

West Down Parish Council
County Councillors Report
July 2025

Tarka Trail

This month I have an update on the delivery of the Tarka Trail Willingcott to Knowle following the announcement of additional funding from Active Travel England earlier this year, taking stock of where we have got with the ‘missing link’ and setting out the next steps.

Willingcott Holiday Village

Straight after the election I asked DCC officers questions regarding the section of route to be constructed by Willingcott Holiday Village. Officers continue to have regular meetings with the Holiday Village about regarding their progress towards completing their stretch of the Tarka Trail, the latest of which was at the end of May. Their current position is that, after having delayed last winter (due to time constraints and their financial position), they are hoping they will be able to undertake their works this winter coming.

However, they did admit that they are already a little behind schedule to be ready in time to hit this key off season window and therefore it would not be a surprise if they do delay again.

I have therefore asked that officers begin exploring some potential ways forward which are outlined below:

Option 1 Wait to open until all sections are complete

- Wait until Willingcott Holiday Village have completed their link of the Tarka Trail and then open all completed sections together.
- Easter 2026 at the earliest, subject to further delays by the Holiday Park outside of DCC control.

Option 2 Willingcott Holiday Village construct a temporary route

- If further delay is experienced, we could explore whether Phases 1 and 2 could open spring/summer (2026) though the creation of a temporary route through the Willingcott Holiday Village site.
- Phases 1 and 2 and this temporary route may need to close during a future off-peak winter season to allow the holiday park to carry out their expansion.
- All completed sections would then re-open the Easter after this winter construction period.

Option 3 DCC to construct the route

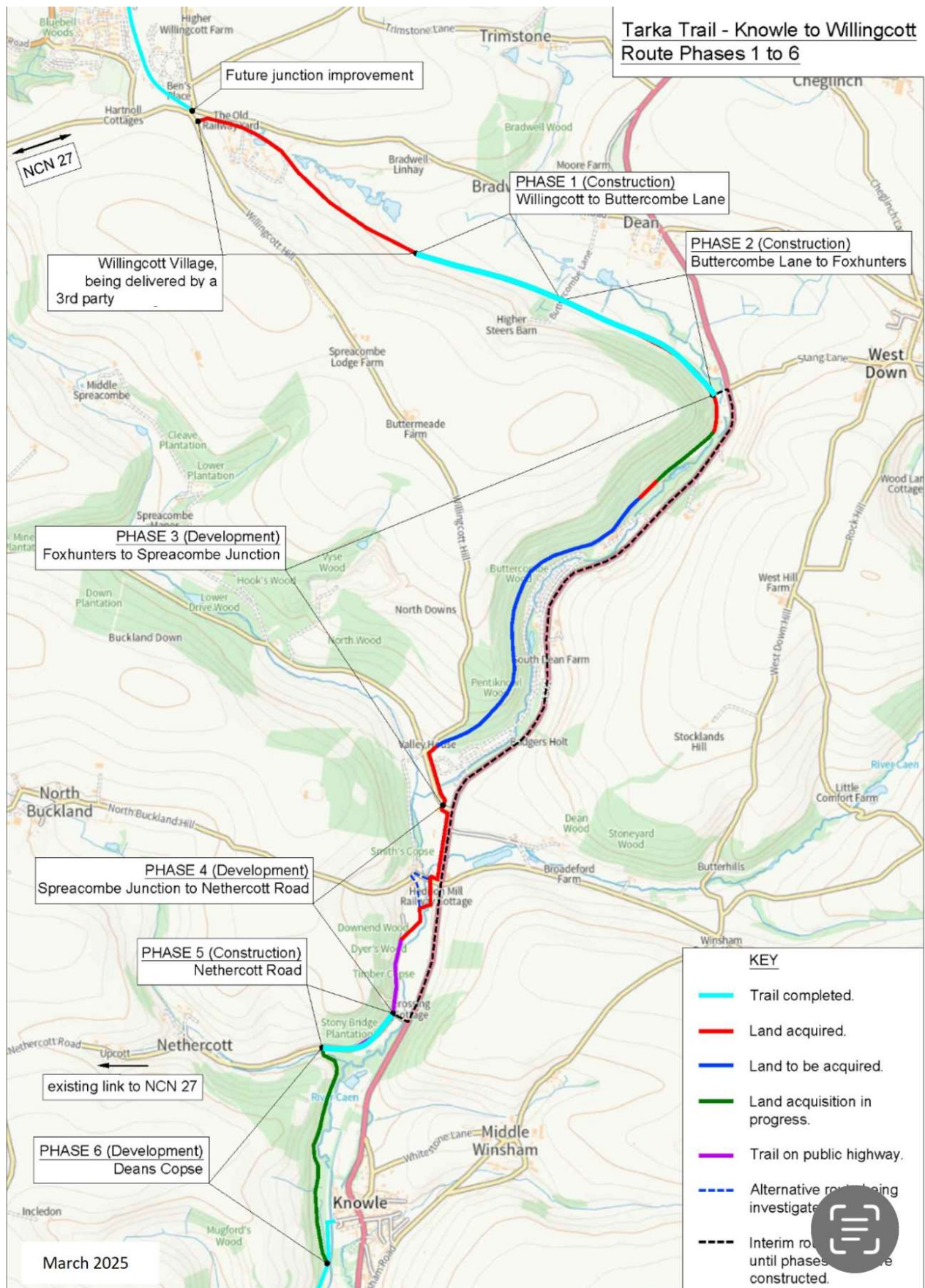
- *DCC do have the required legal powers to build the route for Willingcott Holiday Village ahead of their timeframe and then to charge them for these works. It is likely that DCC would need to agree that some parts of the Tarka Trail would then be closed when the Holiday Village does carry out expansion works. This would cause some inconvenience to the Holiday Village, and there is a risk DCC could end up in a position where they do not receive the money back.*

Without Phase 3, users could potentially be led onto the A361, so we would also need to seek an opinion from road safety on whether Phase 1 and 2 can be opened before Phase 3 is constructed. It may be the case that we could explore the option of a ‘softer’ and less widely publicised opening, along with measures to help inform cyclists that the off-road path is coming to an end and suggesting alternative routes. We are also aware that this road is undergoing improvements via the Safer Roads Fund.

Planned works for summer 2025

In addition to above a more specific update on the progress DCC are to make this summer using the Active Travel Funding.

A section of Phase 4 is currently dedicated as a bridleway and we are going to be undertaking resurfacing works and the repair of a small retaining wall to bring the path up to the standard required for shared use (by walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users and horse riders). This work is planned to be carried at the end of June/early July by our Public Rights of Way team. The section for upgrade is the stretch of public bridleway from south of Thorne Close and Crawford cottages down to the end of Phase 4 where the path meets Nethercott Road. More detail can be seen in the attached location plan (below), this stretch is part of the section coloured purple in the wider scheme map.



20 is Plenty update

I wanted to give you a heads-up on the latest regarding 20mph speed limit areas across Devon.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity recently sent an email to some council members, outlining what looks like a new policy. It seems Parish Councils might be asked to contribute a significant amount of money to implement 20mph zones. For smaller, more rural parishes, or those in areas with higher deprivation, this could be a really substantial sum. This potentially puts these communities at a disadvantage, which is definitely a concern.

However, this is just an early indication of the emerging policy. We'll have much more concrete information after the Cabinet meeting in July, where a final decision will be made. I'll be sure to update you as soon as we know the outcome.

I'll likely be in touch before our next meeting, and I'll be happy to share all the details then.

From: Councillor Jacqi Hodgson <jacqi.hodgson@devon.gov.uk>

Sent: 16 June 2025 16:57

Subject: RE: 20 is plenty

Dear All,

The blanket approach will ensure that all cities, towns and parishes within DCC will be able to choose to have 20 mph speed limits in their local areas that fit with the '20's plenty' provision "where people live, work, play and go to school". To date those who have requested this have needed to define the areas / streets they wished to have designed at this reduced speed, fit into a scoring system that would benefit from fatalities and be awarded minus points for have a zebra crossing (!!). Then, just a few areas per year would go forward with officer support.

My hopes for this new blanket policy would still be to still require City, Town and Parish Councils to approve a proposal with a map of the streets for 20's Plenty and be prepared to contribute to the costs. I would also seek DCC officer support in terms of any safety audits, mapping, legal support etc that is already in house at DCC. The costs are anticipated at ~£25,000 per parish, although I'm guessing that will vary according to the amount of road to be changed to the lower speed. Where local councils are passing the 20's plenty motion in their council meetings, these potential costs up to £25,000 should also be taken into account and they would need to be prepared to raise their part of the precept perhaps over 1-2 years in order to raise these funds. In a smaller parish of say 300 households, this would amount to a rise of around £83 per household if sought in one year, or £41.50 if spread over 2 years. I.e., less than £2 or £1 per week to cover the start up costs.

Since the introduction of 20's Plenty in Wales there has been a recorded 28% reduction in fatalities. In my view, £1 - £2 per week over a couple of years is not a high cost for this level of safety, and is probably a lot less than some people pay for life insurance.

My conversations on doorsteps have indicated that many people would be more than willing to pay more council tax for improved council services including lower speed limits to make local streets safer and more pleasant to use.

As you will be aware, this new policy is currently being developed at DCC and is expected to come back to Council in July for a recommendation that will go to Full Council in September.

Hope this helps.

Kind regards,

Cllr Jacqi Hodgson

Devon County Councillor for Totnes & Dartington

Green Party representative

Summer Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

The Government-funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme offers free activities and nutritious meals during school holidays for children aged 5 to 16.

Who's eligible? Primarily, the programme is for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. However, some children may also qualify under "extended criteria"; more details can be found on the children, families, and education webpage.

How to book: You can now book activities online using the new EEQU system. This system provides details on activity locations, times, and transport information. It instantly assesses eligibility, and if your child qualifies, you'll receive a booking confirmation and reminders. Cancellations are easy and free up slots for others.

Activities on offer: With over 100 providers across Devon, there's a wide range of options, from arts and crafts to sports and outdoor adventures. All clubs run for a minimum of four hours and include a hot meal. The programme aims to keep children engaged, active, and well-nourished. The Calvert Trust is one of the venues offering diverse activities, providing a great chance to try something new.

Refurbished White Goods

Devon residents can now get their hands on high-quality, affordably priced refurbished white goods thanks to a brand new workshop opened by SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK Ltd.

The new hub in North Devon is dedicated to giving a second life to large domestic appliances like fridges, freezers, and washing machines. Skilled technicians thoroughly clean, repair, and safety-test these items, making sure they meet all quality standards before they're sold.

You can find these refurbished appliances at Devon Reuse Shops located within many Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) across the county. Keep an eye out for them at: Bideford, Brunel Road (Newton Abbot), Marsh Barton (Exeter), Ivybridge, Knowle Hill (Exmouth), Pinbrook Road (Exeter), Sidmouth, and Seven Brethren (Barnstaple). Plus, for your peace of mind, each appliance comes with a 30-day money-back guarantee.

This initiative builds on the success of the reuse hub, which started in September 2023 by safety-testing small electrical items and later expanded to refurbish bikes. It's all part of a bigger picture: since 2012, over 10,000 tonnes of discarded items (like bikes, TVs, and furniture) have been diverted from waste thanks to Devon's recycling centres – a truly impressive milestone!

The DCC website is very useful for reporting highway problems and the reports go straight to the contractor. [Report a problem - Roads and transport](#)

Alternatively, the highway contact number is 0345 155 1004

If it's a river flooding the environment agency can be contacted on 0345 988 1188

Travel Devon website; [home - Travel Devon](#)

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