

Parish Report – April 2026

Planning Training and Updates

Mandatory Planning Committee Training – 18 March 2026: this refreshed the requirements for lawful decision-making, including reliance on the Development Plan and material considerations, clear evidence-based reasoning, correct procedure, and avoidance of predetermination or bias.

Parish Planning Training – 26 March 2026: for Parish clerks – this refreshed understanding of the planning system and the role of Town and Parish Councils as statutory consultees. Emphasis was placed on timely, policy-led parish comments focused on material planning considerations, and on offering mitigation or suggested conditions where appropriate.

There was also a presentation for the **Section 106 (S106) officer**. S106 agreements are legally binding planning obligations attached to planning permissions, used to secure site-specific mitigation or contributions required to make a development acceptable in planning terms, such as highways works, open space or community facilities.

This was followed by a **Conservation Officer's** presentation on heritage assets. Heritage assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and other historically or architecturally significant buildings or places whose significance must be conserved or enhanced through the planning process.

Finally, there was a talk from the **Enforcement Officer**. This provided an overview of the work they carried out.

Key takeaway: Parish influence is strongest when comments are timely, policy-based and focused on material planning considerations.

M5 Junction 28 Improvement Scheme

The scheme has passed a national review and remains supported by Government, but funding has not yet been approved. M5 Junction 28 remains within the Major Road Network / Large Local Majors programme, allowing work to continue while full business case approvals are progressed.

Waste, Recycling and Depot Update

The garden waste collection service remains opt-in, with the annual charge frozen for 2026/27. Updated recycling guidance includes the acceptance of metal pots and pans. Additional containers and free recycling advice are available. Councillors will be invited to depot site tours later this summer.

Creative Communities Grant Scheme (Round 1 – 2026/27)

The Creative Communities Grant Scheme supports cultural, arts, heritage and small public realm projects. Funding of up to £5,000 is available for partnership projects and up to £1,000 for individual organisations or businesses. Applications close on 24 April 2026, with projects to be delivered by 31 March 2027.

Mid Devon Lifeline Alarm Service

The Mid Devon Lifeline Alarm Service provides 24-hour digital alarm support to help residents live independently. Costs include a £40 one-off installation fee and a weekly charge of £6.23. Residents may self-refer without an assessment.

Gypsy and Traveller Site – Tiverton

A delegated decision on 24 February 2026 approved refurbishment of the existing Gypsy and Traveller site at Last Meadow, Uplowman Road, Tiverton, providing three pitches. The site has lawful use and was supported by Tiverton Town Council.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy – Update

A Community Asset Transfer Policy is being considered by Cabinet and is not yet adopted. The policy will mainly apply to community land and buildings and normally favour long-term leasehold arrangements, with freehold transfers considered only in exceptional circumstances. There has been a strong interest in Community Assets and some parishes have already approached MDDC. The passage of their applications will continue.

Information on Council-owned land and buildings is published under the Local Government Transparency Code and can be viewed on the Mid Devon District Council website:

[MDDC transparency code assets](#)

Subject to Cabinet approval, each Town or Parish Council would have one opportunity to submit an Expression of Interest by the end of June 2026, reflecting Local Government Reorganisation timescales.

Meetings and Events

Town & Parish Clerks' Annual Meeting: Wednesday 29 April 2026, 6.00pm, Phoenix House, Tiverton.

Landlord Networking Event: Wednesday 13 May 2026, 5.00–8.30pm, Upton Barn & Walled Garden, Cullompton.

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