**From your Parish Council:**

**Use of Human Waste in Agriculture**

The residents of Lower Loxhore (and others depending on the wind) suffer at least twice a year from a nauseous and noxious atmosphere caused by the spreading of sewage on the fields that run from Hill down by the Bratton Bridleway to Lower Loxhore.  The smell is so strong that windows and doors have to be kept closed and even then staying in does not prevent headaches.  The run off, in the past, has also caused people's fish in their ponds to die.

Your Parish Council have tried complaining to NDDC Environmental health department but they are only concerned with smells and do not consider a smell lasting under three days a nuisance!  We have also tried the Environment Agency but by the time they respond the problem has gone!  The Council wrote to our MP to see if she would support a campaign to get this practice banned.  Unfortunately her reply with comments from DEFRA and an attachment from the Environment agency (EA) indicates that the use of sewage will increase in order to meet environmental targets of not polluting rivers and the sea.  (Please look at the July 2021 minutes and attachment on the Parish website)

 However, there are very strict rules on the storage, spreading, ploughing in and use of sludge.  These rules can be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sewage-sludge-in-agriculture-code-of-practice/sewage-sludge-in-agriculture-code-of-practice-for-england-wales-and-northern-irelandhttps://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sewage-sludge-in-agriculture-code-of-practice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sewage-sludge-in-agriculture-code-of-practice)

 We would ask anyone who observes the rules being broken or who is affected by the smell or run off to ring the environment agency on 0800 807060. (Please let the Parish Clerk know also that you have done this)  The more who complain the better chance of a response from the EA.  If that does not get the expected response then we have a direct contact Mr Mischka Hewins 02030 252385 [mischka.hewins@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:mischka.hewins@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Also, NDDC share a climate emergency officer with Torridge District Council and she might be a source of assistance if anyone thinks the rules are being broken.

Her name is Donna Sibley [Donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk](mailto:Donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk)

Finally we have one other potential helper.  A lady with the Devon Wildlife Trust is tasked to work in liaison with South West Water to visit and counsel farmers to try and prevent the run off and contamination of watercourses.

Let your Parish Clerk, Maria Collett, know.

Thank you.