

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022.

In our recent community survey many of you said that this is the main way that you find out about WHPC activities so we have expanded the number of pages so we can tell you more.

In this edition we've devoted a couple of pages to the draft East Devon Local Plan as this will set out the local planning strategy for future years. We encourage you to take a few minutes to read our summary to understand its impact on West Hill.

We always want to hear the views of residents so please get in touch if you want to raise an issue or have an idea.

Cllr Margaret Piper, WHPC Chairman

In this issue

- *West Hill Community Survey – the results are in*
- *Playpark news*
- *East Devon Local Plan- what will it mean for West Hill?*
- *Be Bright - Be Seen – Special Offer*
- *Meet our Councillor team!*
- *...and dates for your diary*



Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, seventy years of service, having acceded to the throne on 6th February 1952 when Her Majesty was 25 years old.

Platinum Jubilee celebrations are planned throughout the UK, the Commonwealth and around the world but what will be happening in West Hill?

We're aware that West Hill's branch of the British Legion are planning a special community event for the extended bank holiday and street parties will be taking place across the village. Do let us know if you're planning a Platinum Jubilee event so that we can include it in the village programme for the Big Weekend, 2nd-5th June.

We'll share the Council's plans in our next newsletter.

Do you have memories or photos of West Hill's community events to mark the Coronation or Silver Jubilee (1977)? We hope to share them on our website or in our next newsletter. Please contact Anne, our Parish Clerk

Cllr Margaret Piper



West Hill's Annual Parish (Community) Meeting

All village residents are invited to West Hill's Annual Parish Meeting on

Friday 25th March 7.30 at Village Hall

This is a community event for West Hill residents to get together to talk about plans and ideas for the village and to meet the Parish Councillors.

It's an informal meeting with refreshments so please come along to learn about what is happening in the village and perhaps become involved in issues that matter to you. This is also an opportunity for community groups to advertise their activities and recruit new members so please get in touch if you would like to reserve a space.

As West Hill is a woodland village we have invited a guest speaker to give a short talk about 'Trees' – their maintenance, diseases and what signs to look out for, planting and what to plant etc – and to answer any questions. Plus, the Parish Council will give a formal introduction – but we'll keep it very short!

We hope you'll join us as a community we are stronger when we work together.

Cllr Margaret Piper

West Hill Community Survey

Thank you to all residents who took the time to complete our survey which ran during September-October 2021. We received 210 responses – 10% of our population.

The purpose of the survey was to help us understand what is important to residents, what they value about living here, how they view future development, what we as a Parish Council can do to improve life for residents and how we can keep everyone informed about our work.

We learned that residents:



value the woodland character of the village, as well as the landscape views.

would prefer future development to be small scale if possible

value the greenfield separation between West Hill and Ottery and would like that to remain

are happy with their social contact, though some would like a bit more

Want WHPC to continue to search for a recreational open space for everyone to use but recognise how difficult this will be

are concerned about road safety, speeding traffic and inconsiderate parking

would like additional dog waste bins

wish the village had a “hub” – a place to meet up socially

would like more facilities for young people

We'll use this information to shape our 2022-23 Plan and to inform our response to the East Devon Local Plan Review (*more on this on a later page*).

Although there was good awareness of the Parish Council website, there was even more awareness of our quarterly newsletter. We need to work on encouraging residents to use our social media, especially our website, which has the most important and up to date information.

The full survey results report can be found on our website: www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Please don't wait for the next survey to pass on your feedback or ideas. Thank you to everyone that contributed to the survey. We'd love to hear from the other 90% of residents! We're here to represent and serve you. It's easy to get in touch with us by email or phone. Our contact details are shown below.

Cllr Alison Carr

West Hill's Public Spaces

Playpark News

West Hill's younger residents want another piece of equipment in the playpark. West Hill's playpark may be small but Cllrs were determined to see what could be safely fitted in.

With the help of East Devon District Council WHPC conducted a survey of children in West Hill to identify what new piece of equipment they would like to have in the playpark. The preferred choice of the youngest children was a slide and the 5-11 age group suggested either a climbing frame, bouncing equipment or a slide. EDDC recommended installing a slide with a climbing frame access to suit both age groups.



to all those children who took part in the survey.



Photo re-produced with the permission of Rhino Play Ltd

Cllr Amanda Townsend

Ash Die Back in West Hill

Broadoak Plantation is a much valued area of West Hill. It is owned and managed by The Woodland Trust. Their recent inspection identified, as anticipated, the significant presence of Ash Die Back disease. The Woodland Trust have advised us that they plan to remove the Ash trees for safety reasons. The clearance will take place during the coming months and they hope to re-plant the area during the following winter.

WHPC monitors the woodland and regularly liaise with the Trust's contractors. We have put forward our preferred planting scheme and hope to work with The Woodland Trust to celebrate the Queen's jubilee, help the environment, and plant a special tree in memory of residents who succumbed to Covid.

Cllr Alan Cook

Community Public Access Defibrillators (CPADs): Can you help?

As a matter of community safety the Council is considering the provision and siting of additional public access defibrillators within West Hill: to add to that already available in the porch of the Village Hall.

The Council are seeking suitable sites to locate the CPADs within special cabinets, that need an electrical supply and be readily accessible, to provide availability in other parts of the community.

If you think you can help then please email della.cannings@westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

What is a defibrillator? A defibrillator is a small electronic device designed to allow minimally trained people to provide lifesaving defibrillation (electric shock to the heart) to victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

The Council will also look to arrange for familiarisation training for village residents, so should a crisis occur people feel more confident to use the defibrillator.

Cllr Della Cannings QPM





New Local Plan for East Devon: What's planned for West Hill?

What is a Local Plan?

Local Plans are used to help decide on planning applications and other planning related decisions. In effect, they are the local guide to what can be built where, shaping infrastructure investments and determining the future pattern of development in the district.

One of the key responsibilities for East Devon District Council is to create a **Local Plan**.

East Devon District Council (EDDC) has now started work on the Review of the current Local Plan. This will determine development in the East Devon (until 2040).

Creating the Local Plan is a lengthy process taking over two years to complete. The published dates for the key stages, including public consultation are

- Summer 2022 Public Consultation
- October 2022 Public Consultation on a revised Plan
- March 2023 Submission of the Local Plan
- July 2023 Inspector's Hearings
- February 2024 Adoption of the Local Plan

What West Hill Parish Council will do?

The Parish Council is committed to keeping West Hill residents informed as the review progresses. We will:

- Form a small working group to liaise with District Cllr Jess Bailey (who sits on the Strategic Planning Committee) to provide feedback and input into discussions of the Working Draft Local Plan
- Arrange public events in West Hill to publicise the Draft Plan and facilitate consultation for our residents
- Make a formal consultation response to the Draft Local Plan
- Arrange further consultation events for the Publication Version of the Local Plan
- Keep the website www.westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk updated with latest details

The next few pages set out what we know so far

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040

For the first time EDDC have published a Working Draft of the Local Plan. This can be viewed in full on the EDDC website. The many documents set out the current approach and thinking.

The Local Plan vision is:

To make a positive difference to residents' lives and our environment in East Devon. With three priorities:

- Better Homes and Communities for all with a priority on the importance of good quality, affordable housing suitable in size and location.
- A Greener East Devon, which prioritises issues arising from climate change and supports our natural environment.
- A Resilient Economy bringing prosperity to the district.

Housing Targets

According to the Government standard methodology, which is very difficult to challenge, East Devon

needs to provide 918 homes/year – 18,360 over the 20 year life of the Plan, + 10% buffer – so **20,196 homes in total**. The current Local Plan accounts for about **13,300** homes already which should be built in the years up to 2031, which leaves around **6,900** homes to be provided on new sites. The plan identifies suggested sites for 6,000 homes, leaving a requirement for land for 900 homes still to be identified.

The strategy for distribution of housing is for a substantial part of future development being concentrated on the western side of East Devon. A second new town is also planned. Across the rest of East Devon, there will be more moderate development, mostly in the main towns.

Villages with a good range of facilities will see modest provision for development, and villages with lower levels of facilities, hamlets and countryside areas would see limited development.

Where will the new housing go?

The Local Plan proposes a hierarchy of settlements, with more housing going to the higher tiers where there are more facilities and infrastructure, and development is more sustainable.

The preferred distribution of new development is shown in the schematic diagram below. WHPC believes there are some problems with this and there is a disconnect between the proposed settlement hierarchy and where the new houses are proposed to be sited. There are constraints on many of the larger towns because they are surrounded by the AONB or the coast. Also, the allocations are only selected from those sites which have been put forward by landowners/developers, rather than where the hierarchy suggests development should go. So there are Tier 3 settlements like Colyton, Budleigh Salterton which have hardly any proposed development, yet a Tier 4 village like West Hill is allocated 101 homes.

Strategic Policy – Settlement Hierarchy

This proposed strategic policy will set out the following settlement hierarchy, where the principle of development is accepted due to having access to a range of jobs, community facilities and services:

Tier One – Principal Centre: Exmouth

Tier Two – Main Centre: Axminster, Cranbrook, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton, Sidmouth

Tier Three – Local Centre: Broadclyst, Budleigh Salterton, Colyton, Lymington, Woodbury

Tier Four – Service Village: Beer, Branscombe,, **West Hill**, Whimple.

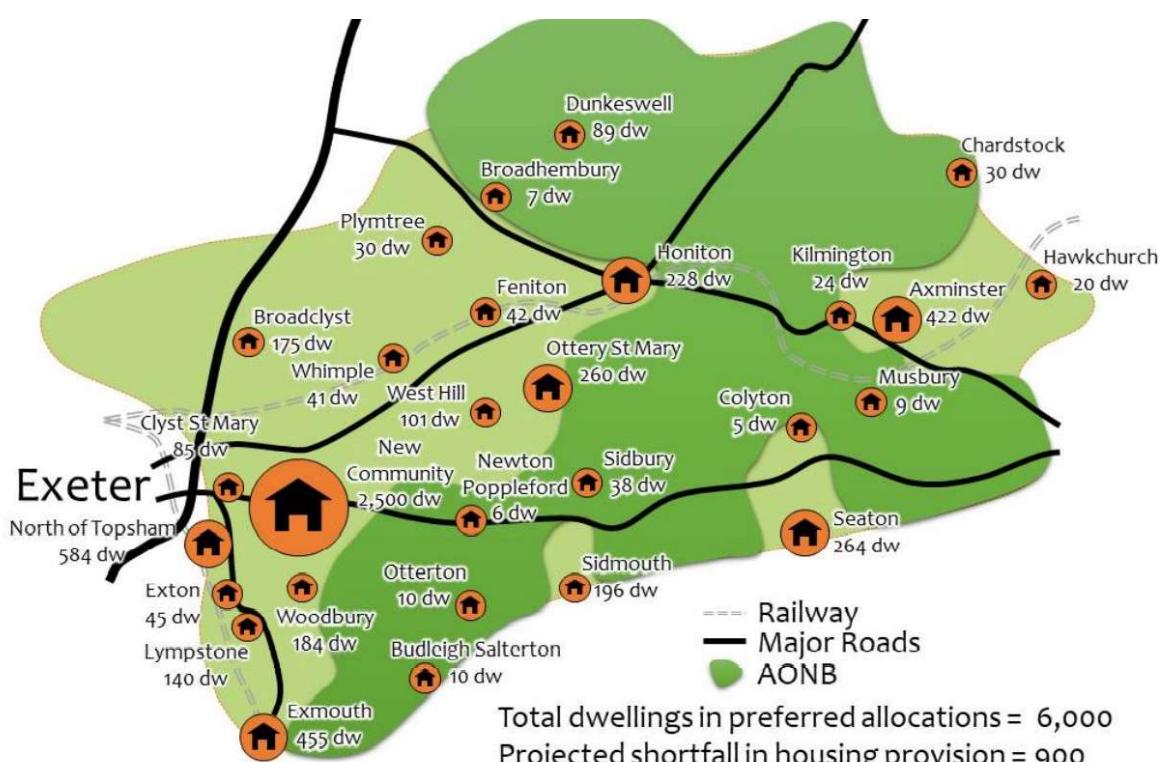


Figure 1: Preferred distribution of development

What does this mean for West Hill?

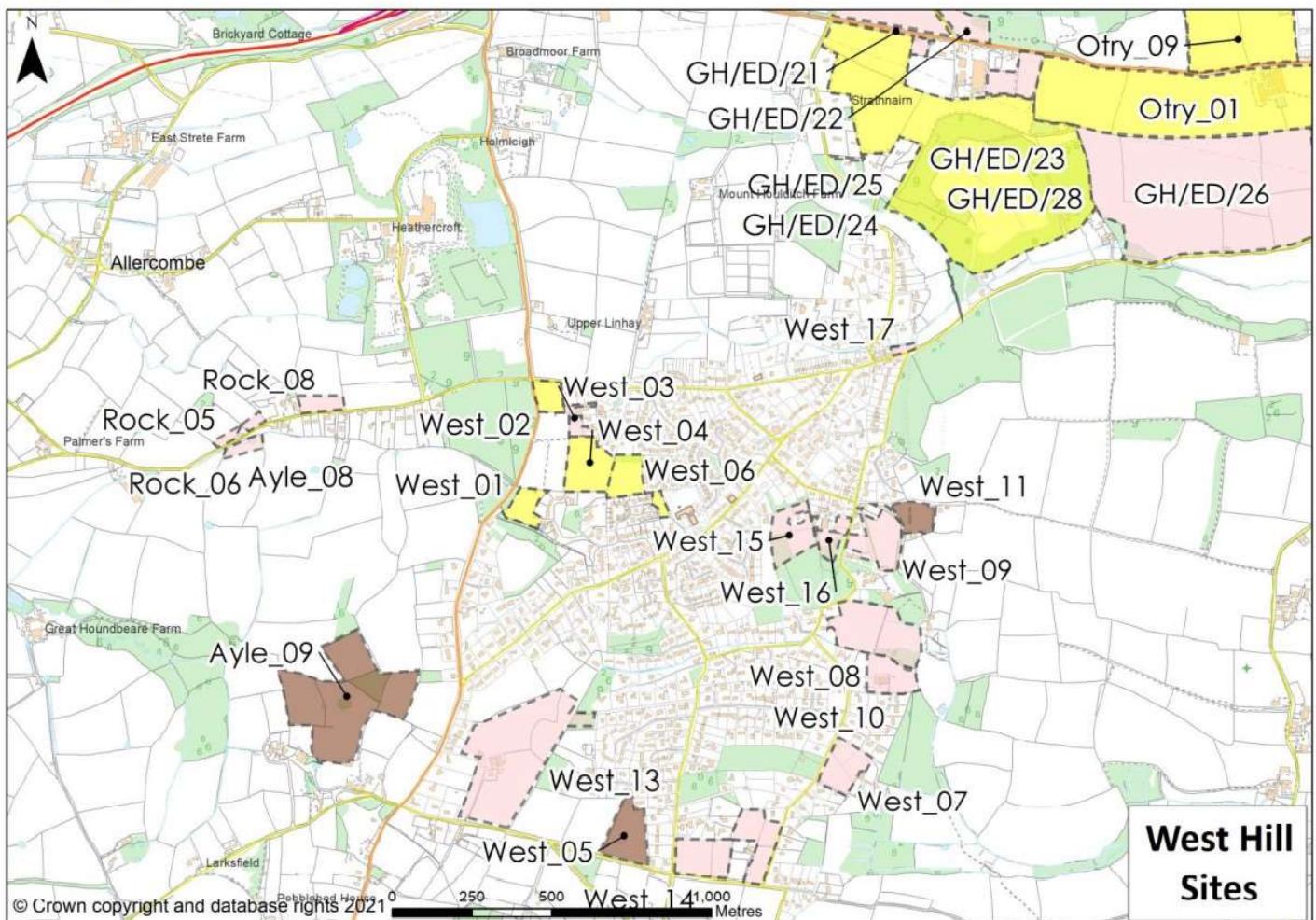
The suggested number of new homes for West Hill is **101**. However, if the 2nd new town that is proposed in the Greendale/Hill Barton area is not feasible – and this depends on the outcome of a feasibility study to be carried out in early 2022 - another 2,500 homes will have to be provided elsewhere in the district. This could potentially see West Hill with another **470 homes**.

The Parish Council's current thinking is that this is unacceptable. West Hill has poor transport links, limited connectivity within the village, poor public space and recreation facilities, and little employment within the village, so people have to travel out of the village to go to work. This makes large-scale development in West Hill unsustainable, and contrary to the "Greener East Devon" overarching strategy. We know that West Hill residents place a high priority on maintaining the special character of the village.

The sites put forward for West Hill have had an initial assessment by Planning Officers. An independent Housing Employment and Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) will assess all the sites in more detail, reporting in early 2022.

-  Key: Preliminary Suitability Rating
- 6 The assessment scale is rated 1-6, 6 being very suitable for development and 1 being a very poor choice for development. Sites rated 4 and above have been considered suitable for inclusion in the plan. It is notable that there are no sites rated 5 or 6 in West Hill.
 - 5 A more detailed assessment of the West Hill sites can be seen in the online plan on the EDDC website (starting at page 705)
 - 4
 - 3
 - 2
 - 1 The sites West_01, 02, 04, 06 & 17 have been suggested for allocation.

West Hill



Be Bright - Be Seen on West Hill's Lanes



WHPC Jan 2022 Safety Campaign

Please take care on West Hill's dark lanes. Long stretches of our roads do not have footpaths or footways causing pedestrians to walk along the roads. That danger is greatly increased by overgrowing and overhanging hedges that both restrict the usable widths of roads, footways and paths.

How can you help?

If you're a householder it's your responsibility not to cause an obstruction through overgrown vegetation. Please wrap up warm and brave the winter weather to check if **your** hedge is overgrown? There are a couple of months left of the hedge cutting season before bird nesting starts in the Spring.

Thank you to residents that have responded to our previous reminders.

Please contact the relevant authority (and WHPC) if you experience incidents such as

- near misses on our local roads, or
- instances of fear or danger on our roads.

Data recorded by Police, DCC Highways etc show there are few crimes and road collisions in our local area. This creates difficulties when trying to persuade the Authorities to take action on speeding

Pedestrians have responsibility for their own safety and those in their care. Please wear something bright to make sure drivers can see you (*and your dog!*). The Parish Council hopes to see more residents wearing something hi-viz when you're out walking. Walking is good but please keep safe whilst doing it.

To encourage you



- We are providing 'hi-viz' vests to all West Hill Primary School pupils to help keep them visible whilst out walking around the village on dark winter nights.
- We also have a limited supply of adult 'hi viz' vests available to residents free of charge on **Saturday 22nd January, 10-12am, at McColls**



New VAS: The Parish Council has agreed to purchase a second Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) to increase coverage across the village. We've liaised with DCC Highways to find suitable sites on West Hill Road. Two sites, near the War Memorial and near Eymore Drive, have been approved so that we now have a total of six around West Hill.

- One VAS device will be regularly moved between the sites on the B3180.
- The other VAS will be moved around the other sites within the village.

We'll continue to transfer the VAS between sites as official advice recommends that a VAS device is regularly moved to prevent drivers becoming used to a fixed location and ignoring the warning sign.

B3180: WHPC Cllrs were very disappointed when DCC Highways rejected a bid to extend the 30mph speed limit on the B3180 to the north of the village. DCC/EDDC Cllr Jess Bailey, WHPC and West Hill's B3180 Campaign Group presented their concerns that drivers, cyclists and pedestrians were at risk due to : too many motorists exceed the speed limit, too many HGVs are using the stretch, and the speed limit is not being enforced enough. The Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) members rejected the bid

- as signs in the proposed locations would be hidden by vegetation.
- extending the 30 mph limit would not comply with DCC's policy because of the number of property frontages along the section of road.

Cllr Bailey asked for DCC Highways and Police to look into other opportunities for boosting road safety.

... and finally Meet our Councillor Team

West Hill Parish Council has 7 Councillors



Cllr Margaret Piper. Chairman of the Parish Council

Margaret has been chairman since May 2021. She was a Exeter City Councillor for twelve years and is now an alderman of the City. She has worked in finance and administration in the small business sector all her life and most recently ran her own business. She is a keen rambler and loves travelling.



Cllr Alison Carr (Vice Chairman)

Alison has lived in West Hill for 8 years. Background in business and marketing but is retired now.

Alison runs the Parish Council Twitter feed and helps with the website.

Hobbies: birdwatching and skiing (not at the same time!)



Cllr Della Cannings QPM

Della is happy to listen to residents' views on community issues. Della's contact details are on the WHPC website



Cllr Alan Cook – a founder member of the Parish Council in 2017.

Alan and family have lived in West Hill for more than 50 years and has witnessed many changes in the village. He is passionate about maintaining the character of the village and in particular its trees. Alan (together with Dick and Eileen) run the Special Trees of West Hill (STOWH) community group.



Cllr Amanda Townsend

Amanda has lived in West Hill for 13 years, and in that time she has been the Chair of West Hill Pre-School, and the Chair of West Hill Primary School PTFA. Amanda enjoys being part of the West Hill community, and is currently a member of West Hill Speedwatch, which she fits around her shifts working as a meteorologist for the Met Office in Exeter and her family life with husband David, and teenagers Eleanor and Ciaran.

.... and our new team members



Cllr Peter Bennett – successful candidate in the Nov 2021 election.

Peter is the first elected member of the Council (other Cllrs were co-opted or candidates in an uncontested election). There is no legal distinction, but he does wish to thank the other candidates for standing and for the residents who voted in the election. As a Human Ecologist and a long-term resident of the village, he will welcome contact from other residents with any concerns, problems or contributions.

Vacancy

The WHPC Councillor vacancy was advertised in the December 2021. Councillors will consider the applications received and seek to co-opt at the 1st February 2022 Parish Council meeting.