

Devon Countryside Access Forum
CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND RESPONSE
(not specifically on the agenda)

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	Sender	Subject	
1	Mid Devon District Council 17.04.23	Adoption of Air Quality SPD (2023) and revocation of the Air Quality SPD (2008) Mid Devon District Council adopted the Mid Devon Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2023 on 4 April 2023. A copy of the adoption statement is available online. The Council revoked the 2008 Air Quality SPD on the same date and ceased to make this SPD and associated documents available in accordance with Local Planning Regulations.	No action needed.
2	Clyst Honiton Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan lead 03.06.23	Clyst Honiton Neighbourhood Plan consultation.	Consulted with Chair and sent position statement on Neighbourhood Plans and Disability Access. Also mentioned that the Neighbourhood Plan makes no reference to horses and the Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that multi-use should be considered in terms of any recreational access improvements so that walkers, cyclists and horse riders have opportunities to walk/cycle/ride safely to other areas, for example the proposed Clyst Valley Regional Park/Clyst Valley Trail.
3	Marine Management Organisation 20.06.23	South West Marine Plans monitoring survey to provide . data on the use of marine plans in the decision-making process and support understanding of the influence marine plan policies have in decision-making.	Not completed as plans have not been used to support evidence used by the DCAF in responses.

4	East Devon District Council 13.07.23	<p>Draft East Devon Local Plan. The feedback will be reported to the Strategic Planning Committee of East Devon District Council on the 21 July 2023 – see:</p> <p>https://democracy.eastdevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&MId=2157&Ver=4</p> <p>Later in 2023 it is likely that the Council will produce a new Local Development Scheme, a project plan for local plan/Development Plan Document production. This will set out a new timetable for production of the local plan. It is envisaged further consultation will take place (Regulation 18 stage).</p>	<p>Report references DCAF comments.</p> <p>In this report there is no comment made on the comments received, and specifically no recommendations on if or how the plan might change in respect of feedback received. The Strategic Planning Committee of East Devon District Council will need to determine appropriate local plan policy, and therefore any plan changes, in response to the consultation feedback and any other existing or new or emerging considerations.</p>
5	Member of public 16.06.23	<p>Questions and concerns raised about Devon County Council's cutting policies on recreational trails, with particular reference to the Wray Valley Trail.</p>	<p>Referred to the Public Rights of Way and Country Parks Manager to respond. Comments were sent as follows:</p> <p>To provide some context, the Devon County Council Public Rights of Way team manages a 6,000-kilometre network of paths, off-road cycleways and minor roads across the County. The scale and extent of this network is such that it is neither practicable or financially viable to deliver a bespoke solution to management and maintenance of each individual path. With regards to key principles, Devon County Council recognises the importance of verges for biodiversity. DCC aims to carry out seasonal cutting work in a sensitive way, alongside responsibilities to make sure that vegetation does not act as an obstruction, nuisance or hazard to path users, and that sight lines etc. are clear. Linked to this, DCC is equally likely to receive public feedback</p>

			<p>requesting that more vegetation management work is carried out – concerns were recently expressed that vegetation growth on verges is potentially impacting on the use of cycleways and associated value in enabling sustainable, non-car travel choices (and carbon reduction).</p> <p>Key factors informing the current regime are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seasonal Vegetation Cutting (SVC) is undertaken on the Public Rights of Way and Recreational Trail network annually, typically with one or two cuts in late spring / early summer, followed (where needed) by scrub management in winter. This work is primarily undertaken to enable safe, unobstructed public use (a legal requirement, particularly under the Highways Act 1980), including for people with disabilities such as visual impairments and restricted mobility.• Public Rights of Way Wardens time the start of the verge cutting each year to reflect the extent and rate of vegetation growth. This can be as early as February in some locations, but more typically starts in May through to mid-July. Generally, this cutting regime helps to encourage a reasonably diverse mix of wild flowers and beneficial plants, including early-growing species that directly benefit pollinating insects. On some of our longer off-road cycleways and trails (for example where Devon County Council is the landowner), DCC usually carries out a winter cut, followed by a couple of lighter summer cuts to just a strip of
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			<p>verge – leaving the majority of the plants to flower and seed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Contractors do the majority of the cutting, although in some areas, local partners take a lead – for example parish councils and local community groups. • Contractors and partners are provided with guidance produced in consultation with the County Ecologist and relevant bodies such as the RSPB, with the intention of protecting nesting birds and small mammals. <p>In considering your concerns regarding the Wray Valley Trail, the cutting regime will be reviewed in liaison with the warden team to identify whether there are adjustments that can be made prior to next Spring and Summer. As indicated above, the Public Rights of Way team do have some arrangements with local community groups and so a potential option may be for interested parties to ‘adopt’ part of the trail to enable a more bespoke maintenance regime to be implemented.</p>
6	Mid Devon District Council 17.07.23	<p>Silverton Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>A re-consultation on the Silverton Neighbourhood Plan. The re-consultation is necessary so as to include the Environment Report (September 2022) that has been prepared by the consultant AECOM.</p>	<p>Discussed with DCAF Chair. A response was sent noting the additional context to the policies on access, public rights of way and greenspace and the associated aspirations. It was stated that the previous response sent by the DCAF still stands and noted that these comments will be taken into consideration.</p> <p>The Devon Countryside Access Forum’s position statements on disability access, landowner consultation and greenspace were submitted.</p>

7	East Devon District Council 15.08.23	<p>Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' by East Devon District Council and effective from 20 July 2023. See published <u>Decision Statement</u>.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of the Local Development Plan for East Devon, alongside the current adopted Local Plan, and will be taken into account in determining planning applications in the parish.</p>	No action required.
8	Open Access Centre 25.08.23	<p><u>Case number 2022119787 (2023) and 2023080001 (2024)</u></p> <p>Notification of discretionary restrictions under Section 22 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p> <p>The restriction applies to land at Hartridge Hense Moor and Luppitt Common for the following dates:</p> <p>2023 Tuesday 19 September Thursday 5, 12, 19, 26 October Thursday 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 November Thursday 7, 14, 21, 28 December</p> <p>19 of the 28 days allocated to this case have now been used. The details of appear on the Open Access website.</p>	For information. No action required.

In addition, the DCAF Forum Officer receives a large quantity of e-mail updates from Devon County Council and other organisations. Relevant information is extracted and circulated to DCAF members via regular newsletters, available on the website www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf or forwarded direct.