

Berrynarbor Parish Council

County Councillors Report

September 2026

Local Government reorganisation

The Government announced on 7 September 2026 that it is pausing and reviewing the planned local government reorganisation in Devon. Housing Secretary Angela Rayner told Parliament that the decision followed legal advice and that the Government wants to ensure the process is robust, lawful and aligned with the priorities of the new Prime Minister.

The paused plan would have replaced Devon's current two-tier system with four unitary authorities, abolishing Devon County Council and the district councils.

A key consequence of the decision is that local elections are expected to proceed on existing council boundaries in May 2027, rather than under any new unitary structures. So that means the District council elections will take place next May.

1. No immediate change to council services

Residents will continue to receive services through the existing arrangements involving:

- Devon County Council
- North Devon Council
- Berrynarbor Parish Council

There are no immediate changes to waste collection, highways, planning, social care or education services.

2. North Devon Council remains in place

Under the previously approved reorganisation, North Devon Council would eventually have been abolished and merged into a much larger authority covering a large rural area of Devon. The pause means North Devon Council continues as normal for now.

3. Continued local representation

Many concerns in rural North Devon centred on whether a large county-wide rural authority would weaken the voice of smaller settlements such as Combe Martin. The postponement means existing district and parish representation remains unchanged while the review takes place.

4. Uncertainty remains

The Government has **not cancelled reorganisation entirely**. It has paused and reviewed the programme, meaning Devon could still face structural changes later. The final shape of local government in North Devon therefore remains uncertain.

5. Financial implications

Devon councils have already committed significant officer time and resources to preparing for LGR. As the former deputy leader of Devon County Council I would estimate that millions of pounds have been spent across the county, and those costs will not be recovered regardless of the eventual outcome.

Key message for Combe Martin Rural

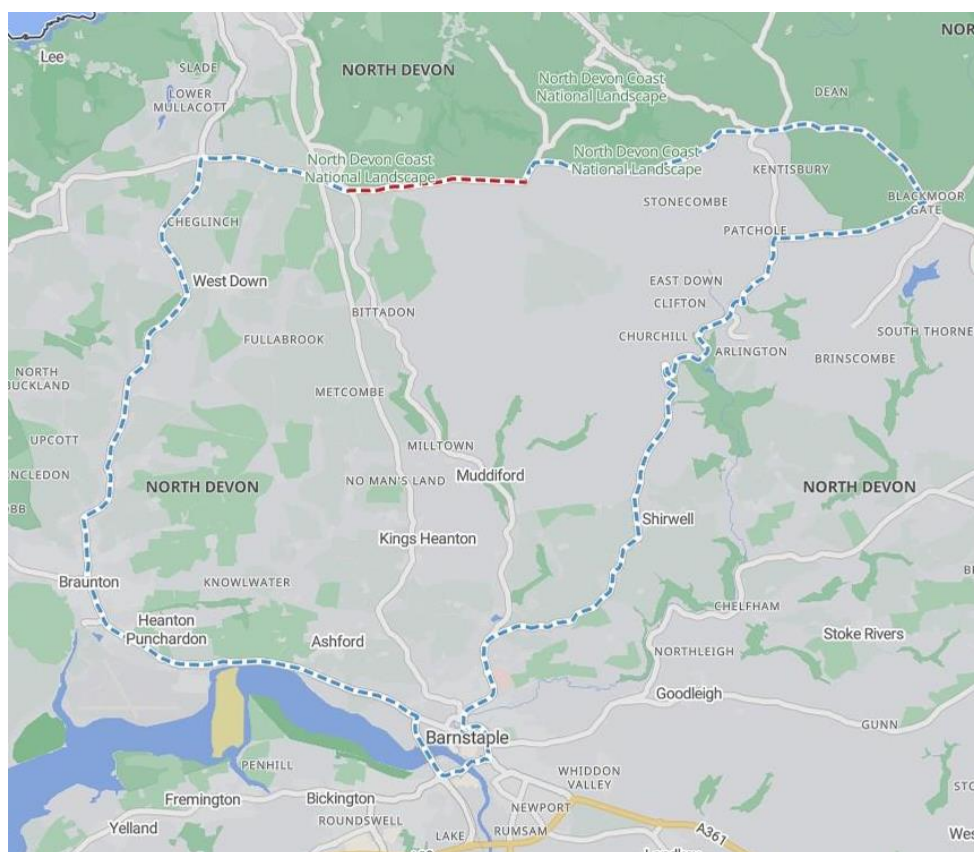
The most important takeaway is that **nothing changes immediately for residents or local services**. North Devon's existing councils remain in place, local elections are expected to go ahead as normal in 2027, and the future structure of local government in Devon is now subject to a fresh Government review.

Closed road A3123 (Near the Chairman's farm)

Monday 28th sept- Wednesday 30th September

7am-6pm

Drainage investigation works.



Andrea Davis

County Councillor

Andrea.davis@devon.gov.uk