

West Devon Borough Councillor Report- Cllr Anne Johnson Ward Member
Tavistock South West- July 2023

The three remaining seats have now been decided with Cllr Mann, Independent winning Tavistock North and Cllr Christopher West with Cllr Nick Viney, both Liberal Democrats winning the two Burrator seats.

The make-up of WDBC is now:- Independents 11, Green Party 4, Liberal Democrats 4, Labour Party 1, This makes up the Independent Group. The Conservatives have 11 members.

Five Ward members for Tavistock are also Town Councillors. Cllrs Ewings, Johnson, Mann, Moody and Squire. This is the highest number of dual hatters that I can remember, which will hopefully enhance the service we can provide to residents.

The second full Council meeting took place on 27th June. At this meeting Hub and committee members were confirmed along with appointments to outside bodies.

The Independent Group is developing the Councils new priorities and ambitions for the next four years – and tackling the housing crisis is high on the agenda.

We will lobby government to address some of the Borough's biggest challenges, including the lack of rental properties and the level of local housing allowance. It will also influence new policies that will support the need for lower cost and social rented homes in new developments.

The Council will continue to work with partners, housing associations and community land trusts to provide affordable, safe, and good quality homes. Focus will be on improving energy efficiency, holding landlords to account, and supporting the Borough's most vulnerable residents.

These plans will now be refined so there is a clear direction on how it will deliver its housing ambitions.

WDBC recognising that many residents continue to struggle with the ongoing cost of living crisis across the region continues to work hard to support to those who need it through the Household Support Fund.

The support is aimed to help with essential living basics, such as food, energy, water, and other necessary bills that people might be struggling to pay, using funding from the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Council is keen to help those who may be in difficulties, who have not had any previous support from government funding. Those residents benefiting from this round of funding will be those:

- in single income households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction
- who have caring responsibilities who receive Council Tax Reduction and Carers Allowance
- who receive War Disablement Pension (on 1 August 2023)

West Devon were delighted to win a prestigious MJ Achievement Award for the important work being done to make a difference in our communities.

West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council won the Senior Leadership Team of the Year category, recognising the dynamic leadership driving forward our ambition to tackle issues facing our residents.

The Councils work extremely hard to deliver tangible benefits for residents. In the last year, they have lobbied on second homes policy nationally, secured funding for a new integrated rail and transport hub at Okehampton, and worked hard to meet climate change goals that will help protect Devon in years to come. The Councils have also worked hard to save people money during the cost-of-living crisis.

WDBC recently flew a Pride flag proudly outside Kilworthy Park, to show support for the Tavistock Pride event and for the entire LGBTQ+ community across the Borough.

Staff and Councillors were present with a stand at The Tavistock Pride Event. This gave an opportunity to meet lots of residents, providing details of WDBC services and how residents can access those services.

Since being elected in May I have received comprehensive training and good support. I have dealt with many residents' queries covering issues such as overgrown footpaths, pavements, potholes, trees, planning, waste collection, developments at The Tors and Plymouth Road, funding requests and flooding at Bishopsmead.

Anne Johnson 13 July 2023