

Axminster Division Report - March 2025

Delighted that spring appears to have sprung and we have largely avoided a cold, but unfortunately wet winter, where this has a detrimental impact on our highways network, where repair teams are now busy catching up with repairs, white line renewals etc.

Keeping our young people safe online

<https://saferdevon.co.uk/> is running a free webinar to explore digital spaces that young people engage with, how these may influence their choices and expose them to risks and practical tips and guidance to support young people to keep safe.

The free webinar will explore:

- why the digital world is a valuable space for many neurodivergent young people
- how the online content young people interact with can shape their choices and may expose them to risks and harmful behaviours
- practical tips and guidance on creating safe and supportive online spaces for young people

This session will be led by Alistair Barfield, who is AuDHD, and a leading expert in neurodivergence and digital harms.

It will take place online on Thursday 27 March at 7pm to 8pm.

Please visit the Safer Devon Eventbrite page to book your place at.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lets-talk-keeping-our-young-people-safe-online-tickets-1263976671249?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Thousands more children to receive Bikeability cycle training

Over 9,300 schoolchildren in Devon are to benefit from Bikeability cycle training this financial year, see <https://www.bikeability.org.uk/>

That's thanks to a Bikeability Funding award of just over £451,000 to us for 2025/26.

The funding is part of £3.9 million of funding recently announced by the Government and Active Travel England (ATE) for cycling and walking projects in Devon, which was the largest settlement for any South West authority.

Bikeability cycle training provides schoolchildren with lifelong road safety skills while also improving their health and wellbeing.

Over the past 19 years, we have provided Bikeability cycle training to almost 120,000 young people across the county.

Adult cyclists are reminded that they can also book free confidence sessions through Active Devon at <https://activedevon.org/adult-cycle-training/>

The sessions, delivered by qualified bike Instructors, can cater for up to three people at a time and can be tailored to suit all abilities and goals, from first-time riders to regular cyclists looking to improve their skills.

For more information on cycle training for children and adults please visit our Travel Devon webpages at <https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-training/>

Councils collaborate on devolution plans

The Leaders of Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council, and Torbay Council are working together to explore the creation of a Mayoral Strategic Authority.

A part of the Government's new devolution plans, this is a once in a generation opportunity to take power out of Whitehall, bring decision-making closer to the people of Devon, Plymouth and Torbay and unlock unprecedented opportunities for growth and innovation.

A Mayoral Strategic Authority promises to supercharge the region's ability to access greater powers and unlock additional funding for economic growth and infrastructure development, such as housing and transport.

By working together, the councils aim to ensure that Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are ready to seize this unique opportunity when the government calls for further submissions of interest.

The councils also emphasised that Cornwall Council is welcome to join their discussions at any time, should they choose to reconsider. This inclusive approach highlights the commitment to regional cooperation and shared prosperity.