

## West Devon Borough PC Report September 2024

### Wildlife Warden Scheme

West Devon Borough Council is launching its own wildlife warden scheme to help preserve the area's biodiversity – and is inviting everyone interested in nature to the scheme's launch event later this month.

The Council is launching the scheme to help meet their priority of creating a 10% biodiversity net gain in the habitats of Council-owned wood and green open spaces by next year.

The aim of the scheme is to bring communities, environmental groups, town and parish councils and other bodies together to network and create opportunities to protect, aid and increase wildlife in each of West Devon's parishes. The Council has appointed a new wildlife warden co-ordinator, who will train and lead volunteer wildlife wardens on practical tasks and conservation efforts.

Practical work will be carried out that benefits wildlife, improves habitats and monitors the state of the borough's ecology as it stands. This includes carefully thought-out habitat management on the Council's land.

The wildlife warden co-ordinator role will be filled by Emma Checkley, an experienced ecologist with years of experience in project management, biodiversity and ecological mitigation.

**Emma said:** "I'm hoping that this role will empower people living in West Devon to get involved with restoring, conserving and enhancing biodiversity in their environment. There's already a huge amount of good work that's being carried out across West Devon. This role is about bringing those people together, joining the dots, and creating networks of people who want to improve habitats for wildlife."

**Cllr Ursula Mann, West Devon Borough Council's Lead Member for climate and biodiversity, said:** "We have been committed for a long time to improve biodiversity on our land. The appointment of Emma will help us reach that goal.

"It's hugely important to people in West Devon that we are managing our land well and we are supporting our local wildlife in any way that we can. We have this opportunity as a community across the borough to make a really big impact. It's a hugely important topic that we need to be addressing, and I'm glad that West Devon is really embracing that."

The scheme will launch with a collaboration café event at West Devon Borough Council's office, Kilworthy Park in Tavistock on Saturday 28 September. Working in partnership with the Devon Wildlife Trust, the event will focus on nature recovery in Tavistock and aim to bring anyone interested together to talk about what can be done to help wildlife locally.

Emma Smith, Wilder Communities Officer, is encouraging the community of Tavistock to come together.: "Whether you are a landowner, individual or part of a community group, everyone is welcome. Together we can make a difference for our local wildlife."The event will run from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will be fuelled with plenty of free tea and cake.

[Book your place online by clicking here.](#)

If you'd like to find out more about the wildlife warden scheme, learn about upcoming volunteer days or get involved in any potential projects, please email

[wildlifewardens@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:wildlifewardens@swdevon.gov.uk)

**Remember to bag your Batteries.**

We're reminding people to put recycled batteries in a small clear tied bag, such as a sandwich bag or empty bread bag, to reduce the risk of fire.

9<sup>th</sup> September 2024  
Cllr Malcolm Calder