return of the service in-house in October 2022. In addition, the higher expenditure reflects the national pay award for 2023/24.

** Income figures are shown in brackets.

The 2023/24 budget for South Hams was £11.738 million but the actual net spend was 0.25% lower, providing a surplus of £29,000 for the year.

A consulting and engaging Council

Following the formation of the new Council in May 2023, the Leader committed to the Council being one that truly listens to its communities and that developing the Council Plan would be just the start of ongoing conversations with residents.

During 2023/24 the Council took a number of steps to consult and engage with its residents which included the below:

- We listened to local concerns about our parking plans for Dartmouth Health Hub through the consultation process and made changes to our plans which include adding an additional eight free one-hour parking spaces and additional free hour parking for Blue Badge holders in one of those existing parking bays.

- We consulted with our residents and partners on our draft Council Plan, seeking their views via an online survey, town and parish meetings and face to face engagement with residents out on the street.
- To inform our decision on the location of a new skate park for Totnes, we consulted with residents asking their preference over two sites for this key recreation facility.
- Our Council Tax reduction scheme is reviewed annually and so in September we asked our residents for their views on what the scheme should look like in the year ahead.
- We took steps to seek residents views on how and where we should enforce the need for dogs to be kept on leads and where we should limit access such as on beaches during the summer season.
- Held a series of roadshow events in and around Ivybridge and an online survey to inform the Ivybridge Economic Plan. The face to face engagement also included targeted session with young people in the town.
- We sought residents views in each of our towns on where we should ban public drinking in the district over the next three years.



We will continue to listen to our residents and communities, helping to shape our future priorities and plans. Make sure you follow us on social media, youtube or on our website to keep up to date on upcoming consultations.

Looking ahead

We think you'll agree that it's been a busy year for the district council, our partners and communities.

Looking ahead to 2024/25, we'll continue to ensure our core services are well delivered, vital support is provided to residents who need it and also to focus on:

- Progressing plans for a community woodland in South Brent;
- Welcoming the first residents to our Holywell Meadow development in St Ann's;
- Continuing to support local food producers;
- Taking steps to decarbonise our council buildings and operations;
- Continuation of installation of both fleet and electric rapid chargers;
- Developing an Arts and Culture Strategy;
- Delivering temporary accommodation units in Kingsbridge;
- Retrofitting 55 properties with energy efficiency measures;
- Working with Salcombe Town Council and businesses to develop a Community Economic Plan;
- Finalising a 20-year Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure plan for the district;
- Developing our approach to working with communities to help them realise their own ambitions for the area.



Keep up to date with what's
happening at the Council
throughout the year



South Hams
District Council

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