

Annual
Review *of*
Public
Health:

Priority actions

2023-2024



Annual Review of Public Health priority actions 2023-2024

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Front cover image: landscaping at Blackdown House, Honiton © EDDC

Annual Review of Public Health priority actions 2023-2024

“Improving health and wellbeing for residents and communities across East Devon”

1. Introduction and background

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society. We use the term ‘public health’ to cover physical *and* mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our district.

Each year we look back on our work and review how we met the targets and aspirations of our Public Health Strategic Plan. Throughout 2023-24 teams from across the council worked together, in some cases still taking on different roles to support the health and wellbeing of our residents as we emerged from the pandemic and moved into recovery phase.

As we reflect on our work over the past year, how can local leaders ensure that health is a better understood element of decision-taking? It is important to remember that these activities also align closely with our golden threads of poverty and climate emergency.

Data from Public Health England, the NHS, and Devon County Council provides a mechanism for evidencing, prioritising and monitoring health and wellbeing issues and reducing health inequalities across our district. We use this evidence-based data to guide and plan our public health work within the council and with our partners. Our public health activities align with national, regional and local indicators and priorities.

East Devon's [Public Health Strategic Plan 2019-23](#) identified three overarching aims which hope to mitigate the differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between communities:

1. To help more people to be healthy and stay healthy
2. To enhance self-care and support community resilience
3. To integrate and improve support for people in their homes.

2. Summary of council public health actions by service 2023-2024

This Review of activities supporting health and wellbeing covers the period 2023-24. It has been compiled primarily from the key achievements selected by Officers and reported to the Public Health Officer. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all activities, but to provide a flavour of work by each of our services.

The Review celebrates our efforts and our commitment to activities which benefitted people’s physical health and mental wellbeing across East Devon. It shows how we care for equalities, fairness and levelling up.

2.1 Communications, Digital Services & Engagement

The [Communications, Digital Services and Engagement](#) Service shares information with residents, tenants and visitors. The team supports the council in engaging with children and young people, the public, voluntary and community groups, staff, councillors, town and parish councils and others. They manage council funding streams for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and they also offer other support to local not-for-profit groups. The team coordinates the Homes for Ukraine scheme on behalf of the council. Work seen to support health and wellbeing during 2023/24 included:

- The Resettlement team provided a comprehensive programme of events and activities for Ukrainian guests and hosts throughout the year. This included a celebratory event for Ukraine Independence Day in Cranbook, cinema events, a family day at Queen's Drive Space on Exmouth and information sessions to help guests move into their own accommodation, find employment, and seek educational opportunities. The team later marked the two-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine.
- The East Devon Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Support Service is operated by Devon Communities Together and client-managed by the service. It laid on a programme of free training sessions, networking opportunities and promotion for the VCSE sector.
- The Communications and Engagement team issue regular promotions through the weekly Residents' update and social media channels, including many activities and opportunities provided by the Public Health Project Officer covering health and wellbeing.

2.2 Countryside and Leisure

The purpose of the [Countryside and Leisure Service](#) is to provide a more beautiful natural environment and to help make East Devon a more vibrant cultural ecosystem. Health and wellbeing benefits are delivered through all the Service's work programmes. This is a summary of activities delivered which benefited health and wellbeing in 2023/24:

Countryside and leisure

LED Community Leisure Ltd, contributions to our health and wellbeing priorities:

- Addressing the Cost-of-Living Crisis: Our Passport to Leisure initiative offers a free Pay-as-you-go membership, providing a 25% discount on all activities. Additionally, we offer a monthly membership option at 25% off the full price. We also collaborate with NHS services to provide a 30-day free access exercise pathway.
- Supporting Mental Health: We partner with schools and mental health coaches to support mental health through an exercise pathway into LED. We offer a 7-day membership to NHS staff during Mental Health Week and conduct mindfulness classes such as yoga, Pilates, and body balance. We also run health referral sessions across LED for conditions like anxiety and depression.
- Assisting Unpaid Carers: We provide free access for carers when they are supporting the person participating in an activity.
- Combating Loneliness and Social Isolation: We organise wellbeing walks and target groups outside the main program, such as carers and individuals with dementia. We also offer walking sports like walking football.
- Supporting Individuals with Dementia: We collaborate with Axminster Memory Café to provide physical activity sessions and continue to support Honiton Memory Café with their ambling group.
- Aiding Homelessness and Housing Issues: We have established links with EDDC housing, strategy, and operations team to provide a free 30-day pass exercise pathway.
- Promoting Healthy Diet and Nutrition: We offer nutritional consultations for members within our sites, conduct regular free health check sessions for non-members, and provide free nutritional recipes. We have also developed a free healthy eating leaflet for families available on our website.
- Encouraging Physical Activity: We deliver a wide range of physical activity sessions through each of our centres and community team initiatives. We extend our support to as many volunteer groups and local clubs with their physical activity as possible. We encourage physical activity throughout the schools and organise many events throughout the year such as physical activity challenges, open days and school swimming.

Countryside Team, contributions to our health and wellbeing priorities in 2023/24:

- The Countryside Team had 228 **volunteers** actively engaged in 2023/24, who between them accumulated 2,331 hours towards the team's wildlife conservation efforts. Activities included hedge laying at Seaton wetlands which rejuvenated the hedgerow and taught volunteers new skills; bench installation across multiple sites; and rhododendron removal at Trinity Hill. Rhododendron removal is a physically demanding task that helps to regenerate lowland heath habitat, and in future will provide the Countryside team with material for charcoal production.
- The Countryside team's environmental **education programme** has engaged with 72 groups, consisting of 1,920 people and generating £11,220 income. The programme includes a range of

outdoor activities and curriculum-based learning for local primary and secondary schools, and uniformed groups such as Brownies and Scouts.

- This year the team also worked with a group of 8 Devon Young Carers and ran a series of 5 outdoor activity sessions for 50 adults with early-stage dementia as part of a project run in conjunction with Exeter University and Seaton Tramway.
- Following covid, a partnership with Age UK has been relaunched: from 2023-2024 the fortnightly sessions engaged with older people at risk of social isolation. Through the group, participants have a reason to spend time outdoors and form new friendships. Activities have included bird watching, bat walks, campfire cooking and a dawn chorus walk, and always finish with tea, biscuits and plenty of chat.



Countryside Volunteers © EDDC

Arts and culture

Thelma Hulbert Gallery's contributions to health and wellbeing in 2023 – 2024

- Making and experiencing creativity and culture transforms the quality of life and mental wellbeing for individuals and communities through THG's exhibitions, events, talks and workshop programme both in the gallery and in the activities we take out to the community.
- Our regular art and craft workshops, exhibitions and art talks engage young and old providing much needed support for their mental health needs through art.
- We have increased our offer to meet the growing demand from the community especially in 2024 when the events were the best attended ever and sold out quickly with more sessions needing to be added. The timing of our main workshops and talks programme in January and February has grown from the need to support our community's mental health in the difficult months of January and February.

- For young people:
 - Through a generous Arts Council Project Grant, we deliver our COS (Create Our Space) project which focuses on encouraging local young people 7 - 25 to engage with art and galleries. We engaged with over 4500 people March 2023 – July 2024.
 - We have taken national and international artists into Honiton Community College and local primary schools to deliver a varied workshop programme. March 2023 – June 2024 – working with approx. 400 students.
 - Our 2023 Summer Art Week encompassed a new activity every day for 12-16 year: August 2023 engaged with approx. 80 young people.
 - THG has hosted youth exhibitions of work created by as well as curated by young people, alongside three programmed exhibitions over the last year: April and July 2023, and January 2024.
 - Our Masterpieces term-time youth group for 11 – 17 years engages young people after school. A different art medium is explored each week and young people who have attended our COS workshops are encouraged to join.
 - Free monthly art session for Under 5's and their parents/carers, to inspire and support young families.
 - THG's popular travelling creative space goes out into the community delivering art activities to:
 - Primary and secondary schools, special schools (including Mill Water/WESC Foundation/The Deaf Academy)
 - Families and housing tenants at community festivals in Seaton, Whimble, Sidmouth and Exmouth.

- For adults:
 - Devon Recovery Learning Community – Women's Mental Health Recover Drop art sessions at THG every Thursday with up to 15 people per session. We have close contact with the group and support their needs. The local GP signposts patients to this group via social prescribing. *Please note this group has recently lost its funding and are disbanding although the attendees are hoping to create their own group.*
 - Having visited THG as part of the Honiton Carers Support Group art sessions, five carers have created their own painting group / support network that meets at THG every Friday.
 - Growing our team of volunteers – we have encouraged the return of volunteers who lost confidence and were hesitant to interact with the public after the pandemic. Each volunteer has a different skill set and utilise these to enrich our workforce, e.g. one volunteer has completed Carbon Literacy Training to be a trainer and delivered this training (with colleagues) to other staff and volunteers.
 - ROC, a United Response group of adults with learning and physical disabilities meets regularly at the gallery for joyful art sessions.
 - Climate Conversations talks with leading eco-artists and academics alongside climate-focused exhibitions explore the climate crisis through the lens of art and culture aiming to alleviate climate anxiety. In January 2023, 30 artists and creatives attended.

2.3 Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Climate and Public Health

The [Environmental Health Service](#) works across a range of areas to influence decisions and to control a range of behaviours and environmental factors that can affect the health and wellbeing of people in East Devon. We have a key role in contributing to public health and wellbeing of our local communities in ways not available to other agencies such as NHS bodies. To achieve this, we work with our communities and with many local partners to reduce health inequalities across East Devon. All of our activities can be seen to improve health and wellbeing; examples in 2023/24 included:

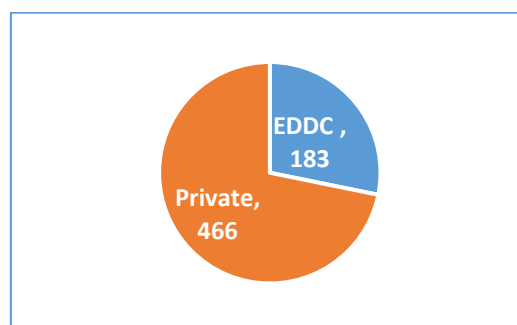
Public Health Project Officer

- My key activity in 23-24 was to research, draft, share and publish the next version of our **Public Health Strategy for 2024 onwards**. The quick read, full version and evidence-base were written and consulted with senior managers & stakeholders, presented to Overview and Council then published: [Public Health Strategic Plan - East Devon](#) The Strategy identifies priority areas and activities within East Devon so that our service and the other services can tackle inequalities by focusing on communities and groups with the greatest need.
- I created and published the council's **Public Health Implementation Plan for 2024/25** to help monitor and track the delivery of commitments against the new Strategy: [ph-implementation-plan-2024-25.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)
- I also wrote, presented and published our **Annual Review** looking back at Public Health Activities by the council throughout 22/23: https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/20240924/ph_annual-review-22-23-final-docx.pdf
- I helped to secure a COMF grant from DCC for Environmental Health, for use to support **pandemic recovery** work. I found it particularly rewarding to arrange grants for mental health support in Axminster and to support the impressive work by Open Door Exmouth. [24 September 2024 - Positive results of council-funded mental health support for Axminster school communities - East Devon](#) and [Grant awarded to Open Door Exmouth for communities' wellbeing - East Devon](#)
- I supported **access to healthy food and nutritional awareness**. I liaised with DCC and various officers, Democratic Services and members for representatives at Devon Food Partnership meetings. I enjoyed setting up a COMF grant with charity *Project Food* to provide nutritional awareness support, and making subsequent introductions for them; my press release is here: [12 January 2024 - East Devon District Council award grant to help tackle diet-related poor health - East Devon](#)
- I assisted the work of the Poverty Working Panel by helping to monitor the council's progress: specifically, to collate the **Poverty Annual Review of 22/23** and propose/create a draft **Poverty Action Plan for 23/24**. Liaising with the Working Panel, its Chair, Democratic Services & officers. I presented the Poverty Annual Review 22/23 to the Panel, it was approved and published in November 23. I proposed a simplified approach for the Action Plan for 23/24; this was agreed, I wrote and published the Action Plan 23/24 in July. The **Review of 22/23** and **Plan for 23/24** are here: [About the Poverty reduction strategy - Conclusions and action plan - East Devon](#)

- **Health messaging:** I continued to research and create a regular stream of evidence-based messages for staff, residents, members, &/or tenants, to share via appropriate media. Ongoing regular items tweeted using #EDDChealth and text/images supplied to HR and Comms for newsletters. Messages ranging from alcohol awareness and Stoptober to mental health campaigns, reminders of meningitis symptoms, to summer-season problem-free picnicking. Full lists of my tweets and the 55 newsletter items for 23/24 are available on request.
- I continued to **liaise with others** including Devon County Council, other districts, local NHS organisations and/or community groups to support good physical and mental health of residents. For example I'm a member of Devon Smoke Free Alliance, contributing to meetings, consultations etc. I attended stakeholder meeting with the new StopForLife team and made introductions for them. I shared the vape Swap to Stop Partnership Working Workshop details with internal and external contacts: I arranged with HR for One Small Step to offer support to Streetscene teams at team meetings.
- I continued to **provide support** to community health & wellbeing groups / local health forums as required. I make suggestions and introductions e.g. I share grant details when I spot them, creating contacts for them: e.g. researched/made contacts for WEB school wellbeing fayre, including with Cllr Fitzgerald. I made efforts to facilitate WEB Loneliness & Isolation group until it was transferred to Budleigh Seachange. I willingly have shared my network of contacts with Comms colleagues e.g. Jo Avery and the Engagement Officers.
- I take opportunities to explain that what is good for an individual's health is good for the planet, and I have supported **Climate Change**/Green team – for example I attended UKHSA presentation about Health Effects of Climate Change then I created and delivered HECC presentation for EDDC Green Team. I helped write the Climate Change Strategy's evidence-base.
- Also worked to redesign/streamline my suite of **webpages**: [Health and Wellbeing - East Devon.](#)

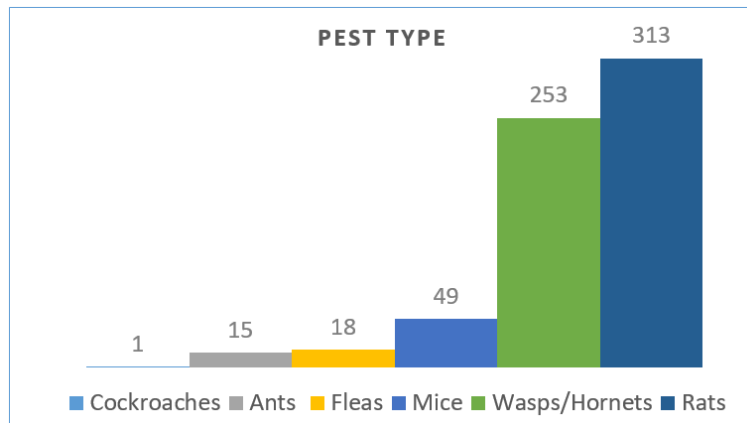
Business Support

- Pest control: Our team process bookings for the EDDC Pest Control service; total = 649. The chart shows the breakdown between private bookings and our own housing stock:

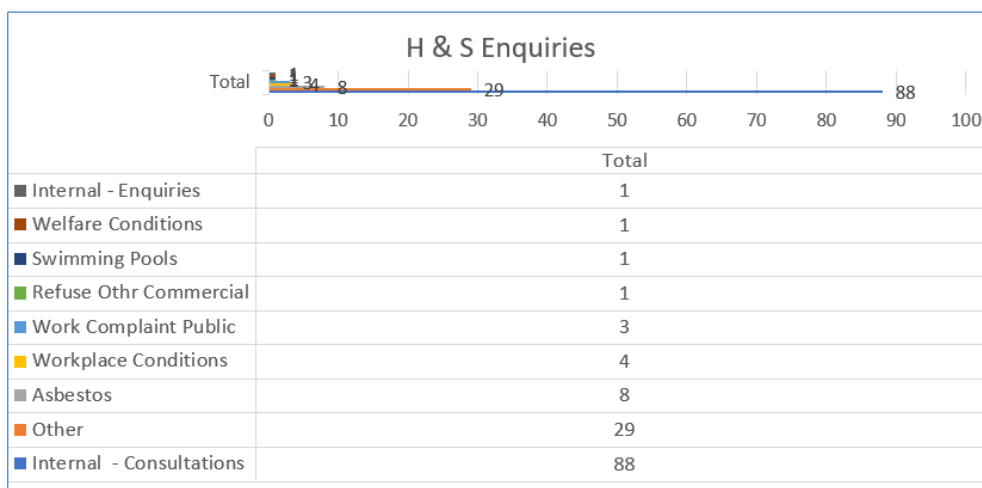


We also offer an advisory service to help customers decide on the best course of action for both their own health and public health and safety. Total advice requests = 125

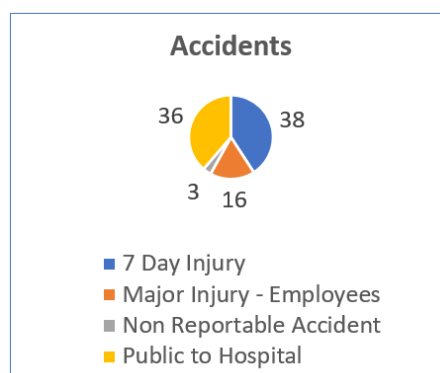
Our team arrange treatment bookings for a number of different types of pest; rats, mice, cockroaches, flies and fleas are often responsible for transmitting infectious diseases, contaminating food and damaging property:



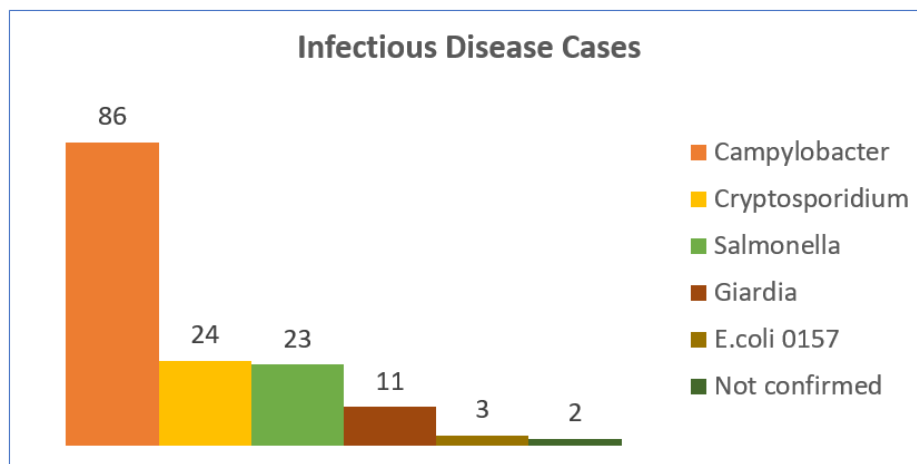
- The council has a duty to maintain a public register of businesses that handle food. Environmental Health Officers award a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme; our team maintained and registered 259 new applications and closed 346 records.
- Our team log Health & Safety requests for our Commercial Environmental Health Officers to investigate. The chart shows a breakdown of the type of enquiry:



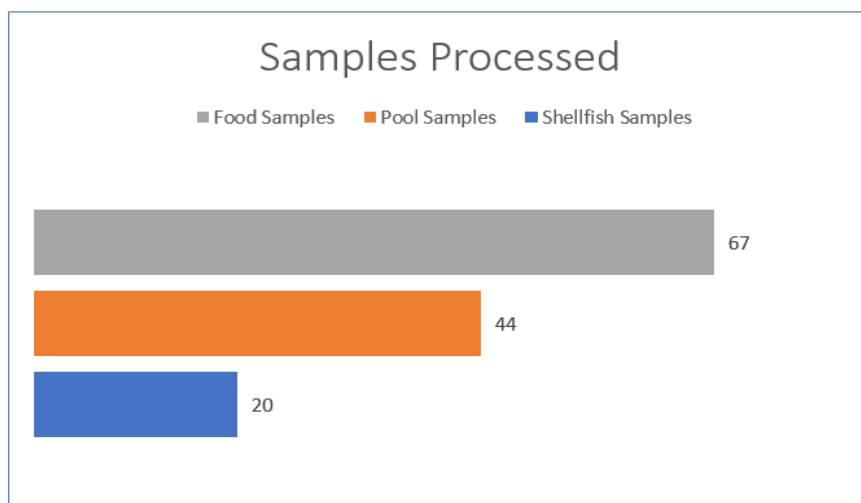
- The Business Support Team manage and process RIDDOR notifications through the HSE portal, gathering further information from the injured party, for the Commercial Environmental Health Officer to investigate and ensure compliance with H & S law:



- The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) notify the Business Support Team of infectious diseases in East Devon in order to keep our communities safe, save lives and protect livelihoods. We process these upon receipt and ensure an Environmental Health Officer can investigate quickly:



- The Business Support Team supported the processing and administration of 131 samples for businesses in East Devon:



- The Business Support Team issued 15 new licences to East Devon skin-piercing businesses [acupuncture, body piercing, tattoo].
- Internally, our team promote wellbeing and self-care by managing the EDDC Eyecare Voucher scheme for all staff. In 2024, Business Support changed the Eyecare scheme to a 'greener', more user-friendly eVoucher system in support of the Council's Net Zero target.

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Actively engaged with 40 communities across East Devon mainly at a Parish/town council level; works with the Parish/Town and their communities liaising with the Environment Agency and Devon Communities together. Focus has been flooding and the impacts of climate change and adverse weather, with a wider input around vulnerable people, the effects of pandemics and other emergencies that affect the community, mental Health impacts that develop after flooding and

isolation and helping out the vulnerable as part of the community plan. This work started after the flooding of Newton Poppleford and the surrounding area in May 2023 and the other floods across East Devon since that point.

- We have been delivering messages to communities about whole societal resilience and the benefits of community plans with a climate change focus and engagement with vulnerable people.
- Some examples of that Emergency Planning and Climate Change delivery since May 2023:
 - Newton Poppleford Community meeting October 2023 on the back of the floods 65+ attendees 22 from the local community and 30+ local councillors from numerous areas across East Devon
 - Ottery St Mary /Tipton St John Community meetings for community resilience plans supportive messaging alongside town councillors. 20 residents overall
 - Seaton Community meeting 15 residents overall
 - Axminster Town Council meeting with councillors and 15 members of the public around climate change and vulnerable people
 - Colyford Parish Council initial meeting wider community resilience plans for wider Emergency planning
 - Sidmouth Town council input
 - Stoke Canon parish council input
 - West Hill and other councils input including Dunkeswell
 - Northleigh council and community input with 12 residents
 - Membury council support to Devon Communities Together
 - Devon & Cornwall Flooding workshop delivery covering learning for emergency planning staff around the recovery after Newton Poppleford and climate change impacts but also about the considerations for planners around the mental health impacts of floods and the need for community plans to support the vulnerable.

Also **Safeguarding** work – see [110724 Safeguarding Scrutiny Report.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

Community Safety & Anti-Social Behaviour

East Devon District Council Community Safety Partnership took part in Operation Loki during July/August 2023, joining local neighbourhood policing teams and Gateway Homeless Action Group who work with street homeless individuals. The initiative, in which high visibility patrols helped prevent Anti-Social Behaviour [ASB], began on Thursday 27th July in Seaton and also ran in Sidmouth, Honiton and Axminster. Patrols focussed their efforts on specific locations where ASB is a problem or issues have been reported to them. For example on 29th July two people were searched under the Misuse of Drugs Act and a vulnerable person was located and escorted home with appropriate referrals to support agencies being made. The partnership initiative focuses on anti-social behaviour which can cause community impact such as anxiety and intimidation for victims. It can cover many issues such as nuisance drivers, graffiti, drugs use, underage drinking, verbal abuse and anti social noise levels during the night time period. While the operation was to tackle ASB, it used a joint approach looking at what help and assistance could be given to any individuals involved in ASB who may have underlining problems such as homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse etc. This operation demonstrated a trauma informed approach. More details at [News Article - Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](#)



Operation Loki images © Devon and Cornwall Police

Environmental Protection

- The team responded to 1063 requests for pest control in 2023 and of those, 569 were for rats and 369 for wasps.
- Continued to monitor the districts outdoor air quality for 2023 and this continues to be above the national levels for good air quality.
- Issued 17 community protection warnings in 2023 which resulted in an improvement in the ASB of individuals in 14 cases and no further interventions were needed. The 3 cases which did not improve were issued Community Protection Notices which then resulted in the cessation of the ASB.

Commercial Team, Corporate Health & Safety

- Receive and investigate infectious disease notifications and outbreaks of infectious disease and other threats to human health within the community.
- Registration, inspection, and enforce food safety standards for food businesses prioritising high-risk establishments and poor performers to protect public health.
- Receive and investigate requests for food incidents and complaints about the safety of food and the hygiene of premises.
- Investigate workplace accidents and complaints about workplace health and safety and enforce as necessary or advise on and promote good practice.
- Registration and inspection of skin-piercing activities to ensure infection control.
- Lead the East Devon Safety Advisory Group (SAG) to advise on and help promote risk management/good practice with event organisers.
- Maintain a programme of regular sampling of shellfish beds, LED swimming pools and food sampling to maintain standards.

Private Sector Housing

- Private Sector Housing supports the Financial Resilience projects in partnership with the Financial Resilience and Benefits Team and Exeter Community Energy to support residents experiencing the Cost Of Living Crisis through improving their energy efficiency and housing conditions.
- The team is supporting the Economic Vulnerability Fund pilot project and Action Against Poverty funding working with Climate Change officer and the Financial Resilience team.
- The team presented the projects to the Poverty Panel to update members on these projects.
- We support energy efficiency and retrofit measures through the Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO4) and a partner in the Home Upgrade Grant scheme lead by Devon County Council to provide retrofit schemes to off-gas home in East Devon. These schemes are eligible for low income homeowners to install energy efficiency measures; retrofit schemes and sustainable energy technology.
- The private sector housing team support residents experiencing self-neglect and hoarding by working with Social Services and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue. In most cases we can take enforcement action and provide grants and loans to undertake clearance; to support home improvements and adaptations as necessary to improve health; safety and wellbeing.
- These interventions also assist residents gain support and services such as enablers and home visits from medical teams to help with their ongoing health and wellbeing,
- <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/news/2023/05/east-devon-supports-national-hoarding-awareness-week/>
- We provide a range of grants through the home improvements and adaptations team to provide a safer and healthier home for residents with dementia. Adaptations include level access showers to prevent hospitalisation associated with falls which enables the residents to remain in their own home. We spent £850 000 on grants last year and delivered 71 disabled facilities grants; 9 other discretionary grants and 66 stairlifts grants.
- We support tenants in the private sector with reactive and proactive visits and undertook a range of enforcement action on landlords to improve housing conditions. We undertake visits and investigations particularly to address hazards of Damp and Mould and Excess Cold.
- The team participates in the Government grant schemes to deliver energy efficiency measures in the Sustainable Warmth project with other Devon Wide Authorities and DCC. We provided ECO3 declarations to residents so they can access home energy efficiency measures through their energy providers.
- Private Water Supplies - Two specialist officers undertake investigations: risk assessment and sampling of private water supplies in East Devon. In 2023 the team completed 144 regulatory samples: 41 requested samples and 18 retests. 68 risk assessments were completed. 23 statutory notices were served on private water supplies that were a risk to human health. 11 statutory Notices were revoked where the water passed the sampling.

Climate Change

- Installed 28 bike parking spaces in two locations in Exmouth – two sets at Phear Park and one set along the seafront: [18 March 2024 - 28 new bike parking spaces ready-to-use in Exmouth - East Devon](#)
- Climate change webpages contain links to ECOE and Energy Saving Devon and information about domestic energy efficiency in general.

2.4 Finance

The [Finance Service](#) includes the Customer Service Centre and the Revenues and Benefits Team. The Benefits team provides means-tested financial support in respect of housing and council tax costs, and now includes Financial Resilience Officers to support the Council's Poverty Strategy. The Customer Service Centre is the first point of contact to the Council, and are also supporting implementation and administration of government support schemes – initially for Covid and now to support residents with the cost of living crisis.

Government Grant Administration

The Revenues, Benefits and Corporate Customer Services teams have led delivery of numerous financial schemes to support businesses and residents initially impacted by Covid and now to support residents with rising household bills, in particular energy costs.

2.5 Governance and Licensing

The Licensing team in the [Governance and Licensing](#) Service assists clients to run their businesses effectively, contributes to the welfare of residents and visitors, and promotes a vibrant and sustainable future. During the year of 23/24, work by the teams supported these priorities:

- All our compliance checks relating to taxi/private hire licensing have public safety at the forefront.
- Take enforcement involving suspension of taxi licences where the driver posed a risk to public safety.
- Support the district's taxi industry to maintain sufficient income through fare increases.
- Regularly attend the East Devon Taxi Association meetings to provide regulatory support.
- Continually support new and existing drivers with help and support; we have reverted to face-to-face appointments especially for new drivers.
- Provide contact and support to existing and to new business ventures in the hospitality industry and taxi trade to help them run their businesses effectively.
- All licensed taxis and private hire vehicles must display 'No Smoking' signage in the vehicle.

2.6 Growth Development and Prosperity

The [Growth, Development and Prosperity Service](#) focused on achieving integrated social, economic and environmental outcomes and the delivery of sustainable development. Alongside delivery of major projects, the team works to strengthen economies and ensure our market, coastal towns and rural areas can thrive. Work seen to contribute to health and wellbeing last year included:

- We provide [Business support and advice - East Devon](#)
- Funded by East Devon, Mid Devon and Exeter City councils through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Prosper is a new, free, business support programme aimed at helping businesses and entrepreneurs, providing online support and in-person one-to-one sessions or workshops [22 September 2023 - Calling all businesses and entrepreneurs in East Devon - Prosper is here to help! - East Devon](#)
- Business leaders gathered at Exeter Science Park to celebrate the 'clean growth' achieved in the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone (EEDez) and plans for a net zero future: [11 September 2023 - Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone celebrates its achievements and looks to a net zero future - East Devon](#)
- Tourism and hospitality businesses throughout East Devon celebrated at the Devon Tourism awards last week receiving 17 accolades including 5 golds: [22 November 2023 - East Devon delivers gold-standard hospitality and aims even higher - East Devon](#)
- More than 1,500 local people shared their views on how Cranbrook's new town centre should look: [11 January 2024 - Residents guide Cranbrook's new town centre - East Devon](#)
- Cabinet approved £207,000 of decarbonisation support for local businesses and community groups: [4 January 2024 - Green light for East Devon business funding to go green - East Devon](#)
- EDDC concluded its consultation on a draft Economic Strategy for 2024-2029: [21 March 2024 - Council wraps up consultation on economic growth strategy - East Devon](#)
- Events planned in Cranbrook with the aim of supporting residents to be more active and helping the town to celebrate its 13-year anniversary. Planned by *Move More Cranbrook*, the Sport England supported programme that aims to help residents in the town to lead more active lives: [19 March 2024 - Cranbrook calls for volunteers - East Devon](#)



Move More Cranbrook Nordic Walkers

2.7 Housing service

The over-riding [Housing Service](#) vision is to deliver a decent home for all residents of East Devon, complementing the Council Plan priority of Better Homes and Communities for All. Delivery is consistent with the Council's Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-care and community resilience, and improve support for people in their own homes.

2.8 HR and Payroll Service

The purpose of the [HR Service](#) is to develop skills, policies and practices so that people are Happy Healthy Here in an organisation that is both supportive and legal. All of our work is underpinned by relevant equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and good practice.

As a large employer our HR policies and practices can directly support economic prosperity, and act as an exemplar for other local employers. Work relating to health and wellbeing during 2023/24:

- Cost of living crisis - support through *always on* – webinars, introduced a new health cash plan to save on costs for health-related issues; *Vivup* savings on everyday purchases.
- Mental health – *power of social wellbeing*, refresher for mental health first aiders.
- Loneliness and social isolation – wellbeing session on *Power of social wellbeing*.
- Smoking – one stop smoking cessation pop ups at Streetscene depots.
- Diet and nutrition; diabetes; menopause; men's health webinars.
- Physical activity – chiropractor back and spine checks and Health MOT checks with LED.

2.9 Place, Assets and Commercialisation

The [Place, Assets and Commercialisation Service](#) delivers place-making projects across the council's own portfolio as well as through working with others, and the efficient and effective management of the council's assets. The focus is on delivering investment and development in priority locations in East Devon to enhance our places and their communities. Property and Facilities Management supports health and wellbeing through delivering maintenance and capital works at the council's leisure facilities. Over the last year the Team has delivered £249,368 of revenue spend and £644,750.80 of capital spend across the district's leisure facilities. Works included:

- Reactive maintenance.
- Planned preventive maintenance and compliance.
- Sports hall floors replacement at various LED sites.
- Refurbishment and improvement at Honiton pool and Sidmouth pool changing rooms.
- Ottery & Broadclyst Leisure Centre roofs.
- Exmouth Tennis Centre roofing works and resurfacing courts 1-4.
- Replacement and upgrade of swimming pool plant.
- Replacement and upgrade of ventilation equipment at various LED sites.
- Installation of energy saving equipment at the EDDC's three swimming pools.
- Delivery of seafront concessions, such as one offering paddleboarding at Sidmouth.

This Service also look after arts facilities such as Sidmouth Manor Pavilion Theatre and Thelma Hulbert Gallery, and the council has provided financial support to LED over the last few years.



Exmouth tennis centre's new court surface © EDDC

2.10 Planning service

Planning is a means to deliver good growth, thriving communities and environmental care. It helps to create the places where people want to live, work, invest and visit; it can shape places and stimulate markets; it can have significant positive impacts on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community.

Overall the service aims to deliver well-designed and safe buildings that together create successful places that help to promote strong and vibrant communities. The Building Control team ensures that new homes and other buildings are constructed to the required standards and provide safe, efficient and healthy places to live and work.

Some of the [Planning Service](#)'s activities to support health and wellbeing during 2023/24:

- Adopted a shared strategy with Exeter, Teignbridge and Mid-Devon Councils detailing our shared approach to addressing the economic, social and environmental needs of the area.
- Progressed work on a second new community as part of the new Local Plan with a vision to create a town with healthy living at its core.
- Increased the resourcing of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 work to improve collection and spend of monies from developments that can be used, among other things, to deliver open spaces, sports pitches and play areas.



Image of the cover of the joint strategy.

The main document is at: [2a. 8590 Joint Strategy DRAFT Nov23-1.0-.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

2.11 StreetScene service

The [StreetScene](#) Service affects every resident and visitor through the broad range of service areas it covers; providing opportunities for health and wellbeing and environments that help to make a positive impact on our residents and visitors, by protecting and improving a Greener East Devon, and contributing to public health through sanitation services such as street cleansing, public toilets and recycling & waste collection. Here are some examples of their contributions to health and wellbeing during 2023/24.

In terms of improving physical activity Streetscene have:

- Enhanced Brixington Recreation Ground public open space with additional footpaths to complete a circular route which has encouraged jogging and walking/dog walking.
- Installed a drainage system across the football pitch to alleviate surface water issues and make it useable for longer periods throughout the year.
- Improved access to assist disabled/visually impaired users and improved the inclusivity of activities, e.g. the tactile footpath and sensory garden in Lime Kiln play area, Budleigh.
- Managing construction of Axminster skate park (into a community hub of activity for all ages).
- Upgraded eight play areas across the district with new play equipment and safety surfacing, making them more attractive and inviting to use. The eight sites are: Greenway Lane, Budleigh. Butts Close, Honiton. The Crescent, Littleham. Jubilee, Beer. Lime Kiln, Budleigh. Ashfield Close, Exmouth. Jerrard Close, Honiton. Pale Gate Close, Honiton. For example: [28 March 2024 - Pirate-themed play park opened in Beer - East Devon](#)



Beer's pirate-themed play park

Streetscene organised a wide range of events for *Love Parks Week* 31st July – 4th August 2023:

- Budleigh: Tai Chi, Wildlife Walk, fly a kite, garden games, RSBP wildlife stand, Flower Takeaway, Bradley the Busker and Wildlife Scavenger Hunt.
- The Glen, Honiton: Creative Cabin Art Workshop, give-it-a-go crochet, garden games, Flower Takeaway, Bradley the Busker and Wildlife Scavenger Hunt.
- Manor Gardens, Exmouth – events cancelled due to bad weather.
- Seaford Gardens, Seaton: free mini golf competition, fly a kite, give-it-a-go crochet, garden games, Flower Takeaway, Bradley the Busker and Wildlife Scavenger Hunt.
- Connaught Gardens, Sidmouth: Tai Chi, Nature Stories, Guided Garden Tour, Guided Wildlife Walk, garden games, Flower Takeaway, Bradley the Busker and Wildlife Scavenger Hunt.

Streetscene work with many volunteers, contributing to those individuals' health and wellbeing:

- Friends of Higher Brook Meadow volunteer on an ad hoc basis to improve the green space.
- Friends of Glen Goyle volunteer on Tuesday mornings.
- Cherishing Sidmouth Cemeteries group was set up in January 24, meet on Thursday mornings.
- Connaught Gardens' volunteers worked throughout 2023 each Thursday morning.
- Seaford Gardens' volunteer worked throughout 2023 every Friday morning.
- Ongoing work with Friends of The Bays, Sidmouth Arboretum and Sid Valley Biodiversity Group.
- Horticultural Technical Officer worked with 10 Exmouth schools and colleges including The Deaf School, to plant 10 Coronation trees in Phear Park paid for by Exmouth Town Council.
- [14 March 2024 - East Devon's first Tiny Forest is taking root in Exmouth - East Devon](#) with 100 volunteers aged from 3 to 96!



Tree planting at Phear Park © EDDC

3. Summary

Most people want to be in better health. Although people are living longer, many are often in poorer health. We believe we have an overarching responsibility to consider health and wellbeing in all our council activities. Everything we do aims to ensure that East Devon is a place where people want to live, work, visit and enjoy life, while focusing on where there is greatest need.

This Review celebrates our efforts and has aimed to show how each part of the council played its part in a joined-up approach to service delivery, supporting our three health and wellbeing priorities:

1. To help more people to be healthy and stay healthy
2. To enhance self-care and support community resilience
3. To integrate and improve support for people in their homes.

Going forward we should keep health uppermost in mind. Health and wellbeing, poverty and the climate emergency align closely and form golden threads running through our service delivery, supporting our priorities identified in our new [Public Health Strategic Plan - East Devon](#) for 2024/27:

- Cost of living crisis.
- Mental health.
- Unpaid carers.
- Loneliness and social isolation.
- Dementia.
- Homelessness, housing and indoor environment factors.
- Smoking.
- Alcohol and other drug use.
- Diet and nutrition.
- Physical activity.
- Pandemic preparedness.
- Health effects of climate and adverse weather events.

Throughout 2023-24 teams from across the council worked together to support the health and wellbeing of our residents. This review aimed to take stock and to help local leaders ensure that health is a better understood and important element of decision-taking.

Author: Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer, 18.10.24