

## Axminster Division Report - September 2024

### DCC Highways

It is understandable that many people's main involvement with DCC is to do with the Highways network and very often, to do with road surface defects, particularly potholes, given many of us use our roads on a very regular basis. I detail below a brief summary of what else happens regarding Highways as part of a much wider area of interest.

After some very poor, wet weather during recent winters has created problems it has been difficult to keep up with repairs, with safety defects taking priority when there is dry weather, which allows tarmac to set properly, rather than using short term fixes, which tend not to last. A generally drier summer has helped eat into the backlog and I hope for similar in the run up to the end of the year.

Additionally in recent months, DCC has been able to put an additional £10m of capital funding towards the following.

Additional serviceability patching (£7.75m)  
White lining maintenance (£0.25m)  
Drainage improvements (£2m)

By mid-August, over 16,000m<sup>2</sup> of larger scale serviceability patching has been laid, which works out in excess of 315 locations.

Over the summer four white lining gangs have been working across the county to remark the following

- 145 mini roundabouts
- 30 compact roundabouts
- 197 zebra crossings

The funding is also making it possible to allow approximately 10km of double white lines to be refreshed.

The programme of drainage improvements, particularly in rural areas is being delivered through a dynamic approach with the Term Maintenance Contractor, where a number of factors come in to make best use of financial and human resources.

Delivery of the 'Local Area Capital Programme' was delayed until mid-May due to resource being focused on pothole repairs, but work is now progressing well, with a large proportion of the projects already completed or scheduled to be completed ahead of winter.

The major resurfacing programme for the A-road network is now underway, with the surface dressing programme already completed.

I am hoping that further efficiencies across DCC services will free up more money to invest further in the highways network in coming months.

### **Over 40s encouraged to check their blood pressure**

**NHS and Public Health professionals at DCC are encouraging people aged 40 plus to check their blood pressure.** It's part of a week-long national 'Know Your Numbers' campaign, beginning Monday 2 September, to raise awareness of high blood pressure.

Known as 'the silent killer', high blood pressure is a major cause of heart attack and stroke, but often has no symptoms.

Knowing your blood pressure means that you can start making healthy lifestyle changes or start taking medicines if you need them to bring your blood pressure down to a healthy level.

Many local pharmacies or G.P. surgeries across Devon offer free blood pressure checks. To check whether your [local pharmacy offers free blood pressure checks visit the NHS webpage at https://tinyurl.com/2jydtjt7](https://tinyurl.com/2jydtjt7).

People can also check what the result might mean at <https://tinyurl.com/4heb8fm8>

### **This September explore The Great Outdoors!**

**This September we are all being asked to embrace the great outdoors and consider ditching the car and, where possible, use an alternative form of transport.**

It's all part of Outdoor September, a Devon-wide month-long campaign being promoted by Active Devon.

Being active, particularly outdoors, benefits your health and wellbeing and during the course of the month Active Devon and their partners from the Devon Local Nature Partnership, Devon Climate Emergency, Devon County Council's Public Health team and Travel Devon, will be sharing details of events, ideas and tips to help us all make the most of our environment.

The campaign aims to support those looking to change their behaviour and become more active.

Here are some fantastic ways to enjoy Devon during #OutdoorSeptember:

- Cycle Routes: Discover the joy of cycling on Devon's extensive network of bike paths. From the family-friendly Tarka Trail and Exe Estuary Trail to the more challenging Dartmoor circuits, there's a route for every level of cyclist. If you are looking for more confidence on your bike, why not sign up for free adult cycle sessions here on the <https://activedevon.org/adult-cycle-training/> [Active Devon](#) website.
- Walking Trails: Put your best foot forward and discover what's on your doorstep. This could be your local green space, exploring the South West Coast Path, wander through Dartmoor or Exmoor National Park, or take a leisurely walk along one of our many estuaries. For more information on exciting cycling and walking routes, visit the [Explore Devon](#) website at <https://www.explored Devon.info/> .
- Public Transport Adventures: During September, it is World Car Free Day (22 September) so why not make use of Devon's public transport. Combine train and bus routes to access remote areas and hidden gems. By exploring your local area without a car, if that's possible, you're contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions, helping to preserve our environment for future generations. For more information on different ways to travel around Devon, visit the [Travel Devon](#) website at <https://www.traveldevon.info/>
- Nature Connection: Join guided nature walks, participate in birdwatching tours, or engage in outdoor park yoga sessions. There are endless ways to connect with nature and discover the tranquillity it offers. Maybe becoming a Wellbeing Walk Leader in Devon is something you'd be interested in? Take a look at the free training offered at <https://tinyurl.com/2cmj57by>

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