

**Subject:** BPC's Policy regarding whether BPC Reports potential breaches of planning legislation to South Hams District Council on behalf of Parishioners

**Date:** 4 February 2026

**Author:** A Thom, Clerk

### 1. Recommendations

- i. That BPC Policy be to signpost Parishioners to report their concerns about potential breaches a planning legislation directly to South Hams District Council (SHDC), and
- ii. That BPC Policy also be to signpost to report other matters that are the responsibility of other Authorities, not to report on their behalf.

### 2. Background

In 2025 Councillor Rake suggested that BPC clarify its policy regarding whether it reports potential breaches of planning legislation to SHDC on behalf of Parishioners. This discussion was initiated when a new possibly hazardous vehicular access from a field onto a road was apparently created by the landowner without planning permission. A concerned Parishioner commented that the matter 'should be a concern of BPC on behalf of all parishioners who use this route'.

Cllr Rake has discussed this with the key Officer at SHDC. SHDC is willing to receive reports from BPC or from Parishioners.

Planning enforcement reports made to SHDC are confidential.

Reports can be made by phone although online reports are preferred.

The SHDC website says that unless you have a good reason for not giving SHDC your details, and explain why, anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated and cannot be reported online. The formal Policy is to not accept anonymous reports.

I support a Policy that BPC will signpost Parishioners to report their concerns about potential breaches a planning legislation directly to South Hams District Council (SHDC).

My reasoning is:

- The Parishioner affected or already aware of the matter is able to make a better report because they have a direct understanding of the details of the matter.
- Unnecessary delays in reporting are avoided.
- Parish Council administrative time is saved.
- The comment that BPC should be concerned on behalf of all parishioners appeals to the Parish Council's wish and purpose to support Parishioners. However as BPC is not the responsible authority, it is only relevant if reports from BPC are actioned differently to reports from Parishioners. Cllr Rake has confirmed that this is not the case.

I also suggest that BPC formalise that this is its Policy for the reporting of potholes or other matters that are the responsibility of other Authorities.

### 3. How to Report

Online reports are preferred.

#### 3.1. South Hams District Council

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/report-it>

01803 861234

#### 3.2. Devon County Council

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/>

0345 155 1004

**3.3. Blackawton Website**

There are links to SHDC and DCC reporting webpages from the Blackawton Community Website:

<https://blackawtoncommunity.com/>