

It is with extreme sorrow and deep respect that the Parish Council marks the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and sends sincere condolences to the Royal Family.

The Chairman of West Hill Parish Council attended the Proclamation of Accession at East Devon District Council offices.

Long Live King Charles III

Welcome to our September newsletter

Sep 2022

The Parish Council hope that you find this newsletter informative.

STOP PRESS: LOCAL PLAN NEWS

A current major issue regards East Devon District Council developing a new Local Plan for East Devon and in particular looking to where it is proposed new developments will occur. Page 2 gives details of the proposals for West Hill.

We have been given a clean bill of health on our accounts for 2021/2022. However, a resident had lodged a Notice of Objection on five issues, which they are entitled to do. The External Auditor stated that three issues were not eligible and the remaining two were not accepted for any further consideration. The External Auditor invoiced the Council for £1597.50 plus VAT, as the cost of their extra work. No budget had been set for such an unexpected cost which falls upon the Council and thus the community as a whole. Please go online and read the Minutes of the council meetings for further details.

We want to work with the community to bring about any necessary improvements for West Hill. We are exploring options with community organisations to support residents with the ever rising costs of fuel, food etc.

We always welcome your ideas and support.

Cllr Della Cannings, QPM, WHPC Chairman

Community Warm Rooms?



Rising fuel costs? inflation? The impact on individuals, businesses, communities over the future months is uncertain. The Parish Council is working with local organisations including the RBL, Village Hall, St Michael's, Ottery Help Scheme and others to explore what can be done to support the village community, if required. Perhaps to provide a central "community warm room", a social space with warm drinks. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering or could help with transport.

Please check the WHPC website and noticeboard for news of EDDC/DCC "Help for Households" etc.

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East Devon Local Plan News

Future Development in West Hill + Ottery St Mary?

East Devon District Council's (EDDC) review of the Local Plan has reached a significant stage. WHPC expects the Draft Local Plan to be published in mid-October for an 8 week public consultation. This will show which sites in West Hill and Ottery St Mary are being put forward for new housing development plus a suite of policies which cover the whole District. During the consultation Cllrs will engage with the community to formulate a response to the consultation. Members of the public can also submit their comments directly to EDDC.

A community drop-in session has been arranged for residents and Cllrs to discuss the proposals.

- **Community Consultation - Future Housing Development in West Hill?**
- **Friday 18th November 3.45pm – 8.00pm at the Village Hall**

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

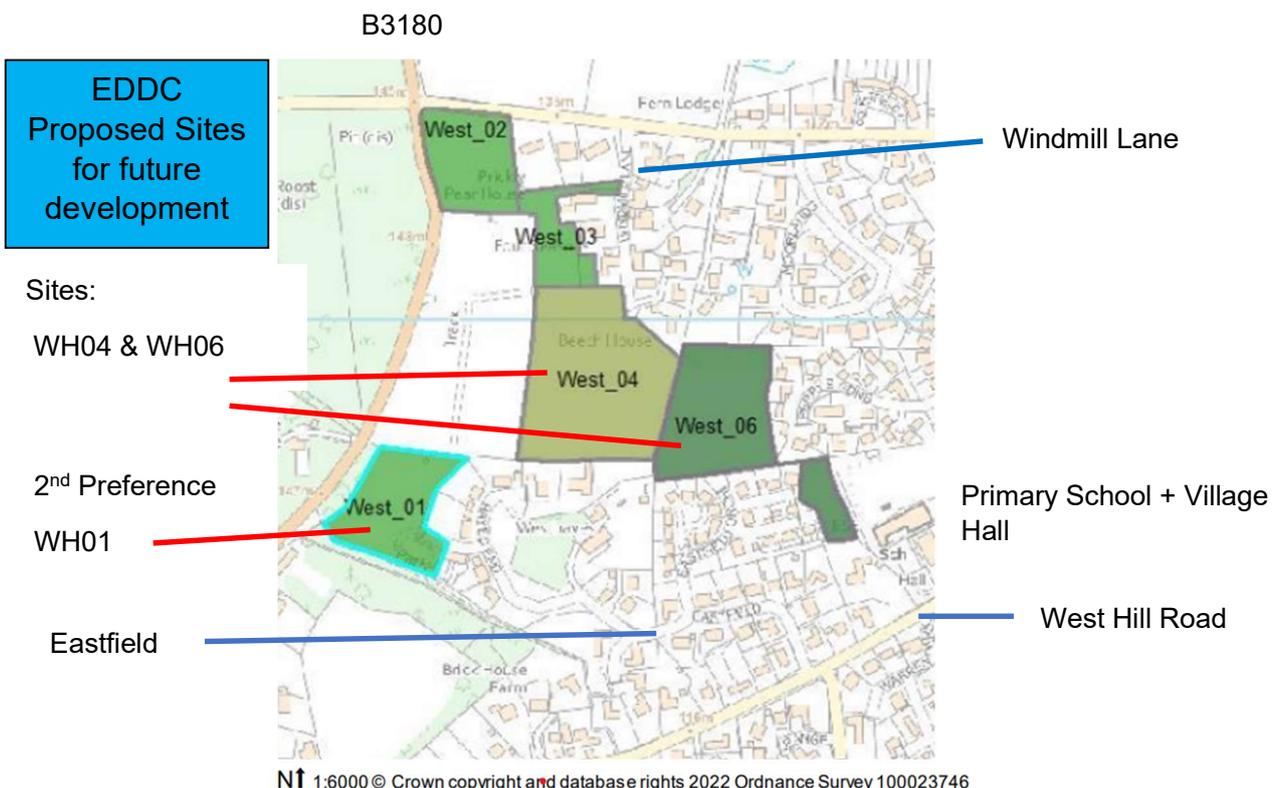
What's planned for West Hill?

EDDC's Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) recently considered site allocations for future housing development in towns and villages, including **West Hill**. These are expected to be in the Local Plan. Further detail is available on the EDDC website.

- 6th Sep: site allocations for towns including Ottery St Mary
- 14th Sep (see note): site allocations for villages including **West Hill**.

Note: This is the expected meeting date at the time of printing

Of the many sites put forward by landowners for consideration, EDDC have stated a preference for only two: WH04 and WH06 north of Eastfield which would provide 51 houses. A 2nd preference is site WH01 at Westhayes (6 Houses). See map below.



Other Planning Matters: Neighbourhood Plan

Ottery St Mary Town Council have indicated they would like to undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Plan. This could involve the two parishes, Ottery St Mary and West Hill, working together as they did before. Alternatively each parish could develop its own new Neighbourhood Plan. Our current thinking is that there are significant advantages for West Hill to have its own Neighbourhood Plan, so that it can focus on maintaining the special character of West Hill. We will need lots of volunteers to help with Neighbourhood Plan preparation – please contact the Parish Clerk if you would like to be involved!

MAKE A CHANGE – BECOME A COUNCILLOR

Are you passionate about West Hill? Do you want to help make a long-lasting change? Do you have innovative ideas for the Parish Council? Do you have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it?

If this is you then West Hill Parish Council need you. We need people from all backgrounds, ages and experiences who reflect our community to want to become a West Hill Parish Councillor.

Parish councils and councillors can make a massive difference to local people. They are passionate about their communities and seek to help improve their residents' quality of life.

Becoming a Councillor is a rewarding experience as you will be able to make a change. A Councillor's role can include developing strategies and plans for the area, helping with problems and ideas, representing the community, working with other local community groups, decision making and reviewing decisions and talking to the community about their needs and what the council is doing.

The next round of local elections is coming up in **May 2023**. West Hill Parish Council is calling on people in the village who reflect our community to put themselves forward for election. (Councillors are elected to represent the local community, so you must either live or work in the council area.) If you have innovative ideas for the Council or have a specific issue in mind, becoming a local councillor will empower you to make that change.

If you would like to know more please speak to any of the West Hill Parish Councillors. Look out for further information and events over the coming months.

To find out more about
being a Councillor

Drop-in sessions at RBL
club, School Lane

Come and chat to a Councillor
on the following dates between
7.30pm and 8.30pm:

Tuesday 20th September

Tuesday 18th October

Tuesday 15th November

Tuesday 13th December

There's no commitment – come
along and have a chat!

Can you spare a couple of hours each month?



Community Speed Watch (CSW) are a group of local volunteers who operate in West Hill to educate and remind drivers of our 20 and 30mph speed limits. We act as a visible reminder of the speed limits to inattentive or anti-social drivers who, if they are registered speeding on one of our roads, receive an advisory letter from the police.

CSW are all volunteers and to maintain the number of roadside sessions we need more people to join our team. We ask you to commit to between two and four hours each month at times to suit yourself. Full training is given and we are sociable and supportive group. Help make West Hill a better place for everyone, please contact us for more information. E-mail richardabonnie@gmail.com

Richard Bonnie, West Hill Community Speedwatch

Playpark News

WHPC is delighted to announce the official opening of a new piece of equipment in the playpark, a climbing frame with slide.

The Parish Council would like to thank

- The children of West Hill Primary School who told us, via a survey, that they enjoyed sliding and climbing activities.
- Cheryl Boulton, Headteacher, West Hill Primary School, for allowing WHPC to carry out the survey
- West Hill Village Hall Trustees, in particular Colin Veale and Mike Harris. With their support we we're able to put a new long term lease in place for the playpark.

The Parish Council successfully applied to East Devon District Council for the release of S106 monies to fund the purchase and installation of the equipment £14,176.00 + vat. S106 monies are contributions paid by developers building in the local area.



Many thanks to everyone who joined us at the official opening on the 26th July 2022. We were very pleased to welcome children from West Hill Primary School, Headmistress Cheryl Boulton, Mike Harris on behalf of the Village Hall Trustees and District Cllr Jess Bailey representing East Devon District Council.

We hope the young children of West Hill have many hours of fun!



Other Playpark news

The wooden playboat has been a favourite of West Hill children for over 10 years but, sadly, it's nearing the end of its days in the playpark.

Over recent years the Parish Council has carried out repairs and patched it up here and there. However, the damage, wear and tear is becoming more serious, expensive and uneconomic.

The Parish Council has decided, for safety and financial reasons, that the Playboat will be removed in the coming months.

What could replace it?

The removal of the Playboat provides an opportunity to consider the Playpark and the activities such as climbing and sliding that are currently provided. Cllrs will explore the many options for new playpark equipment. Cllrs would welcome your ideas!

Queen's Platinum Jubilee in West Hill



This has been a very special, and now sad year to celebrate the long service of Queen Elizabeth II. The Queen's Jubilee Big Weekend in June seems a long time ago but we hope you have good memories of the many local and national events.

In West Hill the RBL street party was very popular and a great success. Also in June the Pre-school Scarecrow Competition provided some excellent and imaginative interpretations on a Jubilee theme to enjoy around the village.

In addition to the many garden parties other events have taken place to mark The Queen's Jubilee, including:

- The Gardening Club provided a delightful planting scheme of red, white and blue outside of McColls.
- The RBL erected a flagpole at the Legion Clubhouse.
- The Parish Council funded Jubilee Commemorative medals for all children at West Hill Primary School.
- EDDC provided a Jubilee Oak sapling which has been planted on the Courtfield Close green space (it is now actively growing after a very slow start).
- The Parish Council have placed a new Jubilee bench in the St Michael's community garden space and will plant a tree adjacent to it in the Autumn as a memorial to those who passed away during the COVID pandemic.



Congratulations to 1st place winners



Queen's Jubilee Bench at St Michael's

Remembrance Sunday update

This year Remembrance Sunday is on 13th November. As always there will be a short wreath-laying ceremony at the war memorial followed by a service at St Michael's Church. The Parish Council has applied for permission to close School Lane and a short section of West Hill Road (Elsdon Lane to Bendarroch Road) to reduce the risk to participants during the wreath-laying and to facilitate the walk along School Lane to St Michael's.

We have requested the road closure from 10am to 11.30am on 13th November. Traffic will be diverted using appropriate signage via Elsdon Lane and Lower Broad Oak Road. Emergency services will not be affected. We are confident disruption to drivers will be minimal and hope that residents will understand why we are doing this.

At the time of going to press we have not heard whether Highways have agreed to our request for road closures. Further information will be put on our website and notice boards nearer the time.

Road Safety: Hi Viz vests for children

Last year the Council supplied Hi Viz vests for all the West Hill Primary School children to help them be more visible during the dark winter evenings. It won't be long before the nights start drawing in again this Autumn and we all need to take care when out and about. This year WHPC will provide some more Hi-Viz vests for the new intake at the Primary School and also for the West Hill Pre-school children. Our brightly-coloured youngsters should be easy to see!

Nestled amongst fields within West Hill lies a unique land based project which aims to provide a safe & sensory landscape where young people (from the InFocus Charity), with visual impairments & complex needs can engage with nature. As the site has developed we have now opened our doors to other organisations including the Kings School.

Experience has shown that whoever spends time at the West Hill Outdoor Learning Centre, gets so much out of being here whether through learning new skills or just being & appreciating nature.

The West Hill Outdoor Learning Centre started in March 2017 with a view to supporting young people from the InFocus Charity, based in Exeter. The project is situated in 9 acres close to the Daisymount roundabout & comprises of a forest, wood, meadow, commercial growing facilities & ornamental & productive gardens.

The site is managed by myself, who is full time & a team of dedicated volunteers who spend a few hours each week maintaining & developing the site. We are very creative & so far have created beautiful gardens, shelters, bridges, seats & other features.

We also have a number of corporate volunteer groups who help to undertake projects. So far this year we have had Solicitors Stevens Scown, PR Agency Launch & Submarine Apprentices from the Royal Navy.

When we took over the site – it was wild & run down. It took a year to ‘jungle bust’ – that is to say remove fallen & dead trees, create paths & design the landscape we see today. Throughout the process we have been supported by the sites owner Otter Nurseries who have helped enormously, initially laying tarmac paths (thus providing better accessibility) & over the years donating, compost, soil & other materials.

As a charity, part of the sites remit is to generate an income which we do cultivating herbs which are sold through InFocus Charity shops & organic vegetables that are sold to the Jack in the Green pub. Being involved in growing herbs & veg also gives an opportunity for students to understand where food comes from.

An important aspect of the site is to improve its biodiversity. We achieve this by managing the site carefully through establishing wildflower meadows, woodland corridors & building log piles. We have also planted several hundred native trees, thanks to the Woodland Trust Trees for Schools programme.



In its' 5th year, the landscape has now matured & has become beautiful & productive. This year we had two Open Days which were extremely successful in that we were able to introduce the landscape & our work to many local people. Next year we are planning on opening the landscape to the National Gardens Scheme.

Further information can be seen on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/InFocusWestHill> or alternatively if you would like to get involved please email PPhillips@InFocus-Charity.org.uk

Further information about the InFocus Charity can be seen at <https://infocus-charity.org.uk/>

Patrick Phillips



West Hill Parish Council welcomes feedback and correspondence from residents. We'd like to highlight a few recent examples including one that took 2 years to resolve.

Responsible dog ownership

The Parish Council has been contacted by a number of residents over the summer about noise from barking dogs. We appeal to dog owners to be mindful of neighbours and not allow dogs to bark excessively. EDDC's Environmental Health team advise talking it over with your neighbour and always remember to reward your dog's quiet behaviour.

If you are being disturbed by dogs barking, you can contact the Environmental Health team Tel 01404 515616 or online at www.eastdevon.gov.uk.

Bonfires

It's helpful to know that there are no laws prohibiting bonfires altogether, or specifying times when you can light a bonfire, but there are laws which might apply if the smoke causes a nuisance. Also, anyone lighting a fire and allowing smoke to drift across a road faces a fine of up to £2000, and concerns about highway safety should be reported to the Police.

The EDDC website www.eastdevon.gov.uk has lots of useful information. If bonfires are causing a nuisance they recommend that you contact the householder to explain the problem to them. If this approach fails – contact the Environmental Health service by filling in an on-line form or emailing environmentalhealth@eastdevon.gov.uk. Or call 01395 517456.

Overgrown hedges?

Landowners and occupiers are required by law to trim any hedge next to the public highway where the growth is preventing the passage, or affecting the safety, of the highway user.

If overgrown hedges are blocking a pavement or causing a road safety issue they can be reported directly to DCC Highways via their "report a problem" webpage on www.devon.gov.uk

Aircraft Noise over West Hill?

Did you know that you can report low-flying or noisy aircraft directly to Exeter Airport? **It's important to log the date and time of the incident. This is used to identify the aircraft.** To contact Exeter Airport Consultative Committee (EACC) Email: exeteracc@exeter-airport.co.uk Tel 01392 354980

West Hill Parish Council is represented on the Exeter Airport Consultative Committee which is the link between the public and the Airport. It provides opportunity for residents to comment/query airport activities including aircraft movements. Please contact Cllr Alan Cook for more information. email alan.cook@westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Double yellow lines?

In 2020 residents in the Bendarroch Road area contacted the Parish Council to highlight the problems caused by cars parked on both sides of Bendarroch Road. Whilst this had the benefit of making vehicles slow down there were times when larger vehicles couldn't pass through.

The Parish Council sent a letter to residents in the area asking for their co-operation and to park considerately. Sadly, the problems persisted. WHPC then met with DCC Cllr Jess Bailey and a DCC Highways Officer on site to discuss the possible solutions such as installing double yellow lines. Little did we know that the Highways HATOC process to consider and approve this takes 18-24 months.

Success! in Aug 2022 DCC Highways made their decision and yellow lines will soon be painted on a short section of Bendarroch Road alongside the junction with St Mary's View.

Ottery St Mary Library News

Ottery St Mary Library moved into the former NatWest Bank building in the centre of the town in February 2017. The new library has a varied selection of stock and is light, bright and airy, with a wonderfully colourful and spacious children's area.

Services

- Children's events
- Book groups and events
- Free public computers and WiFi
- Printing, copying and scanning facilities
- Self-service machines
- **Home library service**

Ottery St Mary Library would like to congratulate all the children who signed up to this year's **Summer Reading Challenge**. This was a challenge to read six books over the summer holidays with stickers, a medal and certificate to gather along the way. Over 170 children signed up, and at the time of writing (only half-way through the summer), 30 children have already completed the challenge. Fantastic!

The challenge officially finished on Saturday 10th September and all children who completed the Summer Reading Challenge at Ottery Library will get entered into a prize draw to win one of five 'Engineer Academy: Makers Kit's' (courtesy of the Friends Of Ottery Library).

Could you be a FOOL?

A Friend of Ottery Library!

FOOL work with the librarians to make the library service accessible to all and help develop the library as a community information centre. We

- organise and run activities and events in the library to bring more people into the centre.
- raise money by fundraising, sponsorship and donations to further the development of Ottery library and our information services.
- represent users in providing feedback

Contact Ottery St Mary Library

Ottery St Mary Library & Information Centre

Opening hours:

Mon 10:00 - 17:00

Tue Closed

Wed 10:00 - 13:00

Thu 10:00 - 13:00

Fri 10:00 - 18:00

Sat 10:00 - 13:00

Tel: 01404 813838

Email:
ottery.library@librariesunl
imited.org.uk

Silver Street, Ottery St
Mary, EX11 1DB

Over the summer we've held several events at the library for children including two science events, a code club and the Met Office visited and ran a climate change creative session. The code club was very popular and we hope to restart a regular code club at the library at some point but are in need of volunteers to run this. If you have the time and ability to help out with this, we would love to hear from you. Finally, if your child has enjoyed taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge, why not sign them up to the Secret Book Quest: an ongoing library reading challenge to read 50 books. To find out more, please pop into the library and speak to a member of staff.

The Home Library Service delivers books to people unable to get to the library because of health, mobility or caring responsibilities. Volunteers will order items from the library, collect and then transport to the customer for contactless doorstep delivery.

Dedicated volunteers can choose and deliver books to your home, including large print and audiobooks, free of charge.

With so much choice, there is bound to be something to fit your interests. Whether you are an avid reader or simply like to browse the occasional books we can help.

To receive the service or become a Home Library volunteer: contact OSM library

Kerry Carr, Library Supervisor, Ottery St Mary Library