

**Notes of meeting of Teign Estuary Trail Stakeholder Group on 7<sup>th</sup>  
November 2025 9. 30am, Forde House**

**Attendees**

Lauren Allington, Transport Planner DCC

Mark Amphlett, Chair of Newton Abbot Chamber of Trade & Commerce

Kate Benham, TET Campaign Group

Arron Carpenter Engineer DCC (via Teams)

Cllr Tony Dempster, DCC Kingsteignton & Teign Estuary

Andrew Gunther, Torbay Council (via Teams)

Cllr Jacqi Hodgson, DCC Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity

Cllr Jackie Hook, TDC Executive Member for Environment, Climate & Sustainability

Cllr Andrew Macgregor, TDC Bishopsteignton

Henry Merritt, Bishopsteignton PC, Chair

Jo Rice, Case Worker for Martin Wrigley MP

Judith Sharples, TET Campaign Group and note taker

Estelle Skinner, Green Infrastructure Officer TDC

Cllr Gary Taylor, TDC Executive Member for Planning & Building Control

Cllr Nicholas Yabsley, Newton Abbot TC

**Apologies**

Bill Bailey, TET Campaign Group

Neil Blaney, TDC Director of Strategy & Partnerships

Cllr David Cox, DCC, TDC and Teignmouth TC

Jordan Facey, Engineer DCC

Adam Luscombe, Torbay Council

Jessica Rowe, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans)

Cllr Martin Wrigley, MP and TDC

## **Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone and attendees introduced themselves. Cllr Jacqui Hodgson, Jo Rice, Cllr Tony Dempster, and Andrew Gunther were attending the stakeholder group for the first time and they were welcomed and their input very much appreciated.

## **Notes of last meeting on 23 May 2025**

The notes were agreed. No matters arising were raised.

## **Progress with Phase 3 design work**

Arron Carpenter gave a presentation on progress to date. The ground investigation work has proceeded well and weather conditions have generally been favourable. The work is due to be completed today and a report will then be prepared for DCC. The report is unlikely to be finalised until early 2026 and will inform the detailed design work that will then be undertaken by DCC engineers from April 2026 onwards.

Cllr Hodgson queried why such extensive engineering work is required. Arron advised that this is partly due to structures that will be designed with good lifespan and partly due to the requirements of Network Rail. DCC will have to consult Network Rail on the design. It was noted that it took a long time to finalise the documentation for the ground investigation work with Network Rail.

Jo Rice advised that Martin Wrigley has regular meetings with Network Rail and she will ask him to encourage Network Rail to respond in a timely manner to matters relating to the Teign Estuary Trail from now on.

The Chair reported that local residents were aware of the ground investigation work and regarded it as a positive development.

## **Progress on Landowner discussions**

Lauren Allington gave a brief update. It was noted that there is a new contact at Norse (land agent acting for DCC). Phase 3 affects three landowners. There have been constructive discussions regarding the ground investigation work and it is still hoped that agreement can be reached without going through the full CPO process.

## **Funding, capacity & project focus**

Lauren gave a presentation. With regard to funding, DCC and TDC funding totalling over £2m has been spent or committed since 2021 when the planning application was submitted. Central government has confirmed that DCC will

receive a Local Transport Grant of £3.6m each year for the next 4 years. Decisions on how the Local Transport Grant is spent will be made by the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) from April 2026 onwards.

Estelle Skinner confirmed that TDC members had committed a funding allocation from CIL of up to £1m in November 2023. £50k was spent on the outline business case and £550k has been committed to DCC for Phase 3 via a funding agreement. Up to £400k is therefore potentially available for other phases of work in future.

Cllr MacGregor raised concerns about the impact of local government reorganisation (LGR) which could result in funding allocations being lost. He suggested that it may make sense to spend money on taking forward a section of the Trail that may be easier to deliver such as Phase 1, following the corridor of the main road from Morrisons to Bishopsteignton, which would be permitted development with no landowner constraints.

Cllr Hodgson advised that LGR, together with inflation, was acting as a catalyst to get on and deliver projects in other district councils where funding was available to do so. She also advised that, regardless of the outcome of LGR, the Devon and Torbay CCA would remain as the strategic transport authority which would provide a degree of stability.

The Chair advised that town and parish councils had been asked last year to demonstrate their support for the Trail by committing to a financial contribution and Bishopsteignton Parish Council has reserved £10k of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for this purpose. He also suggested that a press release could be issued to let the public know how much funding had been committed or spent so far and what progress had been made. Lauren thought it might be appropriate to do this next April after the CCA has confirmed the capital programme for 2026/27.

Lauren gave an update on the situation regarding Wear Pond as a designated county wildlife site.

Lauren then provided an update on the position regarding the Teignmouth to Dawlish section of the Trail. In 2023, Sustrans reviewed the plans drawn up by DCC and developed revised plans that would be compliant with LTN 1/20. The revised plans would result in the overall cost increasing from around £1.4m to £2m (broad estimate). At present there is no officer capacity to take forward the plans and attempts to explore external funding had been unsuccessful.

Judith Sharples said that LTN 1/20 was urban-focused and queried the position regarding new guidance being drawn up by Active Travel England for cycling infrastructure in rural areas. Lauren advised that DCC had seen an early draft of this guidance which made reference to schemes in Devon. Judith referred to the suggestion made by Martin Wrigley at the last meeting that an approach could be made to Active Travel England to work in partnership with DCC using the Dawlish to Teignmouth scheme as a test case for the new guidance, with the potential of securing national funding for its delivery.

Estelle chaired the remainder of the meeting as the Chair had to leave at 11am.

### **Update on LGR and the Devon and Torbay CCA**

It was noted that councils in Devon had not been able to agree on one proposal for a new structure of unitary local authorities and several different proposals had been developed. This increases the risk that central government will impose a structure which may not be the best solution for Devon.

It was also noted that the establishment of a strategic mayoral authority may be necessary if Devon is to secure any of the additional funding that is being devolved to mayoral authorities in other parts of the country.

Cllr Hodgson commented that she thought the government should take more account of the important role played by town and parish councils who understood the needs of their local community and could secure additional funding through the council tax precept.

Lauren advised that the CCA had adopted the Local Transport Plan 4 in July and the Teign Estuary Trail is identified as a key priority in this plan. This should help to ensure that delivery of the Trail remains a key priority whatever the outcome of LGR.

### **Update from Torbay**

Andrew Gunther said that Torbay Council continued to support the TET as part of a strategic network of cycle / shared use paths that would connect South Devon to Torbay.

### **Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that Estelle would arrange a meeting in May 2026.

DCC and TDC officers were thanked for their very useful presentations and the work they were doing to progress the plans for the Trail.

The meeting finished at 11.10 am.