Cllr Steve Keable

October 2026

Devon County Councillor's Report - Creedy, Taw & Mid Exe:
Bickleigh • Brushford • Cadbury • Cadeleigh • Chawleigh • Cheriton Fitzpaine • Coldridge • Cruwys Morchard • Down St. Mary • Eggesford • Kennerleigh • Lapford • Morchard Bishop • Newton St. Cyres • Nymet Rowland • Poughill • Puddington • Sandford • Shobrooke • Silverton • Stockleigh English • Stockleigh Pomeroy • Thelbridge • Thorverton • Upton Hellions • Washford Pyne • Wembworthy • Woolfardisworthy • Zeal Monachorum

Steve.keable@devon.gov.uk

Mid Devon Councillor's Report - Taw Vale:
Chawleigh • Lapford • Nymet Rowland • Wembworthy

Skeable@middevon.gov.uk



October's newsletter for Parish Councils, their Councillors and our communities.
Please share, so all can stay informed about local decisions, community initiatives, and take-up opportunities to have your say, or to tell me about matters that are important to you.

Okehampton Interchange

Okehampton Interchange is a £18 million investment made possible through £13.5m of UK Government with matched local Councils funding, opened for travellers in August. Passenger demand far exceeded projections, achieving over 0.5 million journeys within the first two years of operation.

The station is expected to deliver significant economic benefits. Okehampton Interchange and Marsh Barton station, which opened in 2023, are together projected to generate around 1,500 permanent jobs and contribute approximately £112 million annually to the local economy over the next decade.

Barnstaple Interchange

Passengers using Barnstaple Railway Station are set to benefit from a series of improvements designed to make changing between buses and trains easier, safer and more convenient.



Work has begun on the railway and bus interchange to improve connections, creating a more welcoming, accessible and safer public transport system. With more bus stops, upgraded passenger and cycling facilities to make it easier for people to move around. DCC are working with GWR and Network Rail on this joint funded project.

This continues the pressure for more rail investment as rail travel dramatically increases in Devon. Crediton has 1.5m passengers travelling on the Okehampton and Barnstaple lines. Network Rail have announced the next planning stage for £100m investment to modernised the North Devon Line to achieve a 30-minute service and targeting 2035 for possible battery electric trains.

Children's Services Improve – Headline findings

Change and improvement are really being delivered in Devon for children and their families, all within 15-months of the May 2025 election. Follow the QR code to read the September letter from Ofsted to the Department of Education and Julian Brazil, Leader of Devon County Council.

- Children and families largely receive a timely, well-coordinated and increasingly integrated multi-agency response from practitioners and managers who are well-equipped to undertake their roles.
- Leaders have taken deliberate and purposeful action across these services to bring greater alignment, increase capacity, support and train staff and better shape the internal and external conditions for practice improvement across front door services.
- There is an accurate understanding of the strengths and remaining inconsistencies across front door services.
- The findings of this visit closely align with Devon's own self-evaluation of practice and the areas they have identified for further improvement.
- Plans continue to be appropriately focused, with leaders having already acted before this visit to further refine services, performance measures and governance arrangements to support greater consistency and improve the help that children and families receive.

Use this QR code to read the full Ofsted Inspector's letter on Devon:

Report a road problem to Devon County Council

Rural areas under-report Highway defects and potholes. You can help by doing this on line. We need to get ready for this winters Super El Niño. Use this QR code.

Devon on right track as Government approves SEND reform plan



The Government has given a vote of confidence in Devon's progress on SEND, approving the county council's reform plan and announcing an indicative £191m grant to repay 90% of the council's accumulated overspend on SEND up to the end of 2025/26.

The Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care said it recognised the progress made by partners across education, health and local government in developing a shared plan to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The approval means Devon County Council is eligible to receive a High Needs Stability Grant covering 90 per cent of its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit accrued up to the end of the 2025-26 financial year, with an indicative allocation of £191.3 million, subject to final confirmation.

Government's approval of our reform plan recognises the hard work and commitment of staff, schools, health partners, parent carers and everyone involved in driving improvement across Devon. It recognises we have developed a strong plan for improvement and are making progress in the right direction.

Local Government Reorganisation

As a local Councillor I welcomed the Government's decision to pause and review proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Devon.

Mine and the MDDC Cabinet had previously raised concerns with the Secretary of State about the speed of the process and the limited opportunity for meaningful local involvement in decisions that could significantly affect community representation. Particular concern was expressed about protecting community identity and ensuring that rural areas continue to have a strong voice in local decision-making.

Use this QR code to read the letter send from the Leader of Mid Devon & Cabinet to the Secretary of State

Local Green Space Consultation – Opportunity for Parish Councils

Parish Council Clerks will have received the **Plan Mid Devon Local Green Spaces Consultation Package**. This is part of the preparation for **Plan Mid Devon**.

This is an opportunity for parish and town councils to nominate additional green spaces that are particularly important to their communities for consideration as **Local Green Space** designation.

Closing date: 7 January 2027

Plan Mid Devon Update

This is the new Local Plan that will guide future development across the district. Information is available on the Mid Devon Council website and the Let's Talk Mid Devon engagement hub.

The Council is working to the Government's new 30-month plan-making timetable, with **adoption currently scheduled for April 2029**.

Key milestones include:
October 2026: Publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment.
January to March 2027: Consultation on proposed plan content and supporting evidence.
January to March 2028: Consultation on the draft Local Plan.
September 2028: Submission of the plan for independent examination.
April 2029: Planned adoption of Plan Mid Devon.



Being positive: Lapford Neighbourhood Plan, 2nd public meeting

People in Lapford have been working their own Neighbourhood plan that will influence Plan Mid Devon. Their Plan's Objectives include: Natural Environment, Net Zero, Built Environment, Housing, Traffic & Travel and those all important Community Facilities. This plan process provides an opportunity for people to have more say about what goes on in their local area.

A neighbourhood plan is prepared by Town and Parish Councils or by local community groups and not the District Council. A Neighbourhood Plan does not need to cover every topic that is included in the Local Plan. It might include policies for only a handful of issues, such as local housing need, climate change, and areas of local green space, where a local community feels that something is not satisfactorily covered in the Local Plan.

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