

2026 January Parish Report

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The draft NPPF 2026 proposes significant changes aimed at enhancing sustainable growth and streamlining planning processes in England. The NPPF was released in December 2025 and is currently open for consultation until March 2026. The draft aims to strengthen national policy's role in driving sustainable growth and ensuring consistent decision making across England.

Mid Devon District Council is holding a Town and Parish Planning event for parish and town councillors **26 March 2026 18:00-20:30** to cover this and other issues.

Businesses:

There has been a lot happening regarding Business Rates but there is help and guidance around. If you need further information please visit the website [Important changes to Business Rates 2026 - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/important-changes-to-business-rates-2026) The site has also been updated to reflect the Government issued guidance giving extra relief to Pubs and Music venues. Those that qualify will get 15% off their net 2026/27 business rates bill, assuming our software supplier is able to make the changes bills will be issued with the extra relief applied.

Current estimates

c53 businesses may qualify

Estimated Value c£50k

MDDC will be compensated via s31 for the loss of income

Drop-in Day for Businesses

Business' are welcome to come in and or contact us to discuss their bills

Website link: [Business - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/business)

The event will be held on **Tuesday, 17 February 2026** at Mid Devon District Council Offices, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, EX16 6PP.

There is no need to book, and you can visit anytime **between 10:30am and 5pm.**

Anyone who is unable to attend and has questions about the changes to Business Rates Relief can email the Revenues Team at: revenues@middevon.gov.uk and arrange to have a call back.

You can also find out a lot of [information about the changes to Business Rates on our website.](#)

As we move into a new year, Mid Devon District Council is encouraging businesses to sign up to their business e-newsletter

The e-newsletter keeps businesses informed about initiatives including grant schemes, training, and events, as well as a roundup of information and useful resources to support them.

[Mid Devon businesses encouraged to sign up to e-Newsletter](#)

Budget

After being summoned into a Govt webinar back in late September, warning around circa 60 Councils to expect funding cuts of around 7% and with no guidance on whether the threatened removal of business rates growth accrued since 2013/14 was going to materialise, the Council had planned for a very challenging 2026/27 budget.

Clarity on both of these positions was finally provided in late December. The Government, in providing a 3 year Funding Settlement (FS), only delivered funding cuts of 2.1% (although you could easily argue this is really 5% if you take account of inflation) and is providing 100% protection of all the extra business rates accrued since the beginning of this system (a huge relief). This had the effect of improving our earlier estimated budget gap reported to the January Cabinet meeting by around £1m.

This late news has significantly eased the Council's budget position for 2026/27 and it is now looking likely that we will be able to set a balanced budget, without the use of reserves, keep Council Tax increases within the Referendum Limit and continued to maintain our existing level and quality of service provision. A position we are very pleased to disclose.

The advantage of a 3 year FS is it gives more medium term financial certainty moving into the future – which enables more proactive strategic planning than rolling 1 year ones. Although the irony here is, that many Councils will not exist in the third year of FS! However, there are some other challenges included in the detail of the FS. At the end of 2028/29 we are £814k above our “fair funding” assessment (so what happens if this protection is removed?) and it also assumes that the Council's property base grows at the average level of the past 4 years (this is baked into the FS – so passes the financial risk of slow build out rates in the District to the Council). Both of these changes generate further uncertainty into any future financial planning.

Leisure Pricing Strategy

A decision was made to freeze membership prices for the forthcoming year to support affordability and encourage sustained participation, while increasing pay as you go tariffs in line with inflation and market rates.

Decision to cease using 'X' (formerly 'Twitter') as a social media platform.

While the use of communication and social media channels should not ever be solely down to any alignment on 'brand values', the platform now permits the creation and distribution of content widely perceived as abusive. Online abuse creates real-life victims and real-life vulnerabilities, and as such the Council does not feel it should continue to utilise such a platform.

Waste and Recycling

To find out your waste and recycling day and download your 2025/26 calendar visit [Check collection dates - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk)

Household Batteries

Batteries, especially lithium-ion batteries commonly found in everyday devices, can pose a severe fire hazard when disposed of incorrectly. Fires caused by batteries can spread rapidly, resulting in extensive damage to waste vehicles and facilities, and creating danger for residents and waste operatives.

Recycling batteries correctly is not only a matter of safety but also a vital environmental responsibility. Batteries contain hazardous materials that can leach into the soil and water if not recycled properly. By ensuring batteries are placed in designated recycling boxes, we contribute to the protection of our environment and reduce the risk of fires.

To help prevent battery-related fires, residents are encouraged to follow these essential guidelines:

1. **Use designated recycling boxes:** General household batteries can be recycled as part of your fortnightly recycling collection - batteries must be placed in a clear plastic bag or tub, and left on top of the black box clearly visible for our collection crews. We do not collect Lithium-Ion batteries at this time.
2. **Wrap or tape batteries:** Used batteries are not always completely discharged so take caution when disposing of multiple used batteries that could come into contact with one another. To dispose of the batteries safely, cover the positive terminal of each battery with tape.
3. **Drop off at [recycling centres](#):** When in doubt, consider dropping off batteries at designated recycling centres or collection points.
4. **Educate others:** Spread the word about the importance of proper battery disposal to friends, family, and neighbours.

Green Enterprise Grants This scheme will run again, this time for 2 years up to March 2028 with a budget of £20k/year. Look for news of it from March. The purpose of the grants is to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) based in Mid Devon to invest in improved efficiency, for resource and energy savings and cost savings, to achieve reduced environmental impact and particularly climate impacts (carbon footprint). Note for Town & Parishes: there is an intention to make it easier in this round for community halls to apply (village halls, parish halls, church halls).

WHATS ON

26 February Grand Western Canal - Illustrated Talk

[Grand Western Canal - Illustrated Talk - Visit Mid Devon](#)

Westexe Rec junior parkrun

A free, fun, and friendly weekly 2k event for juniors (4 to 14 year olds) is now held every Sunday at 9:00am. The event takes place at Westexe Recreation Ground, Wellbrook Street, Tiverton, EX16 5BP.

[home](#) | [Westexe Rec junior parkrun](#) | [Westexe Rec junior parkrun](#)

The Source Trade Show

Food, drink and hospitality businesses - join the Growth Hub team at The Source Trade Show on Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th February at Westpoint Arena, Exeter. The show brings together

suppliers, ideas and insights designed to help businesses stay competitive in a fast moving sector.

With hundreds of food and drink brands under one roof, visitors can explore quality ingredients, equipment and services essential for the year ahead. It is an opportunity to discover new products, refine existing offers and spot emerging trends across hospitality, catering and food retail.

Visit our stand G8 to speak to the Growth Hub team about available business support for food, drink and hospitality businesses.

Registration is free for trade buyers, register here: <https://enrolment.engage-powered.com/sr/go/register.aspx> Find out about the show: <thesourcetradeshows.co.uk>.

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