

More families in Devon will be able to access help and support following the launch of a dedicated Family Hub Advice Line and website, run by the charity Action for Children on behalf of our County Council.

Family Hubs are a new way of bringing together all the help a family may need in one place. It's part of a transition in Devon from children's centres, which supported families of children aged 0-8 with a referral from a GP or other professional, to family hubs – which are open to all families with children aged up to 19, or 25 for young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and care leavers.

The free Action for Children-run advice line connects parents and carers to trained family support workers, who can provide a listening ear when things get difficult or can signpost to other support.

It will run alongside a network of Action for Children run Family Hub centres across Devon.

Rob Wyatt, Action for Children's operational director in the South West, said: 'We're thrilled to be able to extend that help to families online and on the phone – meaning they can access support quickly and at a time that suits them.'

'At Action for Children we support hundreds of thousands of children and families across the UK, and we know that early help is a vital lifeline. Our staff support parents to address issues early and can help stop problems escalating. That is not only the best way to ensure positive outcomes for the whole family, but also avoids the need for costlier interventions further down the line.'

You can call the Devon Family Hubs Advice Line on 0800 538 5458.

Finding the right childcare for your child is really important and it is Devon's job to help make sure that there are enough early years and childcare places for families in Devon.

Every year we invite people to take part in our Parents Childcare Survey to find out the kind of child care people use or plan to use, entitlement to government funded childcare, and the number of hours your child will spend in childcare each week. The results will help our early years and childcare team to plan and make sure that there is enough childcare available throughout the county.

Take the survey here <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ParentsSurveySummer2024/>

Devon's determination to reduce carbon emissions are continuing to pay off after the latest figures show that we are ahead of schedule in the goal to reduce our Council's emissions by 70% by 2030 according to the latest report on our carbon footprint.

The total level of emissions we produced in 2022/23 was 19,400 tonnes (of carbon dioxide equivalent), a 56 per cent fall when compared to the 43,826 tonnes in our baseline year of 2012/13.

The figures take into account emissions created in areas such as our vehicle fleet, school transport and buildings.

Street lighting is one of our main sources of emissions and the latest figures show that these emissions fell by almost a quarter in 2022/23 when compared with 2021/22 (4,576 tonnes falling to 3,465 tonnes).

This is largely due to the project to convert all of Devon's 79,000 streetlights and highways signals to LED lightbulbs and to put in better controls so that lights can be dimmed. This project is in its final stages and 90% complete.

We have also completed retrofitting nine council buildings, increased the number of electric vehicles in our fleet while staff are travelling less when compared to pre-Covid and moved to agile working and video conferencing.

Other contributory factors that have reduced our carbon footprint include the reduced carbon intensity of the grid electricity we use. More than half of the grid electricity we use in the UK now comes from non-fossil fuel sources.

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