

## **Axminster Division Report 10th May 2022**

### **Scam alert: Council tax rebate**

DCC has received reports that fraudsters are telephoning people, pretending to be from their local council, to con them into providing their bank details. The callers refer to the government's £150 council tax rebate, which was recently introduced to help people with their rising energy bills and for some people has not yet been paid out. Posing as a local council, they ask the person for their bank details. The DCC Trading Standards Team flagged the scam recently and said: "It's a scam. Councils would never cold call and ask for your bank details to make the payment. Never give your bank details to a cold caller." For more information about the rebate, visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/council-taxrebate-factsheet>

### **Remember to be tick aware this spring and summer**

As April to June brings warmer weather it can be a great time to enjoy outdoors activities, such as a walk in one of Devon's national parks or a cycle along a coastal path. However, it also brings the peak of tick activity. Ticks are small spider-like creatures, which feed on blood of host animals, including humans. They can vary in size, from the size of a small freckle to a baked bean. Some ticks can carry bacteria which pass diseases such as Lyme disease. Public health data shows cases of Lyme disease are significantly higher in Devon when compared to the rest of the country. Further information can be found at <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/13/what-islyme-disease-and-why-do-we-need-to-be-tick-aware/>

### **Devon backs Freeport proposals**

While there may well be a degree of, "How does this benefit us" about the Devon Freeport project, the economic spin off is likely to spread much further beyond its borders in to wider Devon in terms of research work and high value job creation DCC has agreed its support for the development of the Plymouth and South Devon Freeport sites. The project has the potential to unlock £314 million of inward investment, and create more than 3,500 jobs, building on the area's global reputation for marine innovation and advanced engineering. Councillors backed proposals to borrow up to £15 million of capital investment to kickstart transport infrastructure schemes, vital to the project. And they approved DCC becoming a founder member of a company, limited by guarantee, to operate the Freeport, alongside South Hams District Council and Plymouth City Council. Three main sites have been identified to unlock 130 hectares of development land, to provide space for high value advanced manufacturing and logistics companies: Langage Energy Park, Sherford Employment Zone, and South Yard in Devonport.

### **Recognise the symptoms of scarlet fever and chickenpox**

Parents and carers are being reminded of the symptoms of scarlet fever and chickenpox, following a rise in cases across the country. Levels for both are what we expect to see at this time of year, but there has been an increase compared to 2021, when coronavirus restrictions kept cases below average. Scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, but highly infectious. Symptoms include a sore throat, headache and fever, with a characteristic fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel. It's important to contact your local GP or NHS 111 if you suspect scarlet fever as early treatment with antibiotics is important. Anyone diagnosed with scarlet fever should stay at home for at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment, to avoid spreading the infection to others. Chickenpox is also highly infectious, and has a characteristic rash, with vesicles on the face, spreading down the body to arms and legs. Generally a mild illness, it can be more severe in pregnant women and immunosuppressed individuals. People with chickenpox should remain at home until they are better and the rash has gone.