



# Tiverton East and Lowman Development Update, Spring 2021

The recent loss of several trees during the property development at Post Hill has once again brought the need for a root-and-branch change to the way Mid Devon District Council conducts public engagement.

The trees were home to a Rookery, and included a beautiful sweet chestnut tree that was thought to have lived for almost 300 years. Despite the enormous public amenity value, the considerable environmental benefit they offered to the area, the presence of nesting birds, and Tree Preservation Orders, Planning Permission was granted to fell them.

The Planning process was used correctly to overturn the TPOs, but the sheer volume of local residents unaware that the

trees would be felled raises an important question - How could so many residents not know this would happen?

It is the responsibility of the local ward Councillors to keep their residents informed of local issues, and represent their views and questions into the Planning process when raised. In this case one of the Lowman Councillors first claimed that they didn't know anything about the development, and then blamed the local residents for not complaining loudly enough! That is unacceptable.

**Matt Farrell and David Sutton are both local residents who believe enough is enough.** This been happening for far too long. They are standing to represent Lowman Ward on the Town Council on May 6th & pledge to keep you regularly informed in the future.

**Matt Farrell, your local candidate for Lowman Ward on Tiverton Town Council and Tiverton East on Devon County Council has been looking into the next set of homes to be built along the Post Hill site.**

There are two ways to build houses. One way is to look at the local housing need - who is wanting to buy or rent - and the other way is to build vast estates and sell them to people moving into the area who can afford to pay the high prices. I'm concerned the planners have prioritised the latter here.

I'm not against building houses, but I believe we need to meet our local need first and not sell our countryside to the big speculative developers in return for often small contributions towards local projects. It is too easy for private developers, even the one owned by Mid Devon District Council, to 'game the system' and get away with prioritising profit over local need.

**f MattFarrellTiverton**  
for Lowman Ward, Town Council  
and Tiverton East, Devon County

Matt Farrell and David Sutton surveying the site after the felling of trees on Post Hill



## Hartnoll Farm, potential site for 1,500 homes



The 154-acre site around Hartnoll Business Centre between Tiverton and Halberton is being evaluated as a potential site for 1,500 new houses. Whilst the proposal is expected to include some commercial properties, it will not create anywhere near to the 2,000+ new jobs needed to be self-sufficient, leading to more commuters travelling out of the town along overused local roads

The traffic through Halberton High Street is already excessive. It can't safely support the increase in traffic a development of this scale would bring. The increased loads along Blundell's Road for traffic entering the town centre would further damage the already dreadful state of the road surface on which so much money was wasted only recently.

We need to stop building houses until the roads, buses and other infrastructure are in place to support them. This requires Town, District and the County Council to work together.

Tidcombe Hall is being considered as a site for the development of 179 houses. The area is only accessible by narrow rural lanes and already suffers from traffic bottlenecks in an area popular with local walkers and cyclists. With all those new families commuting to Exeter and Taunton for work the traffic is likely to increase significantly and cause real problems for local people.

Why build there? The area is adjacent to a reserve site in the Mid Devon Local Plan, but they are exceeding their quota of private development sites so it is not needed. The proposal was for almost twice the number of houses in the local plan anyway.

Hundreds of local residents, Councillors, and local groups have all commented on these unsuitable plans, and the applicant has asked for a delay to consider them. We need to keep applying the pressure to ensure our objections are heard loud and clear.

**We may not know the outcome for this site yet, but the action so far shows what can be achieved when Councillors and local residents work together to look at contentious planning issues.**

Narrow bridge on Tidcombe Lane



Trees felled at Post Hill, some previously protected by Tree Preservation Orders



**David Sutton, your local candidate for Lowman Ward on Tiverton Town Council, says WE MUST ACT NOW:**

“My passion for saving trees has come about after having lived a large part of my early life in Kenya before moving to Tiverton. In that country there are now roads & vast swathes of new houses where there once stood huge, beautiful, indigenous trees and forests - all too common everywhere we look these days. They are a shameful blot on the landscape, cutting through nature without care or regard for the fragile environments they replace.

**“If we are not careful this could easily happen here, so we must start to act NOW and protect our environment and natural habitats. Once they are lost they will never return.**

“I see this happening already in Exeter and the surrounding areas, and I am genuinely fearful that the plans to build more of Exeter’s houses in our countryside (that the Lib Dems were sacked from Mid Devon Council’s Cabinet for stopping) will be revived if we do not keep challenging the ‘Build here’ mantra funded by cash-rich developers and their quockerwoggers in positions of local power. We should be investing in our environment, our future, and not private developers’ pockets who just develop and move on to level the next site leaving a few paltry rows of new trees in their wake.

“The recent tragic loss of the ancient sweet Chestnut tree along Post Hill was for the sake of not building a new road a few feet further over. That tree was estimated to have been nearly 300 years old. It did not need to be felled. A few new trees elsewhere on the site will not offset that loss to the local birds, bats, and people. An entire eco system was destroyed for the sake of those few feet and some extra £ on the value of a home!

“Making more people aware of this wanton and mindless destruction and not let it sneak in unopposed is going to be the

biggest factor in saving our countryside. We need to form one voice, one group, to be aware of what we want - not only now but for our future and the generations that will follow us.

“I want to be your voice for the beautiful town and villages we live in. Not to be anti-development, but to focus on sustainable home building. Encourage developers to think about trees and hedges first and not as a ‘quota’ to meet. Regenerate the existing buildings before building new ones. Make the landlords responsible for the upkeep of their premises. Tackle all the disrepair and invest in improvements for normal people like us.

“I think we all have a responsibility to look after our fragile environment, to be aware of what’s going on in the areas we live in, and to stand up and have a voice for Mother Nature. With all the changes to our climate it has never been more important.”



*David Sutton*

**f Focus on Castle and Lowman for Lowman Ward, Town Council**

