

Berrynarbor Community Road Warden Scheme

Prepared by Julie Irwin Clerk/RFO May 2027

Introduction

The scheme is a formal agreement between Devon County Council (DCC) and local councils that enables communities to deliver approved minor works on or around the public highway. DCC do not ask communities to carry out specific tasks; instead, Parishes can choose the activities that will make the greatest local impact.

The scheme does not transfer any DCC responsibilities; it provides local councils with the opportunity to carry out additional local works that enhance and complement the service DCC deliver. Whilst enabling DCC meet their statutory duties and manage the network by using an asset-management approach to ensure public funds are used effectively.

The Road Warden acts as the key contact between the community, Parish Council and DCC. Activities are agreed in advance and must comply with safety requirements. Volunteers operate under guidance and must not undertake high-risk works.

Role of the Parish Council

The Parish council acts as facilitator and their responsibilities include:

- Appointing a Community Road Warden
- Supporting volunteer recruitment
- Ensuring appropriate insurance and governance arrangements
- Liaising with DCC highways officers

Training and Risk Management

- All volunteers must receive appropriate training, including Chapter 8 (Traffic Signs Manual).
- Risk assessments must be completed before any work is undertaken. Personal protective equipment and signage must be used at all times.

Scope of Works

Permitted activities include minor maintenance tasks. Complex or high-risk works remain the responsibility of the County Council.

Examples of work that may be approved under the scheme include:

- pothole repairs (that do not meet DCC safety intervention levels).

Berrynarbor Community Road Warden Scheme

Prepared by Julie Irwin Clerk/RFO May 2027

- clearing weeds
- cleaning road signs
- cleaning drainage features (for example, gully gratings).
- repairing fingerposts

Approval depends on:

- type of work proposed
- volunteer qualifications
- traffic flow and speed
- safety considerations outlined in the risk assessment

All works **must** be pre-agreed with the local Neighbourhood Highway Officer (NHO) and carried out using our method statements. Work on high-speed roads is unlikely to be approved. Some tasks (for example, sign cleaning) may be allowed on main roads if training, signing, and guarding meet Chapter 8 requirements¹.

Roles & Responsibilities

Road Warden	Road Warden Volunteer
<p>Should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be nominated by a local council or organisation• communicate with Devon County Council• work within the formal Road Warden Agreement• coordinate all minor works in the parish or town• ensure risk assessments are completed and available upon request• record what works they do	<p>Should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be nominated by a local council or organisation• receive the necessary training for the work they undertake• work within the arrangements agreed with the Road Warden

Insurance

- DCC provides [third-party \(public liability\) insurance](#) for volunteer work completed in accordance with DCC guidance.
- DCC provides [public liability insurance](#) for voluntary work on the public highway, **provided the work is undertaken safely and in line with DCC guidance.**

¹ [Traffic signs manual chapter 8 part 1 road works and temporary situations: designs](#)

Berrynarbor Community Road Warden Scheme

Prepared by Julie Irwin Clerk/RFO May 2027

- DCC provide [guidance on insurance](#), however parish and town councils are advised to discuss insurance requirements with their insurance provider.

Benefits & Outcomes	Risks & Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables communities to complete small-scale works locally, improving road safety and local environment • Meaning a faster response to minor issues • Free training (on DCC-arranged courses). • Priority consideration for the Highway Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund (HMCEF)* • Increased community involvement and ownership. The scheme reflects the principles of localism and community empowerment. It enables residents to take an active role in maintaining their environment, improving responsiveness to local issues and strengthening community resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependence on volunteer availability, • Health and safety compliance • Potential confusion over responsibilities • Financial burden on Parish Council • Volunteer capacity – ensuring sustainable participation. • Governance and insurance – confirming coverage with DCC and insurers. • Training commitments – ensuring volunteers can attend required courses. • Record-keeping – maintaining logs of works and risk assessments. • Scope creep – avoiding pressure to undertake tasks beyond capacity or safety limits. <p>These risks must be managed through clear governance and communication.</p>

* The HMCEF provides financial support to towns, parishes, and community groups for volunteer-led enhancement work. Priority is given to organisations signed up to the Road Warden Scheme. Initial applications must clearly outline the work and the benefits to the community. Organisations may apply to the fund to purchase items including tools and equipment (including personal protective equipment) and pothole repair materials.

Recommendations

- Berrynarbor should adopt the Road Warden Scheme in a phased, low-risk, model, focusing first on tasks that deliver high visual impact and reduce small maintenance issues. This approach plays to your parish’s strengths: strong community engagement, a tidy village ethos, and a manageable precept.
- Hold a public meeting and form a project group

Berrynarbor Community Road Warden Scheme

Prepared by Julie Irwin Clerk/RFO May 2027

- Appoint a Road Warden with the Right Profile
- Develop a risk assessment (based on those shared from other PC's)
- Avoid high-risk tasks, initially, given the parish's limited volunteer time and the need to avoid liability and keeps the scheme safe, manageable, and compliant
 - Do not begin with pothole repairs, even though permitted. They require more training, more PPE, and more scrutiny.
 - Avoid any work on high-speed roads (e.g., the A399 edges).
 - Avoid drainage works beyond simple gully clearing
- Put Simple Governance in Place This protects both the Parish Council and the volunteers.
 - Adopt a short Road Warden Policy
 - Ensure insurance is confirmed in writing (via DCC's indemnity)
 - Keep a simple log of works
 - Ensure all volunteers sign a participation form acknowledging training and safety rules
- Review – after 6 months

Decision Required

Council is asked to consider:

- Whether Berrynarbor Parish Council wishes to join the Devon County Council Community Road Warden Scheme.

If so, to authorise the Clerk to:

- Meet with DCC and sign the Road Warden Agreement with DCC.
- Appoint a Road Warden.
- Put in place the necessary governance, insurance confirmation, and volunteer arrangements.