

Bridestowe & Sourton

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2016 - 2034

(Regulation 14 version)



Neighbourhood Development Plan for Bridestowe and Sourton 2017.

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Chapter 1. Introduction and background.

1.1 PREAMBLE

This Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is the plan for the two West Devon parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton, and represents the communities' vision and priorities for how we would like to see the local area change in the coming years. In doing so it sets out our local planning policies which will be considered as and when any proposals for development come forward in either parish.

The Plan is not intended to cover every issue identified as being important to the communities. It has a focus on responding to proposals for development and the appropriate use of land. It puts us, as the communities, in the driving seat when it comes to having a say over what, how and where development should take place where it requires planning permission.

The Plan and its policies reflect our parishes' characteristics and the ambitions of our communities. The non - planning issues that arose from the consultation have been included in Appendix X (Community Aspirations). The two Parish Councils are committed to addressing these aspirations although some may not be deliverable at a parish level.

A list of the various reference documents referred to in this plan can be found in Appendix II and on both Bridestowe's and Sourton's websites.

The Plan covers the period from 2016 to 2034, running concurrently with the Local Plan produced by West Devon, South Hams and Plymouth Councils and current policies and plans of Dartmoor National Park Authority, as the local planning authorities.

We recognize that our NDP is a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community as understood today and current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period. Bridestowe Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

Bridestowe and Sourton are adjoining parishes in the district of West Devon; both are rural parishes, separate and distinctive, yet sharing common threads and jointly using certain amenities and facilities.

Both parishes face similar challenges - reduction in public transport, rural isolation, oversubscribed local schools and concern about potential inappropriate development. Both share a desire to have a voice in the local development that will occur in the decades ahead.

With this commonality, Bridestowe and Sourton Parish



Bridestowe and Sourton Neighbourhood Development Plan Draft. October 2017

Councils, encouraged by central government, decided in 2013 to develop a joint parish plan. It was agreed that Bridestowe PC would hold the funds for the project and be the lead body in grant applications.

With the development of a new Strategic Plan by West Devon Council, which proposed allocating new housing to Bridestowe, a decision was taken to 'upgrade' to a neighbourhood development plan that, unlike a parish plan would, if successfully adopted, have statutory power and become part of the Development Plan for the Parishes.

Background data, feedback from community organisations and businesses plus local research had already been collated. With a working group in place, a constitution adopted and officers in post plus funding from Devon County Council's Town and Parish Fund, a smooth transition from parish plan to emerging neighbourhood development plan was achieved. Further engagement and consultation would be required to build on these foundations.

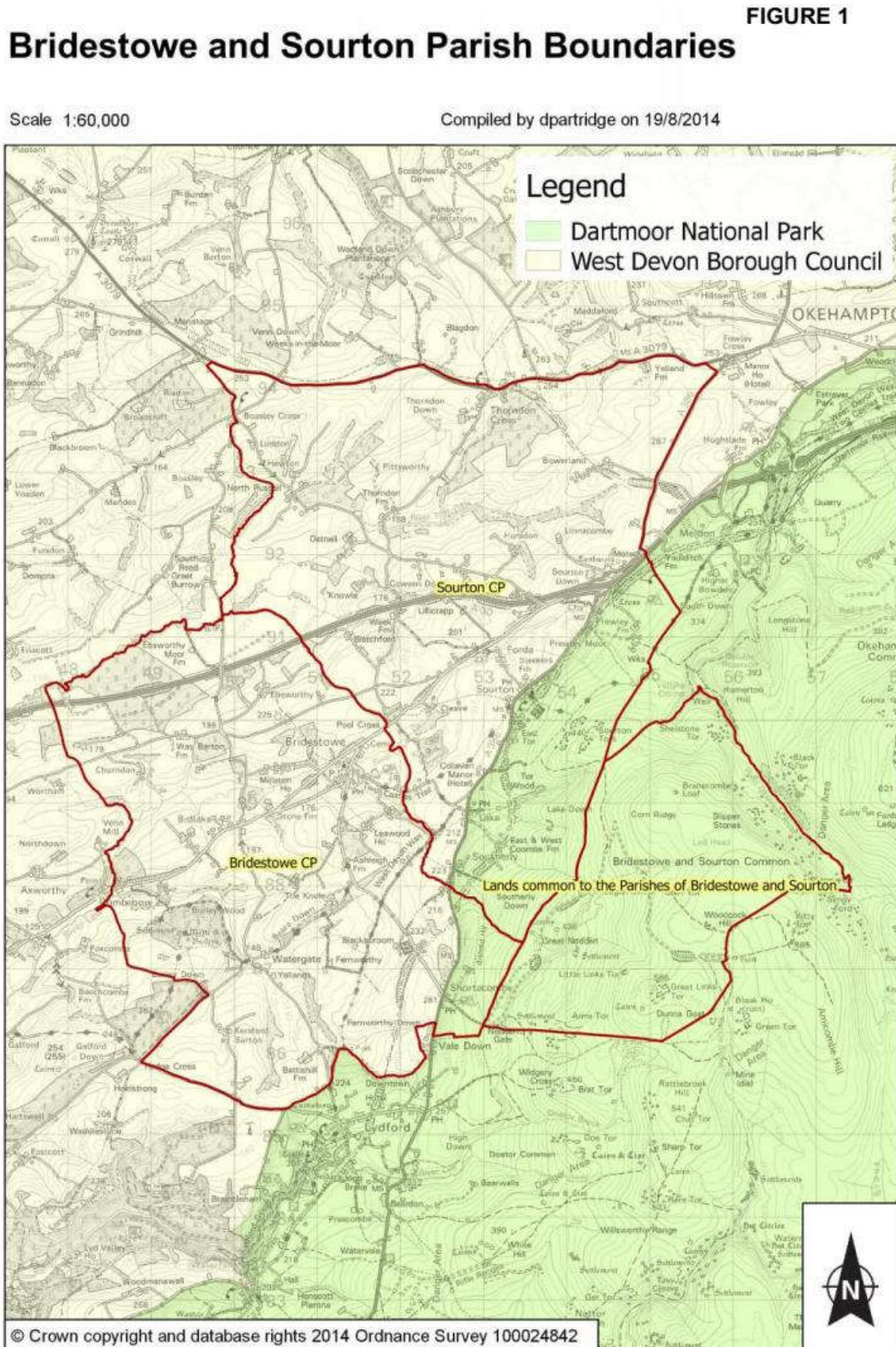
The two parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton were formally designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area in December 2014 through an application to West Devon Borough Council under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6).

The Plan has been prepared by the Bridestowe and Sourton Joint Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group, whose members are parishioners and representatives from both Parish Councils.



1.3 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DESIGNATED AREA

In accordance with part 2 of the Regulations, West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) and Dartmoor National Park Authority, the two relevant local planning authorities, publicised the application from Bridestowe and Sourton Parish Council and advertised a six-week consultation period. The application was approved by WDBC in December 2015 and the parishes of Bridestowe and



Sourton designated as the Neighbourhood Area (Fig 1. Red line denotes boundary)

1.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Bridestowe and Sourton's joint Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been developed from the views of local people, businesses, community organisations including young people's groups and the local schools' federation. Views have been gathered using a variety of different consultation approaches including stalls at local fetes and popular events and regular monthly evening meetings open to all.

Arising from the public meetings, a consultation group of 48 households was established. All members of this consultation group have been sent and given the opportunity to comment on and contribute to all documents prepared by the Steering Group. The households involved in the consultation group include more than 10% of the population of the two parishes. A comprehensive paper survey was distributed to every household in the area in 2015. Regular bulletins about the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan have been included in the monthly newsletter circulated to every household in the two parishes and current summaries have been posted at regular intervals on both village web-sites. Social media have been employed to elicit feed-back and views from younger parishioners.

In addition to the residents' consultation, a wide range of stakeholders were invited to give their views and share insights. Local businesses were asked to complete either a paper-based survey or respond online. Separate surveys were carried out to gain insight into specific areas such as recreation.

A housing needs survey, with questionnaires delivered to every household in the two parishes was commissioned in 2016 after a successful application to the National Lottery for funding. The full results of the surveys are included in Appendices I, III and IV of this report.

1.5. PROFILES OF BRIDESTOWE & SOURTON

1.5.1 Location

Bridestowe and Sourton are adjoining parishes in the district of West Devon. The A30 dual carriageway, the main access to Cornwall, runs through both parishes of the Neighbourhood Plan area, with the main Okehampton to Tavistock road (A386), running North - South, bisecting Sourton village.

The cities of Exeter and Plymouth are 30 miles to the east and 25 to the south respectively and can be reached by regular but limited bus services. The nearest mainline railway stations are in Plymouth and Exeter although plans to run trains from Okehampton to Exeter are underway. The towns of Okehampton and Tavistock are local shopping centres and offer library services, medical centres, secondary schools, community hospitals etc.

Both parishes contain Common Land in the Dartmoor National Park, parts of which are held jointly. This provides rough grazing, a small part of which is used by the military for live firing practice. The scenic quality is reflected by the 'National Park' status, which is the highest worldwide landscape designation.

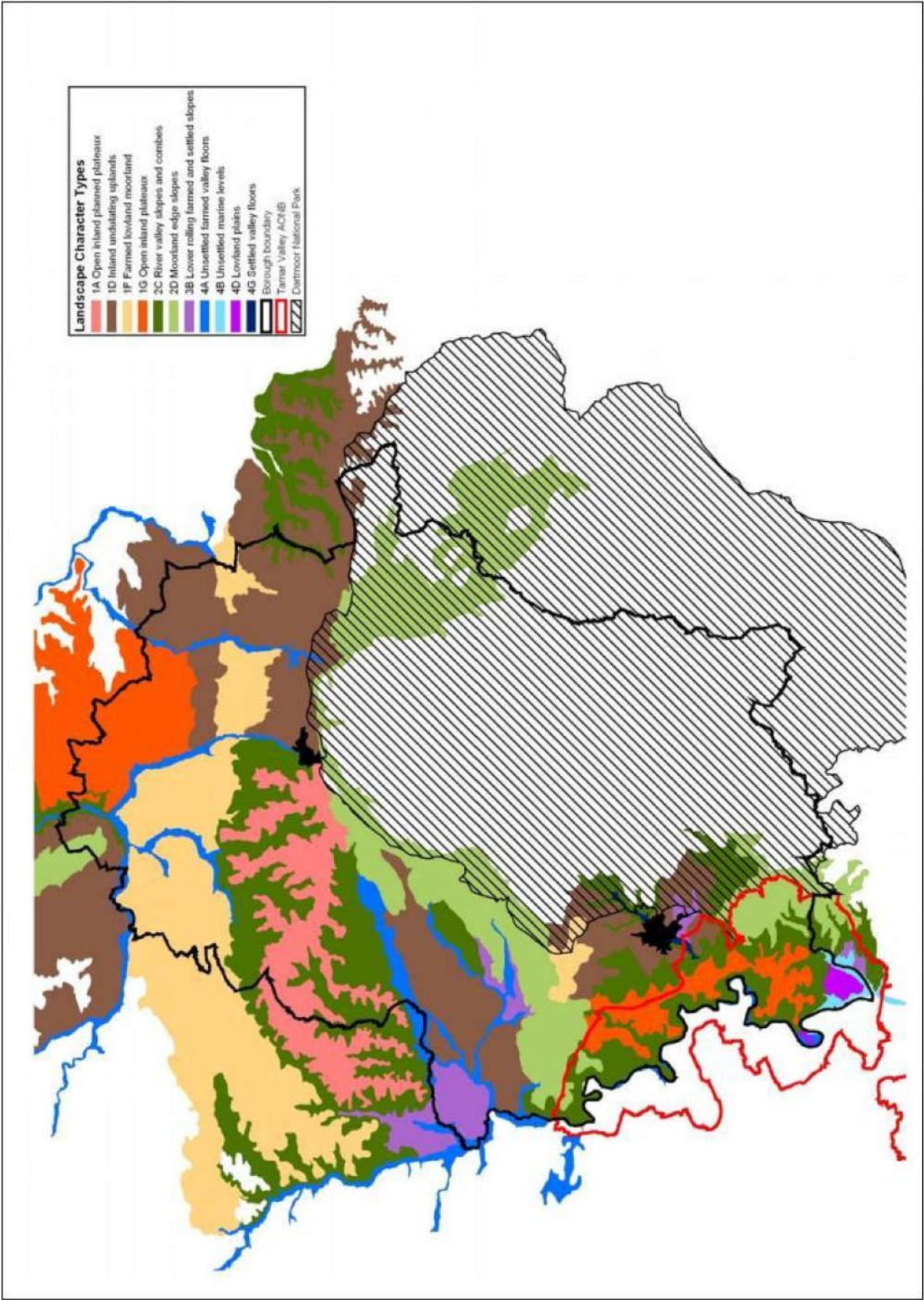


Figure 2. Map showing Landscape Character Types

The Landscape Character map (Figure 2) sets the designated area within the locality showing the mix of moorland, farmland, river valley slopes and coombes - all of which contribute to its distinctive identity. Both are rural parishes, separate and distinctive, comprised mostly of undulating farm land given over almost entirely to pasture.

Sourton Parish consists of a small village with no real nucleus, which has a public house, but no shop, together with several small hamlets. The school in the parish is in an isolated position, standing virtually alone, a good couple of miles from most of the scattered hamlets and the village itself, and predominantly serves the parish of Bratton Clovelly.

Bridestowe in contrast, has a village centre, with a shop and post office, public house and school at its heart plus a few small satellite hamlets. The beauty of the area makes it a popular holiday destination and a place where retired people aspire to live.

1.5.2 Size and population

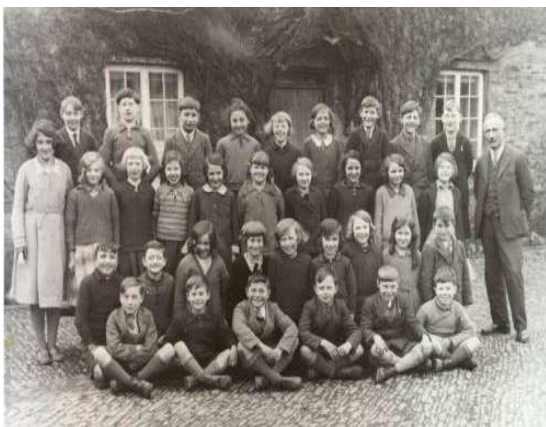
Bridestowe parish has a total of 2,036.16 hectares and a population of 576 (240 households), whilst Sourton parish has a larger area, 3,396.53 hectares but a smaller population, 413 (180 households). [2011 Census data].

Sourton's population has been relatively static over the past 20 years, while Bridestowe's population has increased due to recent housing developments.

The proportion of the population aged under 16 and over 65 is shown in Table 3.1, in Chapter 3 and shows a slightly lower proportion of people under 16 and a substantially higher proportion over 65 than the national average.

The two primary schools within the NDP area, are fully subscribed. Both schools have received good Ofsted reports, and attract children from outside the NDP area.

"Treetops" the thriving pre-school and after school care provider based in Bridestowe is heavily over-subscribed and is under pressure to expand as it not only serves the local area but also attracts children from the surrounding parishes.



Bridestowe Primary School, then and now and Boasley School in Sourton Parish

1.5.3 Heritage

The area is steeped in history and this is reflected by the fact that there are 448 entries in the Historical Environment Record that pertains to Bridestowe and Sourton. Bronze Age remains such as hut circles and tumuli still exist on the moor. In 1991 remains of a Roman road and possible signal station were found at Sourton Down while nearby in 1643 a battle between the Royalists and Parliamentarians took place. Some farmsteads date from the Saxon period and are named in the Domesday Book. An extensive Norman earthwork can be seen among the trees of Burley Wood in Bridestowe parish. Some mostly unsuccessful mining took place in both parishes in the nineteenth century but more importantly small outcrops of limestone were quarried and the stone burned in kilns for use as an agricultural fertiliser and in the building trade. The sites are now deeply flooded and are valuable wildlife havens. An ice factory was set up on the slopes of Sourton Tor in 1875 but it was a short-lived venture, undermined in part by mild winters.

During the Second World War Bridestowe was home to three army camps and the American troops stationed at Leawood were in the forefront at the D Day landings. The concrete bases and road layout of one of these army camps are still present within the Leawood Estate lands.



1.5.4 Recreation

Sport and recreation form an important element in the life of Bridestowe and Sourton. The National Park and Fernworthy Down provide open access for walkers and horse riders whilst bridle paths, the Granite Way and Pegasus Way provide additional access for cyclists and riders. Paragliders are a regular sight, launching from Sourton Tor to share the thermals with the buzzards. Bridestowe's Sporting Green provides a good range of children's play equipment but a lack of facilities for older children has been identified. Sourton has no play facilities for children.

1.5.5 Housing

Sourton village has seen little building since the Second World War apart from Trescote Way, a substantial development of bungalows built in the 1970's under previous planning regulations. Although technically within Sourton parish, Trescote Way's proximity to Bridestowe village leads residents to perceive themselves as part of that community.

Bridestowe village has had three significant residential developments in the past thirty years which have almost doubled its population. The rest of the parish inhabitants live in small

hamlets or scattered farms, some of whose outbuildings have been converted to dwellings.

Several sites have been proposed in Bridestowe by landowners for possible development. All 5 proposed sites are adjacent to but outside the settlement boundary. Chapter 5 sets out the policies that relate to these and any other possible sites of development.

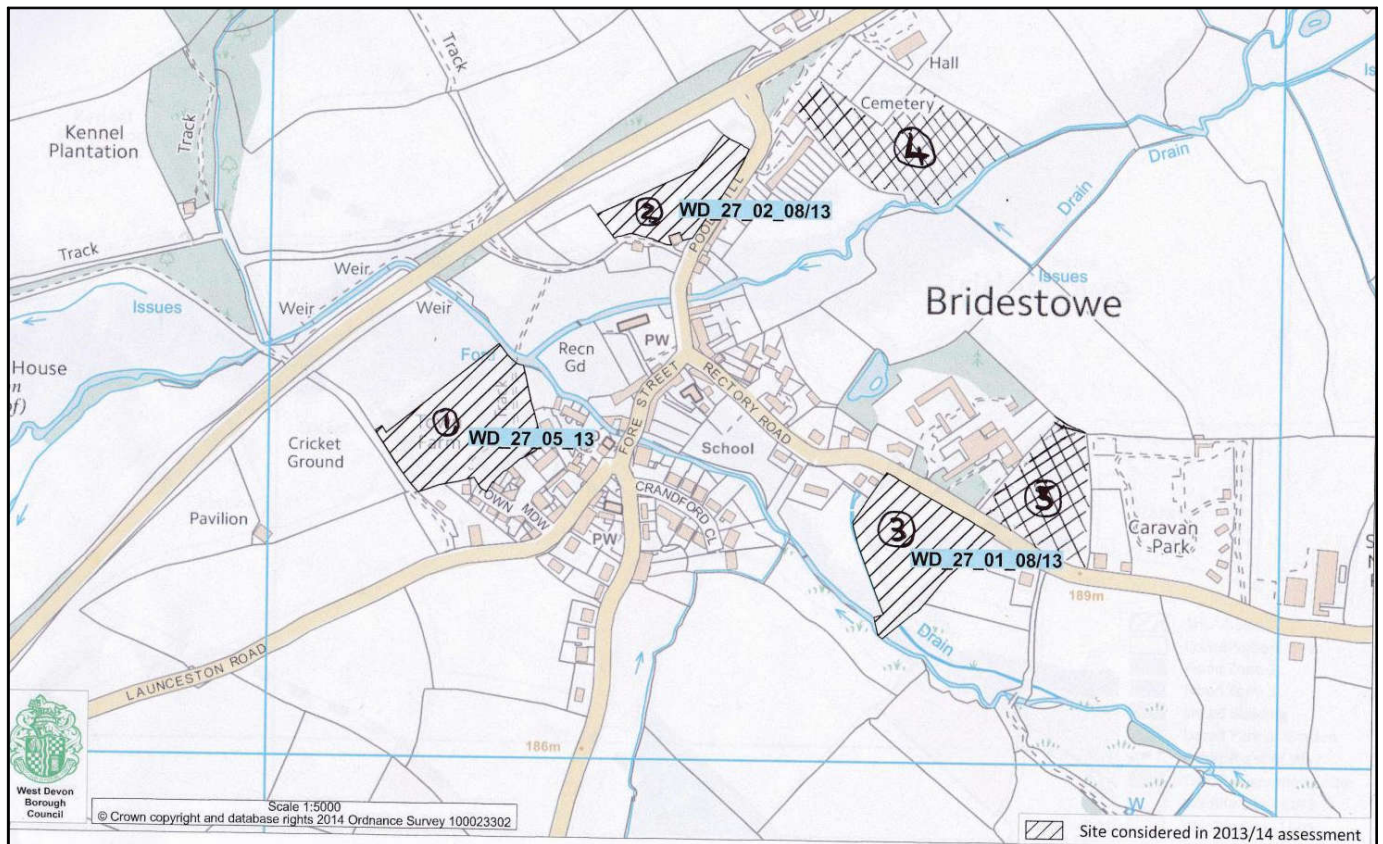
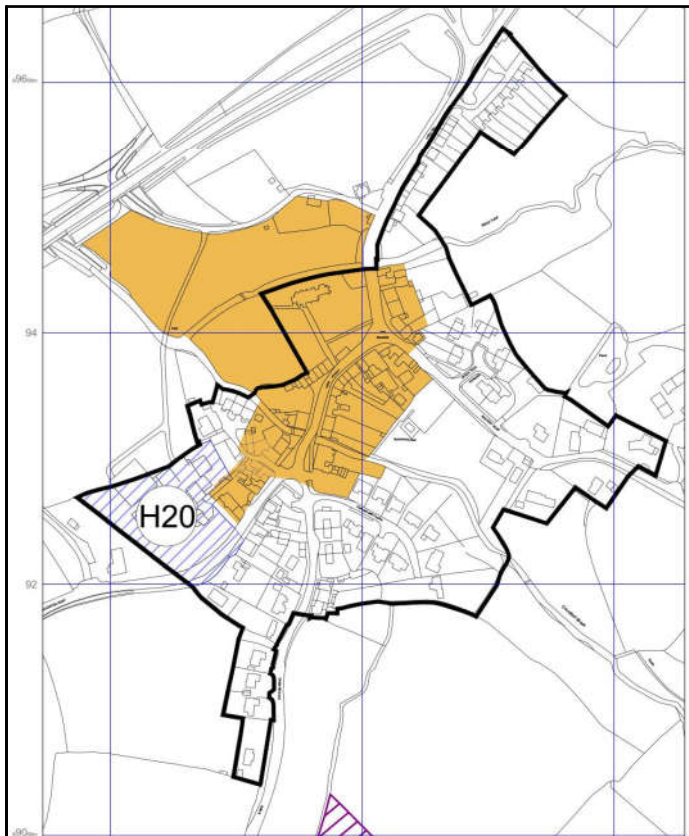


Figure 3. Sites put forward by landowners in Bridestowe



**Figure 4.
Bridestowe's settlement boundary**

Initially Sourton had not been identified as a development area, but since the establishment of the local neighbourhood development planning process one application for new housing has been submitted and granted planning consent.

Sourton village had no settlement boundary at the commencement of this Neighbourhood Development Plan, but this was addressed by the Parish Council in July 2016 and a boundary drawn up and adopted. (See Appendix V)

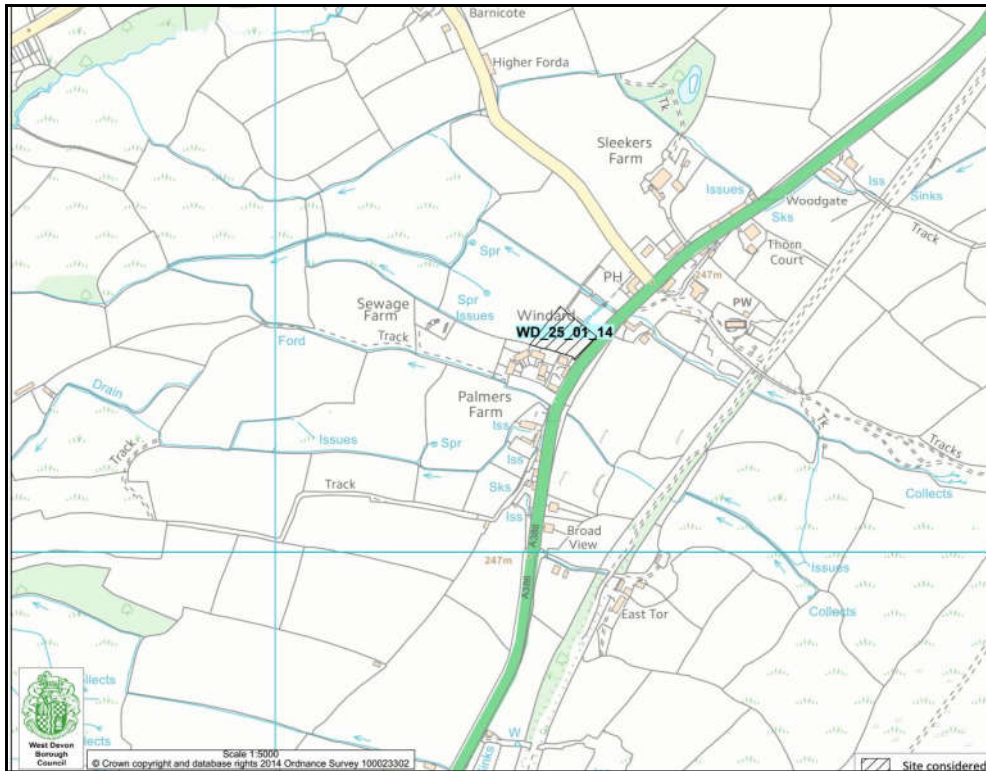


Figure 5. Location of proposed housing development in Sourton

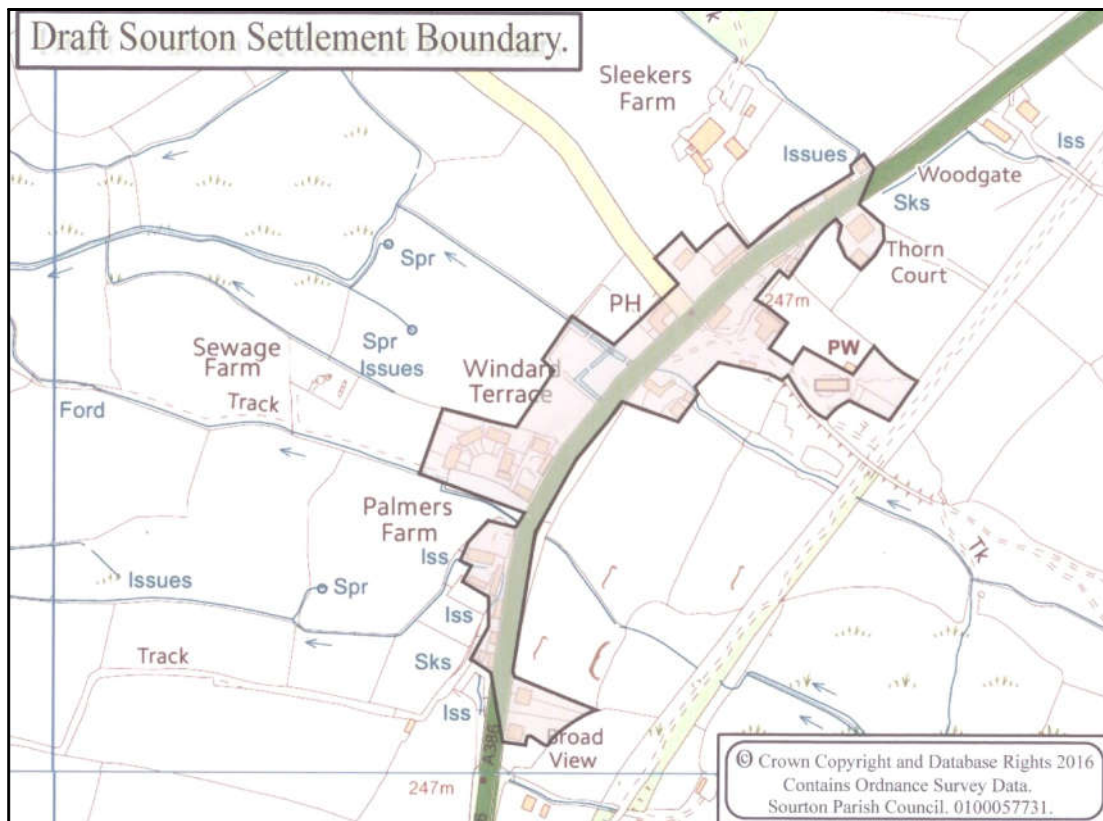


Figure 6. Draft settlement boundary for Sourton village drawn up in July 2016

Bridestowe and Sourton have a wide range of housing, with a relative excess of larger homes and lack of smaller homes suitable for young people and for older residents seeking to downsize but still live within the community. Redressing this imbalance in housing stock is an important feature of the policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan, and is supported by the adopted West Devon Core Strategy (2011) and the draft Joint Local Plan prepared jointly by Plymouth, West Devon and South Hams.

Data from the 2011 Census show that Bridestowe has 240 households of which 70.4% are owner occupied (national average 63.3%), 6% social rented (national average 19.3%), and 20.4% privately rented (national average 16.8%). For Sourton there are 180 households, 81.7% are owner occupied, 3.9% social rented and 12.2% private rented.

Average incomes in West Devon are lower than the national average, particularly for people who work in the Borough (see Chapter 3), whilst the average price of a 2-bedroomed terraced house in Okehampton is currently in the range of £140,000 – £180,000 (www.rightmove.co.uk); a starter home in a sought after rural setting is considerably more expensive. The imbalance between incomes and available low-cost housing emphasises the importance to the Parishes of measures to increase the provision of affordable housing, both to buy or rent.

1.5.6 Employment and incomes

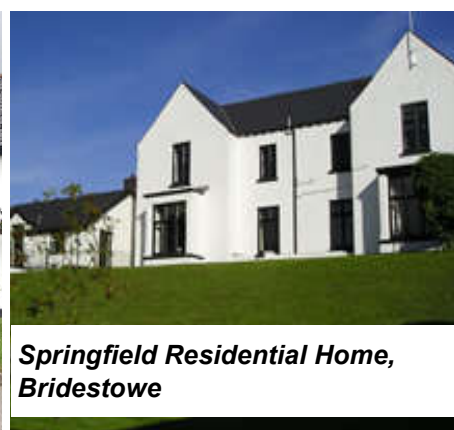
Currently the main industries are agriculture and tourism. Most farms concentrate on fattening cattle and sheep and a few keep dairy cows. Both parishes have a caravan and camping park, public houses which serve food and have facilities for Bed and Breakfast. Bridestowe has a thriving village shop and post office. A long established residential home with separate supported living bungalows for the elderly frail, provides local employment as do a busy garage, café and hotel close to the A30.

Incomes are generally lower than the national average (see Chapter 3) and unemployment is low.

Despite the relatively low wages locally, the poor provision of public transport means that many people need to own a car to commute to work; 51% of households within the two parishes own 2 cars (national average 32%) whilst 8.3% have no access to a car (national average 25%).



The White Hart Inn, Bridestowe



Springfield Residential Home, Bridestowe

Bridestowe and Sourton as part of West Devon have a low wage economy and higher living costs contribute to levels of fuel poverty locally [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2015].

1.5.7 Living in the Neighbourhood Area

In an early consultation, people were asked what they liked about living in the area; above all they valued the landscape with its proximity to Dartmoor.

Another finding was a strong sense of community and this is supported by the many clubs and societies that meet regularly, plus the social facilities offered by the village halls and the churches. Annual events like the Bridestowe Ram Roast and Sourton's Produce Show are always well attended. The area has very low levels of crime.

1.5.8 Why the Landscape is important

In WDBC's 2011 Strategic Plan the importance of the beautiful landscape of West Devon is acknowledged and it is this asset, exemplified in parishes such as Sourton and Bridestowe, that draws tourists and those wishing to retire to the area. This is also acknowledged in the emerging draft Joint Local Plan. Key to conserving what people come here to enjoy - the scenic countryside - means not only maintaining the habitats and field systems that make up the landscape, but ensuring that development does not intrude or blight it.

Good, well designed housing, sited in areas where that development is not intrusive, can ensure that both the landscape and the built environment can happily co-exist.

Stunning views of Sourton, Bridestowe and in the far distance Bodmin Moor can be glimpsed from the first time from the A30 heading West as the road approaches the Sourton Cross. Other breathtaking views are accessed from various vantage points within the parishes and ensuring that these are not compromised by development is of great importance in this Neighbourhood Development Plan.



1.6 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

External factors will impact on the two parishes and it is prudent to recognize that these may necessitate a review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan within the plan period.

1.6.1 Improving rail links

Improving connectivity and supporting the development of future rail freight opportunities, improving the rail link between Cornwall, Plymouth and the rest of the country is of great importance to the Region. The Tavistock to Plymouth and Okehampton to Exeter rail links, two projects provisionally approved by the Local Authority, will have an impact on the local area making it more attractive to commuters wishing to locate to a rural area with good rail links to the two cities. Demand for increased housing development is a likely consequence of such developments.

Currently there are significant impediments to local businesses, to the development of tourism, and to the broader economic development of West Devon caused by the absence of a rail service. The potential impacts of rail service re-opening on the local and regional economy are likely to be significant and on balance positive. (see Appendix VI).

1.6.2 Community energy projects

The move away from reliance on fossil fuels to cleaner sources of energy is a national and international priority as part of the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015, to which the UK Government is a signatory.

Engaging in community energy projects that through collective action could contribute to energy generation and perhaps reduce the cost of energy for consumers, has strong support from residents (see Appendix III) and is in line with local strategic policy. There are however natural concerns that intrusive renewable installations could mar the highly-valued landscape.



1.6.3 Farming

Although agriculture directly accounts for a small percentage of local employment, its indirect involvement (e.g. equipment supply and maintenance, retail and tourism) is much greater, and its role in both parishes is historical and enduring.

Britain's exit from the European Union could impact unfavourably on the incomes of farmers and major uncertainties are currently contributing to reduced investment and limited agricultural developments. Diversification and innovative land use of traditional agriculture land may occur in the years to come but are not addressed in this plan.

Chapter Two: Planning Policy Context:

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a way in which local communities, such as those within the Parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton, can formulate development management policies, and set out local standards and criteria against which planning applications for the development and use of land and buildings will be assessed in the parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton.

If a NDP containing these policies successfully passes scrutiny by an independent examiner and then is subsequently approved by a local referendum, the NDP will be formally 'made' and thus the policies it contains will be applied by the Local Planning Authority for development management purposes in the consideration and determination of formal applications for planning permission. The examiner is there to consider whether the NDP in setting out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a particular neighbourhood area meets the basic condition, and whether the referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area. The examiner will make recommendations and the Local Authority then decide what action to take in response to these recommendations. If the Authority propose to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner, it must notify the following people or groups of their proposed decision (and reason for it) and invite representations from;

*the qualifying body

*anyone whose representation was submitted to the examiner and

*any consultation body that was previously consulted

NDPs were established through the Localism Act 2011 and Schedules 4A & 4B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and accordingly must meet the following basic conditions:

- i. They must generally conform with the strategic policies of the formally adopted Development Plan for the area, in the case of Bridestowe and Sourton this is the West Devon Local Development Framework (2011) , together with the Dartmoor National Park Plan (for those parts of the Parishes within the National Park);
- ii. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of state and the National Planning policy framework (NPPF, March 2012)
- iii. Contribute to achieving sustainable development; and,
- iv. Be compatible with European Union (EU) law and human rights obligations.

Thus, the weight to be accorded to Parish led development management policies contained in any NDP will be equal to that of policies developed at both District and National level, ensuring that local residents have a real and greater voice in the quality and contribution of new development to local community facilities and the character of the rural landscape within

the Parishes. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A Neighbourhood Development Plan has the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan. However, NDPs are not a potential tool to stop development from happening in the first place.

The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) provides current advice from the Government on Planning Policy and potentially supersedes policies contained within some of the older local planning documents.

In this Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton we seek to clarify what kinds of development are to be encouraged, for the benefit of developers and the local community.

Plymouth, West Devon and South Hams are currently preparing a Joint Local Plan which is anticipated to be finalised and adopted in late 2017, and will set out the overarching strategy for the area, setting out where development will take place, what areas should be protected, and how the area will change through to 2034.

In this Neighbourhood Development Plan, we have sought to follow the principles set out in the currently available public consultation version of the Joint Local Plan as far as possible. Until the new Plan has been officially adopted we are however required to generally conform with the existing Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2006-2026) which was adopted by West Devon Council in 2011.

Details of policies and strategies in the adopted plans for West Devon that are relevant to the neighbourhood development plan are given in Appendix II.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The NPPF is supported by detailed guidance (National Policy Planning Guidance, NPPG) on how the framework and its contents should be applied locally and nationally. Both the NPPF and the NPPG are available at: <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/> .

Details of recommendations in the NPPF that are relevant to the Neighbourhood development plan for Bridestowe and Sourton are given in Appendix II

The NPPF emphasises the importance of Sustainable Development 1, which it places at the heart of planning and in our Neighbourhood Development Plan we have endeavoured to ensure all objectives and policies are in line with this principle.

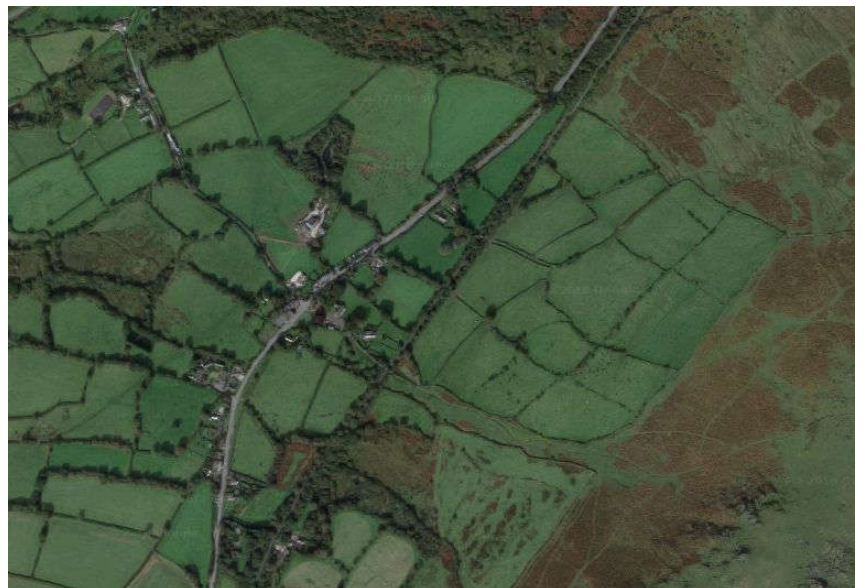
1. Footnote

International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as:

“meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development:

- 1 living within the planet’s environmental limits;
- 2 ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;
- 3 achieving a sustainable economy;
- 4 promoting good governance;
- 5 and using sound science responsibly



Chapter 3. Issues and Proposals raised by People in the Local Community

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Planning Group sent out a questionnaire in April 2015 to all parishioners asking them to consider what they thought was important about their parish, features they valued, aspects they didn't like, and changes they would like to see. Parishioners were also consulted on additional points at two well attended annual events, the Bridestowe Ram Roasts, and at numerous other consultation events in both parishes over the period from August 2014 to Summer 2017.



Monthly open meetings were held, alternating venues between the two parishes. As noted in Chapter One, 48 households, including more than 10% of the total population of the two parishes have been closely involved in providing feedback via email or in person at every stage of the plan's development .



More detailed information on the extensive evidence base, including reports on the Parishes' consultations can be found in Appendix I and via Bridestowe's and Sourton's websites.

This section of the Plan looks at the results of that consultation, highlighting the issues raised and the proposals that were put forward, as well as highlighting issues raised by other consultations and research.

The issues considered in this chapter relate to future land use and are therefore directly relevant to the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Other issues identified that do not fit into this category such as new recreational facilities for older children, traffic calming measures, and establishing a green offroad cycle/walking route between the 2 communities are dealt with by both parish councils jointly. See Appendix VIII (Community Aspirations).



The April 2015 Questionnaire (see Appendix III for details)

A total of 178 questionnaires were completed out of approximately 475 questionnaires distributed; people chose to respond either on line or by completing the paper questionnaires. This gives an approximate 38% return overall.

Despite the length of the questionnaire - 42 questions in the main section and another 26 in the supplementary sections - most people completed the whole questionnaire, and few people omitted any significant parts.

Most questionnaires included information about all members of the household and the households from which completed questionnaires were received included a total of 397 people; this is 40% of the total population of the parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton (Total population 996 in the 2011 census).

A detailed report of the consultation process and the results of the April 2015 questionnaire and the May 2016 Housing needs assessment are given in Appendix III and Appendix IV respectively.

Summary of key issues raised in the consultation processes.

Housing	More high-quality affordable homes required to meet local need More housing for younger and older people Small pockets of developments rather than one large site
Employment	More employment opportunities to boost local economy Utilisation of brownfield sites for new businesses Need for improved broadband speeds
Traffic and Transport	Inevitable increase in village traffic with development Insufficient car parking Speeding traffic endangering pedestrians
Young people and Recreation	Poor recreational facilities specifically for over 12s Lack of facilities for physical activities
Environment and Amenities	Threat to valued landscape from development Ensuring appropriately scaled renewable energy installations Need to protect existing amenities



3.1. HOUSING

3.1.1 Background.

West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) in its emerging draft strategic core-planning document (prepared jointly with Plymouth City Council and South Hams District Council) has allocated a figure of 30 additional homes to be built in Bridestowe for the period 2014 – 2034.

Whilst this Plan has not yet been adopted, it contains the most recent comprehensive assessment of the likely future housing needs for the Local Authority area, and the local parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton. We have therefore used this assessment as indicative of the likely need for new housing in the two parishes over the period covered by this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Sourton has been assessed by the Local Authority as a community that is unsuitable for sustainable housing development as it has no shop or school within the main settlement. Although the Joint Local Plan has not allocated any required new housing in Sourton, this still leaves it vulnerable to development should land be put forward.

The WDBC Sub-Regional Housing Market and Needs Assessment (HMNA) carried out in 2006, highlighted the need for more affordable homes and a growing gap between the need for, and the current provision of, appropriate housing, including both affordable housing and market price housing for elderly and disabled residents in West Devon.

As noted in Chapter 1, and shown in Table 3.1 below, the 2011 Census showed that the proportion of the population in the two parishes aged over 65 is significantly higher than the national average, whilst the proportion between 15 and 29, and the proportion under 16 are both significantly lower than the national average.

Table 3.1. Age of population
[2011 Census]

	Bridestowe	Sourton	National average
Under 16	93 (16.1%)	61 (14.7 %)	18.9%
Over 65	156 (27.1%)	129 (31.2%)	18%

This is in line with the local perception of an ageing population caused by increased life expectancy, and people retiring to the area, with younger potential residents being priced out of the property market. These demographic pressures are factors contributing to the increasing need for both low cost high quality affordable housing and the need for housing suitable for older residents seeking to downsize but remain within the community.

There is a significant issue of out-migration among young people in the area, particularly school leavers, with 3 times more 15-19-year-old people leaving the area than coming in. The retired population of West Devon is projected to rise by 56% by 2026. (The Great Dartmoor Leaf 2015 -2020).

In 2006 an Employment Land Review identified that West Devon has a high proportion of relatively low paid employment opportunities. (WDBC Strategic Plan 2011)

This is confirmed in more recent (2016) data from the Office for National Statistics:

Average Gross weekly pay

(Source: ONS annual survey 2016)

	West Devon	Great Britain
Full time workers	£431.8	£540.2

There are also notable differences between average annual earnings of residents in employment and workplace earnings, suggesting that those with higher qualifications and earning power are commuting out to work, while those commuting into West Devon to work are in lower paid employment. (CPRE Report Rural Connections 2015)

The discrepancy between local incomes and the high cost of housing is detailed in Chapter 1. The affordability gap is such that in 2016 the average home in West Devon cost 9.7 times the average income in West Devon, having risen from 5.6 times average income in 2000.

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths>)

Many of the older residents although of retirement age still work, many in agriculture, making the profile of the local economy slightly different from national statistics.

The work of the Sub-Regional Housing Market and Needs Assessment also showed that in West Devon about 87% of newly forming households are looking to occupy one or two bedroomed units. However, within the Borough only 34% of current stock is of one or two bedrooms. (WDBC Strategic Plan 2011) These figures, together with the results of our housing needs assessment indicate that there is a need for smaller housing including both affordable homes and market price homes rather than larger homes.

Table 3.2. Distribution of sizes of housing stock compared to national average:

[Source: 2011 Census]

	Bridestowe	Sourton	National average
Houses with 1-2 bedrooms	34.2%	26.1%	39.6%
Houses with 4 or more bedrooms	30.8%	27.8%	18.9%

3.1.2 Bridestowe and Sourton Housing Needs Survey

To obtain accurate, up to date data a Housing Need Survey (HNS) was carried out in April 2016 with funding from the National Lottery. (See Appendix IV for detailed report).

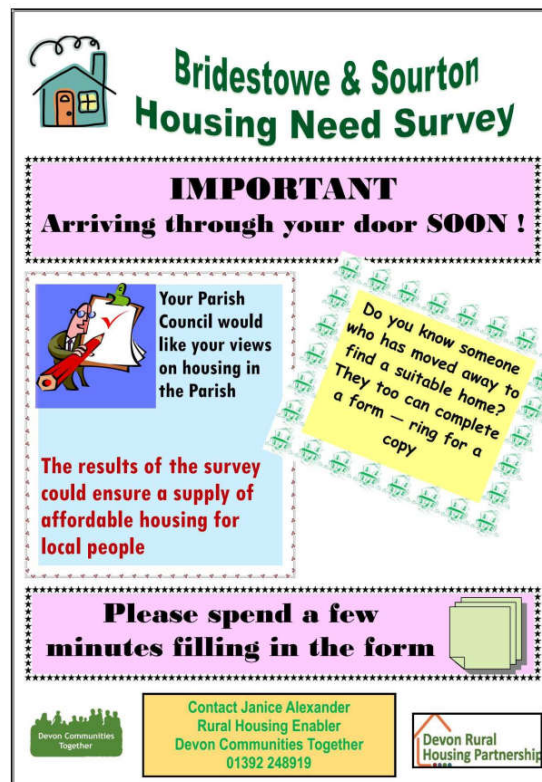
All households in Bridestowe and Sourton were canvassed.

Detailed and accurate information on existing housing stock was obtained together with a clearer understanding of what type of housing was needed to meet the present and future needs of the local population.

The survey identified a current need for a minimum of 12 units of affordable housing, with 1-3 bedrooms, in the two parishes, together with a need for at least 9 market price smaller homes for residents seeking to downsize within the locality.

There is also a need for homes with level access that would suit young families, the elderly and those with disabilities. People with disabilities require wide, level access within the home.

Although the response rate to the questionnaire was higher than in most similar recent surveys, the actual level of housing needs identified in this survey must be considered to be a bare minimum requirement.



3.1.3 Where should new homes be sited in Bridestowe and Sourton?

The questionnaire sent to all Bridestowe and Sourton households in 2015 showed that generally the community supports an increase in the housing stock. Development within the settlement boundaries was the preferred location (50% of respondents), rather than outside the village or in the outlying hamlets, and a significant minority (25%) favoured conversion of existing agricultural buildings. Despite this preference Bridestowe has no infill sites that will accommodate more than 1 or 2 houses.

Several specific sites for possible development, which had been put forward by the landowners were set out in the questionnaire and residents were asked their opinions on them – (5 sites in Bridestowe and 1 in Sourton).

It should be noted that all the sites put forward for Bridestowe fall outside the settlement boundary but are adjacent to it. These sites must be considered as 'Exception Sites'; the NPPF states these sites must be used for affordable housing in perpetuity where normally housing would not be permitted.

The location of sites put forward in Bridestowe

1. Town Farm; Adjacent to Town Meadow
2. On the northeast side of Pool Hill
3. On the south side of Pig's Leg lane/Rectory Road
4. Between Bridestowe Cemetery and Hunter's Moon
5. North side of Pig's Leg lane/Rectory Rd (Proposed housing for the elderly, adjacent to Springfield Residential Home)

One site was proposed in Sourton, northwest of the A386 near the Highwayman Inn as shown in Chapter 1 (this site has now been granted planning consent).

The responses revealed a considerable variation in opinion as to which site or sites would be appropriate options; the proposed site between the cemetery and Hunter's Moon received the greatest number of most positive responses and the lowest proportion of objections.

At a later event, the Ram Roast, parishioners were asked if certain conditions could make any of the sites more acceptable. There was broad agreement that if the possible new development at Town Farm was provided with its main vehicular access from the old A30 this could help alleviate traffic problems through Bridestowe Village.

There has been a long history of concern about sewerage provision for the previous new developments of housing in the village and concern was expressed by many people that further development would overload an already struggling system.

The development on Pool Hill would be considered more favourably if the development was landscaped into the hill to minimise it towering over that part of the village.

Asked if there were other specific sites in either parish that would be suitable for new housing developments, land adjacent to (on the North side of) Launceston Road was suggested by several people. To date this site has not formally been proposed as a possible site for development by the landowner.

There was a clear preference for several smaller developments rather than a single large new housing development.

This was confirmed by the findings of the Housing Needs Survey (HNS)- 91% of respondents favoured small pockets of development (i.e. developments of 10 or fewer homes).

3.1.4 Size and type of new housing in Bridestowe and Sourton.

56% of respondents to the extensive 2015 questionnaire thought it was important that some of the new housing in the villages should be low cost/affordable housing to rent and many emphasised how important it was that local residents particularly young people should be given preference in allocating such homes.

The findings of the Housing Needs Survey in 2016 revealed that a total of 12 households in the twoparishes were identified as being in current housing need, (9 in Bridestowe and 3 in Sourton), 11 of which will need a 1- or 2- bedroom home and one will need a 3- bedroom

home. Of these 9 will need affordable rented accommodation, whilst 3 could afford shared ownership. Because of mobility needs three will require level access. A further 9 households of older residents expressed the wish for smaller market price accommodation to allow them to downsize within the locality.

3.1.5 Style of new housing in Bridestowe and Sourton

When asked, which features of new homes were particularly important, low energy design, traditional and local style, green space and off-road parking, were all rated as being particularly important, whilst almost half of the respondents gave contemporary (21st century) style the lowest possible score.

Key issues that are important to local people:

- Need for developments of smaller (1-3 bedrooms) and affordable homes in preference to larger or more expensive homes.
- Development should preferably be within the settlement boundary if possible.
- Support small pockets of development rather than large developments.
- Support conversion of agricultural buildings where these are amongst other farm buildings.
- Consider suggested sites in the Plan in the light of resident's opinions, especially giving weight to suggestions on how to reduce any negative aspects.
- Support developments that take account of residents' opinions as expressed in this Plan, with particular weight being given to approaches to minimise the identified negative aspects of each of the proposed sites for development.
- Include statements on the importance of good design, sensitive to the character of the communities
- Support the use of sustainable drainage systems to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

The policies in this plan will seek to address these issues.

3. 2 EMPLOYMENT

Historically, in this rural area, agriculture has made an important contribution to the local economy of West Devon for centuries; it has played a major role in shaping and maintaining the Borough's landscape character. (JLP Strategy 2013-34 page 226).

Although agriculture provides only about 7.5% of total employment, this figure is still above the national average, and, as noted in Chapter 1 many other residents are dependent on agriculture related employment (e.g. equipment supply and maintenance, retail and tourism).

Tourism is an important part of West Devon's economy and within the two parishes there is a wide variety of holiday accommodation on offer from hotels, bed & breakfast, bunk barns, self-catering cottages and camping and caravan parks. Visitors swell the numbers using existing facilities, shops, pubs, garages and make use of bike hire facilities to explore the Granite Way,

an increasingly popular Sustrans route. Tourism not only contributes to the local economy but provides employment.

An ageing population brings with it a need for residential accommodation and community care services.

Springfields is a well-established residential home within Bridestowe with extra care bungalow accommodation; many of its employees are drawn from the local area, where it is one of the most important employers. Residential and nursing homes in Okehampton also provide local employment opportunities.

There are many small businesses and trades that serve the local communities, such as electricians, builders, providers of financial services, chiropodists, mobile hairdressers etc.

One of WDBC's overarching Core Strategy objectives is to "Sustain an active and working countryside, acknowledging the importance of agriculture, tourism and small rural businesses" (WDBC Core Strategic Plan 2011 SO9).

This is further emphasised in the draft JLP where there is emphasis on encouraging diversification. "Supporting rural entrepreneurial culture and setting aside land to support start up survival rates will help build resilience in the rural economy"

Rates of employment are close to the national average: in the 2011 Census 72.6% of people of working age in Sourton and 73.2% in Bridestowe were described as economically active compared to the UK average 76.7%. As noted in Chapter 1, this figure is distorted by the relatively large number of family farms in the parishes, to which many family members contribute although they may not be formally identified as economically active.

From the 2011 Census 5.5% of working age residents were reported to be receiving 'out of work' Benefits (National Average 8.4%).

Many people work from home (see Appendix III).

Whilst no specific sites for business development have been put forward by the landowners for formal consideration at the time of preparation of this Plan, two possible sites have been identified with the landowners' permission: these are the site of the Second World War military encampment in Leawood Estate, to the East of Station Road, just North of Bridestowe village, and old farm buildings on Standon Farm, to the West of Station Road, to the North of Bridestowe village. For both possible sites it would be important for access by heavy goods vehicles to be primarily from the A386 rather than through the village, but both would be potentially acceptable sites for such development.

3.2.1 Location of new businesses, their size and factors inhibiting local business development.

Almost 60% of respondents to the Bridestowe and Sourton questionnaire thought that encouraging new business to the parishes was quite or very important. New housing without access to new job opportunities could lead to the two parishes becoming "dormitory" settlements with the occupants all commuting outside for work, leaving the villages empty and

soulless. The great majority of respondents (78%) favoured siting new businesses on already developed sites within settlement boundaries if possible, whilst 15% of respondents preferred development on farmsteads. No respondents suggested encouraging a large enterprise to locate to the area.

Local residents showed great appreciation of existing small businesses and trades and a desire to see them flourish.

Factors adversely affecting local businesses include business rates (noted by 19%), lack of suitable premises (25%), lack of skilled labour (25%) and poor broadband connection (50%).

Of the 149 respondents who reported using broadband internet, 42% found it be poor or variable, with many respondents reporting extreme slowing of their internet connections during the early evenings and at weekends, whilst many drew attention to the wide discrepancy in service depending on how far they were from the main villages.

Although the Broadband service has improved since April 2015 with the provision of fibre optic connections to the main cabinet in Bridestowe village this has not resulted in a measurable improvement in service for residents living more than a mile or so from the cabinet.

Whilst there is a current programme to provide wide area high speed Wi-Fi internet connection to areas outside the reach of the fibre optic network the precise specifications, geographical provision and accessibility of this proposed new service is not yet clear for residents of the two parishes.

For 80% of residents who use the Internet for business purposes a fast connection was reported as being important or very important, particularly for those who worked from home.

Factors that might support or facilitate local businesses included faster broadband (mentioned by 82%) better public transport (mentioned by 41%), and business accommodation units to lease (mentioned by 22%).

On a positive note, almost half of those completing this section (47%) stated that they would or might be able to offer work experience or apprenticeships to local young people in the future. The questionnaire included a section specifically to canvass the views of those running or considering starting a business.

A total of 36 respondents completed this section, including 31 who currently run a business here and 5 who are thinking of expanding relocating or starting a business here. These included 9 farm-based businesses, 2 based in business premises and 28 who conduct at least part of their business from home.



Most are quite small, with 12 employing 1-3 people, 3 employing 4-10 people, and 2 employing more than 10 people.

Key issues that are important to local people:

- Support sustainable growth and expansion of appropriate, new small businesses as well as existing ones
- Support new business units in appropriate local locations through conversion of existing buildings or discreet well-designed new buildings
- Promote the retention and development of local facilities, such as shops, pubs, etc.
- Encourage improvements in broadband connection, including the provision of transmission facilities for high speed Wi-Fi or mobile phone-network-based broadband where this can be achieved without significant negative visual impact.

3.3 TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC

West Devon is a rural, sparsely populated area and there is heavy reliance on the car to access essential services and facilities. Both parishes have seen the reduction of public transport services. WDBC, in its strategic core plan (2006-2026), recognises that public transport is not accessible to everyone and that certain rural areas run the risk of isolation despite larger villages having a bus service.

The relative lack of public transport in the two parishes and the concomitant increased dependency on cars leads to an increased need for car parking within any proposed new housing development (see below).

The Draft Joint Local Plan notes an intention to promote flexible car use through park and ride facilities, car sharing and car clubs and to promote good quality, accessible and safe footpaths and cycle routes.

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2006-2026) states:

*“Development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel and to optimise the potential for the most sustainable forms of travel having regard to the following hierarchy:
1. Walking 2. Cycling 3. Public transport 4. Private vehicles.”*

3.3.1 Possible railway developments. (see also Appendix VII).

The draft Joint Local Plan sets out an intention to reinstate the railway from Bere Alston to Tavistock, to reduce congestion on the A386 into Plymouth. This is reinforced in the South West of Tavistock Masterplan with funding for the railway and associated infrastructure to come in part from proposed development. This proposal is supported by both Devon County and Plymouth City councils in their respective transport plans. Depending on funding, it is possible that Tavistock station could be open from 2022.

The East of Okehampton masterplan seeks to safeguard the ability to provide a shelter, platform and car park as an alternative point to access rail services, as part of proposed

development. This sits within aspirations to reinstate daily passenger services between Okehampton and Exeter (Facilitating Economic Growth in South Hams and West Devon -JOHT Resources Ltd, May 2014).

This leaves a relatively small gap in the rail line, between Meldon and Tavistock. Re-establishing a second main line from Exeter to Plymouth has been explored and benefits to the local and regional economy are clear. The 2015 report commissioned by the Campaign for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) Rural Reconnections; The social benefits of rail reopening*, highlighted the increased likelihood of local housing development; the reinstatement would transform the locality into a commuter belt for Exeter and Plymouth. The proposal for reinstatement of this railway was also viewed in a mainly positive light by the cost/benefit analysis conducted on behalf of Dartmoor National Park.

[* <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport/rail/item/3986-rural-reconnections>]

In the questionnaire in 2015 respondents were asked in the questionnaire whether they supported or opposed the possibility of the railway being re-opened between Meldon and Tavistock. Of the 162 respondents who answered this question, 64% were in favour or strongly in favour and 20% opposed or strongly opposed the idea.

Whilst the potential advantages of better travel links to the rest of the country, and the possibility of not needing to take the car for long journeys were recognised and emphasised by many respondents, the possible disadvantages of disruption during construction, increased noise and adverse effects on the cycle track were also identified. The potential benefits of being able to travel easily to work in Exeter or Plymouth for local residents were to some extent balanced by the likelihood of increased numbers of people moving to the area, with increasing pressure on housing and house prices.

Overall however the overwhelming view was to support the proposed development, with many people making this conditional on retaining the cycle track in its present or slightly revised position.

As noted in Chapter 1, opening of additional rail links will have substantial and only partially predictable effects on the local economy and housing needs. Such a development will potentially require review of policies in this Plan within the time period that the Plan covers (2016-2034).

3.3.2 Traffic in the Villages.

Major roads run through the parishes: the A30, old A30 (West Devon Way) and A386. Because of the speed of traffic on the A386 and the old A30, crossing these roads is hazardous and it can prove particularly difficult to cross safely for those who are hard of hearing, or unable to walk briskly. There is a current proposal to reduce the speed limit on the old A30 as it passes the Village Hall and turnoff to the village, which has very strong local support. Such a change would potentially have implications for the possibility of an additional access road to the old A30 from the proposed housing development on Town Meadow.

Additionally, the volume of traffic through Bridestowe was considered a problem by 58% of respondents. Children walking from the primary school to Treetops Preschool have no complete pavement route.

West Devon Borough Council do not address speeding problems in their strategic plan but residents in both main villages expressed a wish for future housing developments to be linked to the introduction of possible traffic calming/ speed reduction measures. Whilst outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan these aspirations are important to the local population. Some of these issues are aspirational and are included in the comprehensive list in Appendix VIII.

3.3.3 Bus Services

Although buses pass through the centre of Sourton, Bridestowe residents must walk some distance to the nearest bus stop. A recurring theme in many responses was the inadequacy of the bus services and, in particular, the lack of a usable bus service to Tavistock.

A further concern raised by many people was the distance of the bus stops on the old A30 from the village in Bridestowe and the great difficulty faced by the elderly, those with limited mobility, or those with young children of getting up Pool Hill to the bus stops.

The community transport Ring and Ride service operates to take people with no access to a vehicle to Okehampton and Tavistock once a week. Only 8% of respondents reported that they used the Ring and Ride service – mainly for travel to Tavistock or Okehampton, and 15% reported that a locally organised community car service would be of interest to someone in the household.

3.3.4 Parking

The questionnaire highlighted that 62% of people have 2 or more cars available for use in the household whilst 10.6% had no car. Cars parked on the roadside in the middle of Bridestowe village narrow the road to such an extent that the free flow of traffic is difficult. This problem is particularly bad at the start and end of the school day when the additional volume of traffic makes it difficult to get through the village at all. There is concern that with an increase in the village population, further pressure will be put on the road system by the increased number and movement of cars, thus increased provision of off-road parking is seen as essential for any new housing development.



Key issues that are important to local people:

- Ensure that all developments in Bridestowe have sufficient off road parking provision for residents and visitors.
- Encourage developments where traffic is not increased in the centre of the village.
- Support the provision of additional parking in Sourton
- Ensure that development around Sourton Down does not lead to additional parking along this section of the A386.
- Support in principle the opening of the railway, but flag up concern about the potential consequential increased number and price of houses in the parishes.
- Ensure that residential and environmental amenity is not adversely affected by traffic;
- Ensure the provision of new and improved footpaths not just within new developments but with appropriate extensions to create safe pedestrian routes to the key locations in the villages
- Ensure that roads in new developments should be wide enough to allow vehicles (especially emergency vehicles) to pass each other without using the pavements;
- Promote the development of cycleways with entry points that provide adequate parking facilities.

3.4 YOUNG PEOPLE, SPORT AND RECREATION

Provision of play facilities for primary school aged children is generally good in small communities with play equipment funded and maintained by parish councils. Older children are less well served.

“Children and young people in rural Devon are at greater risk of social isolation which has consequences for their emotional and physical health and wellbeing. Isolation and lack of reliable and affordable public transport impacts on their ability to access education, recreational facilities and services.”

from Devon County Council’s “Rural Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Devon 2010 -2013” (Children and young people).

This Report recognises the unique problems faced by young people living in rural areas such as long walking distances to school buses and/or public transport on unlit, isolated and/or unsafe country roads; heavy reliance on school bus transport that can make it difficult to participate in extracurricular activities due to rigid bus timetables, fewer youth clubs/activities within smaller settlements.

Limited opportunities, boredom and low self-esteem impacts on the wellbeing of this age group and can lead to high-risk activities including antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and self-harm as well as tension with other residents.

The 2015 questionnaire sought the views of respondents on provision for the needs of children and young people. Whilst social, play and recreational provision in the parishes for the needs of children aged between 4 and 11 years was considered as excellent by over 60% of people, provision for children aged 12-14 and over was considered very poor by 80% of respondents.

Many respondents made suggestions about how to better serve the young people of the

parishes, including establishing a skate park in the sporting green/ playground area, more activities focused on their needs and better public transport to allow teenagers to access Okehampton or Tavistock. Many respondents drew attention to the hazards faced by teenagers playing or skateboarding in the villages because of the speed and high volumes of traffic, as well as the hazards to children from large traffic volumes at the beginning and end of the school day.

A section of the questionnaire that was specifically aimed at children and young people was only completed by 15 (6 boys and 9 girls) and not all answered all questions. Because of this poor uptake a further survey was carried out in July 2015 targeting young people (see Appendix III). Reassuringly 76% of the respondents to the comprehensive questionnaire said that they thought Bridestowe and Sourton were good places to grow up – and cited safety, peace, good links to the countryside, the parks and sporting facilities as things they particularly liked.

Poor internet connection, poor public transport (to meet with friends from other villages or Okehampton) and a lack of activities focused on teenagers in the parishes, plus lack of access to a skate park were all given as things they did not like about living here.

Only 25% thought that they would stay in the parishes when they grew up, and 50% thought they would not, whilst 25% were not sure. The things they said they did not like about Bridestowe and Sourton as listed above were all cited as reasons they might not stay (presumably with their own future children in mind).

Key issues that are important to local people:

- Promote the provision of better facilities for older children
- Promote opportunities for play and physical activity
- Support development that enhances and increases community facilities, recreation and local services within the core villages

3.5 THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES

The scenic quality of the area is reflected in the fact that part of the area is designated as a National Park (the highest status possible for landscape). The beautiful scenic nature of the area is well recognised. Devon County Council in their landscape character assessment in 2008 described the local area thus:

“A gentle agricultural landscape of high scenic quality, characterised by ribbon-like rivers. Slow-flowing, meandering streams fringed by trees glide through quiet, inaccessible floodplains. A semi-regular pattern of fields, edged with hedges and earth banks, covers the undulating landform and adds pattern and texture to the landscape. The area feels remote and peaceful, and away from Okehampton has seen very little C.20th development; the scattered stone-built farms and villages have a timeless quality. Narrow, earth-banked lanes thread across the valleys, contrasting with the A30 which cuts across the landscape”.

Single wind turbines are a feature of the local area but are not numerous and none have been installed within the two parishes.

Photovoltaic panels (solar electricity) and solar thermal panels (solar hot water) are becoming more common and Boasley School is an example of an amenity building that has deployed them. Following the results of a renewable energy feasibility study, instigated by Okehampton Town Council and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, the group CORES (Community of Okehampton Renewable Energy Society) has been set up as a community benefit society by a working group of volunteers. CORES aims to generate electricity locally, sell it at near half-price to local businesses and put the profit made to good community use in the Okehampton area.

3.5.1 Physical well-being

If the built environment is well planned and implemented to a high standard, it will have a beneficial impact on the physical well-being of its inhabitants. Similarly planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity, promotes access to healthier food, provides high quality open spaces, green infrastructure and opportunities for play, sport and recreation, will all contribute to promoting healthy lifestyles.

There is strong community support for safeguarding existing parish assets - halls, schools, churches and sports fields and an enthusiasm for creating future sports' facilities and green ways. The supplementary questionnaire circulated in July 2015 that sought the views of younger residents in particular on the subject of recreation, revealed that 69% of respondents were interested in keep-fit classes and 43% in playing tennis. Maximising the opportunity for physical activity, including sports and leisure by providing/improving facilities and sharing use of community buildings has strong local support, particularly if this caters for the needs of the 11 - 18-year-old age group as they are perceived to be poorly served.



Bridestowe's shop and post office is visited by over 50% of respondents to the main questionnaire every day.

The rural surroundings are an important leisure asset for local inhabitants wanting to be physically active; they enjoy the proximity to the Dartmoor National Park providing many opportunities for walking, cycling, horse riding and other outdoor pursuits. Almost 25% of respondents reported using footpaths and cycle paths several times a week.

3.5.2 Social well-being

The numerous clubs and church activity indicate a strong community spirit. There is an appetite for additional activities such as dance and evening classes. Creating places and spaces for people to meet promotes community engagement, helps foster community spirit and counter rural isolation. Creating a social hub for young people was one suggestion put forward.

It is important to ensure that the disabled as well as the able-bodied have equal access to all aspects of community life.

Measures to address local transport deficiencies by introducing alternative schemes like car sharing should be encouraged. Increased connectivity through telecommunications is not only important for rural enterprise and home-working but allows fuller interaction for young and old across the area and beyond.

3.5.3 Landscape, renewable energy and amenities.

The landscape is treasured by parishioners with 100% of respondents to the questionnaire considering it important or very important to them and 100% of respondents considered conserving unspoilt countryside, village greens, open spaces, wildlife designated conservation areas and rights of way were important or very important to them. In the survey 34% said that they used the footpaths and cycle paths on a regular basis.

Development of existing footpaths to improve pedestrian and possibly cycle access between the villages received unanimous support.

A significant majority of respondents to the questionnaire showed strong support for small scale developments of each type of renewable energy other than wind turbines, but strong opposition to larger scale developments. There was some opposition to the development of wind turbines on any scale.

Several alternative suggestions were made by respondents, including several suggestions of installation of community sized ground source heat pump systems as possible sources of low cost renewable heating within villages or settlements.

In response to a question to gauge interest in a community energy scheme as a way to buy electricity, gas, oil or other fuels at lower cost, or to manage and generate energy, 83% of respondents expressed a definite or possible interest.

Amongst the specific local facilities listed the ones rated as most important included the Village Halls, and Methodist Hall, the pubs, the sporting green and cricket field, the children's play area, but overwhelmingly the one rated the most important by the largest number of people was Bridestowe Shop and Post Office.

Key issues that are important to local people:

- Include a strong statement about the importance of the landscape quality to ensure that development does not diminish the scenic quality of the area.
- Support small scale renewable energy projects
- Investigate community energy schemes

Chapter 4: Vision and Objectives

4.1. Our Vision for Bridestowe and Sourton.

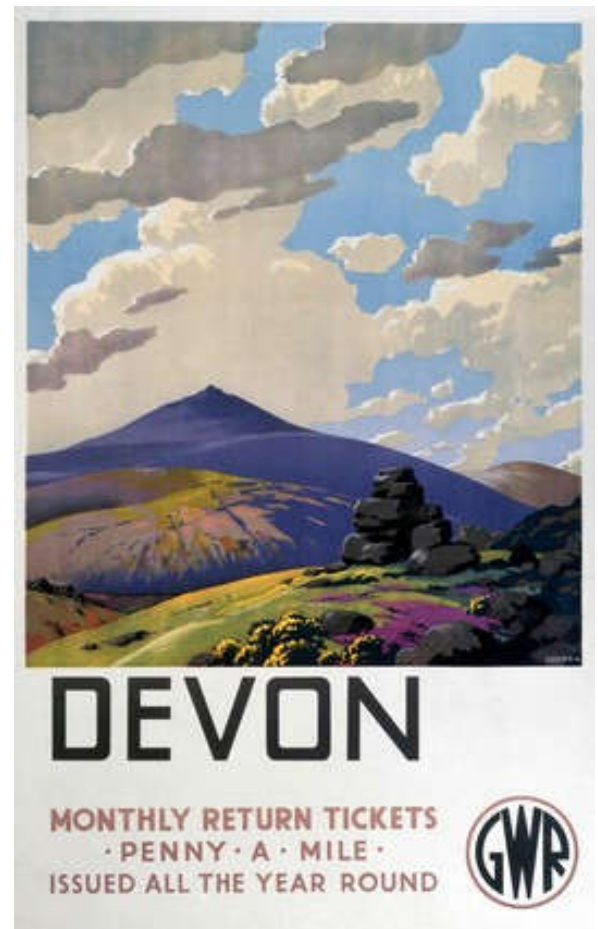
To secure a strong future for both parishes by supporting sustainable development that meets the needs of current and future residents without detriment to the unique and highly prized landscape and environment.

4.2 Objectives

1. **Housing development.** To support and facilitate provision of suitable housing to meet the current and future housing needs of residents of the Parishes
2. **Good Design.** To ensure that any new developments are designed to integrate with adjacent buildings; this is achieved by appropriate design, materials and layout.(JLP Policy DEV10)
3. **Conserving and Enhancing.** To conserve and enhance the landscape, biodiversity, natural habitats and cultural heritage of the Parishes through:
 - sensitive design which protects and enriches the landscape and built setting in new developments and
 - identification of key landscapes, views and heritage assets to be protected.
4. **Promotion of Small Businesses.** To promote the local economy through support for traditional types of rural employment (such as farming, forestry, and related practical skills) and other forms of small-scale independent businesses (including hospitality and sustainable tourism) appropriate to the location.
5. **Renewable Energy.** To encourage small-scale renewable energy production in new developments on or within the home and in the existing built environment where location and design are sensitive both to the local environment and to residential amenity.
6. **Wellbeing.** To conserve and enhance educational, social, cultural and recreational facilities in the Parishes, including communal open spaces, footpaths and cycle paths.

We will do this by:

- Delivery of a housing growth strategy tailored to the needs and context of Bridestowe and Sourton
- Supporting measured, proportionate, timely and sustainable development to meet local requirement
- Sensitive development which protects and enriches the prized landscape and built setting
- Promoting a distinctive and flourishing local economy that exhibits vitality and dynamism
- Endorsing policies that have a positive effect on the environment, including those that remove or minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change and reduce our carbon footprint
- Maintaining the high quality natural environment with its protected wildlife interests
- Sustaining and improving local facilities for existing and new residents
- Seek on-going improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity
- Protect greenspace, the landscape and support nature conservation
- Involve local people in an ongoing basis in the process of plan-making, monitoring and delivery of development.



Chapter 5. Our Policies and General Development Principles

SECTION 1: HOUSING

Introduction

Development within the settlement boundaries was the preferred location of respondents to the comprehensive questionnaire, but Bridestowe has no infill sites that will accommodate more than 1 or 2 houses. Sourton has been assessed by both Local Authorities as a community unsuitable for sustainable housing development as it has no shop or school within the main settlement; however, it could still see development should land be put forward. Although several specific sites for possible development for Bridestowe fall outside the settlement boundary, they are adjacent to it. These sites must be considered as 'Exception Sites'; the NPPF states these sites must be used for affordable housing in perpetuity where normally housing would not be permitted.

Policy H1.

Proposals for appropriate new housing development will be supported at a scale and in locations that accord with the NPPF, adopted policies for West Devon, Dartmoor National Park Authority and policies contained elsewhere in this Plan, where they support the continued sustainability and viability of communities in the Plan area by providing new homes, including but not limited to affordable and local needs housing to meet the objectively assessed local housing needs of the Plan area (Appendix IV).

Policy H2.

- a. Proposals will be supported for housing developments outside the Bridestowe village development boundary subject to all the following criteria being met:
 1. They are adjacent to the existing settlement boundary;
 2. The proposed development contributes to meeting the local housing needs (as defined in section c below) within the relevant parish for affordable and social-rented accommodation, which, for developments of more than 5 homes, constitutes a minimum of 30% of the proposed new dwellings or, for developments of 5 or fewer homes, an equivalent contribution towards the cost of such accommodation elsewhere within or adjacent to the Bridestowe settlement boundary (see H1);
 3. The proposed development is subject to a legally enforceable agreement which will ensure that affordable housing remains affordable housing for people with a local connection in perpetuity; (see below)
 4. The proposed development is appropriate in terms of its scale, character and location with the settlement to which it is associated (as defined in H1, H3, H4). Developers must produce evidence that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding rural landscape or the landscape setting of any settlement in the Plan area;

5. Within each of the parish hamlets, proposals for 1 or 2 houses, adjacent to or within the hamlet setting within each 5-year period of the plan, will be supported only where local needs can be demonstrated.

b. Definition of Local Housing Need.

In this Plan, “local need” with reference to housing provision is defined as housing provided specifically for people who meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Existing residents of Sourton or Bridestowe parishes establishing a separate household;
2. People who do not live in the Parishes but who have a current and long-standing link (of at least 5 years) to the local community including a previous period of residence in the Parishes or an adjacent parish; or
3. People who are in, or are taking up permanent substantive employment in an already established business, within the Parishes or an adjacent parish;
4. People who must leave tied accommodation within the Parishes or adjacent parish; or
5. Those residents of the two parishes who currently live in accommodation that is unsuited to their needs and who are unable to find suitable accommodation within their local community.

Policy H 3.

The following provisions will apply to all proposed housing development in the Plan area:

1. Proposals should be supported by information proportionate to the scale of development to assess the impact of the development on the following:
 - surrounding rural landscape or the landscape setting of any settlement in the Plan area; special and distinctive qualities of the local landscape or the Dartmoor National Park (as defined by the DNP Authority), and takes full account of the historical environment.
 - the local highway network, or on safety for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders or other users.
 - land stability or drainage, and utilises sustainable drainage methods and sewage disposal;
 - surface or ground water quality, quantity or drainage;
 - risk of flooding; and flood measures should be included in the development to ensure that flood risk in surrounding areas is not increased in line with current Environment Agency regulations;In addition, proposals should include measures to:
 - minimise light pollution, particularly for developments outside or at the edges of existing settlements;
 - increase biodiversity and provide an evidence-based biodiversity action plan
2. The proposed development respects the established patterns of development

3. Proposed new developments overall and individual components of those developments are in keeping with the site and surrounding landscape in terms of height, scale, massing, orientation and location within the site and are not unduly prominent in the local or wider landscape.
4. The proposed development respects and complements the physical and natural characteristics of the site. Landform re-profiling and loss of established trees and hedgerows to accommodate the development must be minimised with mitigation through replanting.
5. The proposed development will not result in the loss of or harm to the character, setting or amenity value of existing public open or green spaces; where such adverse effects are likely to occur, the development will be supported only if the community will gain equal or greater benefit from provision of a suitable replacement as part of the proposed development.

Policy H.4.

All new housing developments in the Plan area must meet all the following criteria:

- a. Quality and design. All proposals for housing development will be designed to a high quality. Design which fails to have regard to local context and does not preserve or enhance locally distinctive character will not be supported.

Development proposals, extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures will be expected to:

- use traditional and vernacular building materials where appropriate to respect the context of the development concerned.
- make efficient use of land while respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- be suitably designed for the context within which they are set;
- retain existing important landscape and natural features;
- ensure that the scale and massing of buildings relate sympathetically to the surrounding area;
- create safe environments addressing crime prevention and community safety;

- b. Car Parking. Proposals for housing development will be required to provide a minimum of two off-road parking spaces per dwelling. Homes with 4 or more bedrooms will be required to provide a minimum of three off-road parking spaces per dwelling. Proposals accompanied by a parking provision of less than two parking spaces per dwelling will only be permitted if alternative and easily accessible car parking arrangements are provided and which in themselves do not add to on-street parking;

All new building developments must comply with highway regulations and have a primary access route of sufficient width to allow access of refuse collection vehicles and emergency vehicles (including Fire Service vehicles). Access roads must be of a standard that will make them suitable for adoption by the highway authority. Site layout for car parking must ensure sufficient on-site turning where appropriate to the scale of the development.

- c. Footpaths. All new development in or adjacent to Bridestowe or Sourton villages must where possible be linked to the core of the village by a continuous footpath designed and constructed to an adoptable standard.
- d. Connectivity. (see policy CW2 a & b below)

Policy H 5.

Other than those changes of use allowed under Permitted Development, proposals for the conversion and re-use of redundant buildings both within settlements and in the open countryside for local housing needs, affordable housing, or live-work accommodation will be supported where all the following criteria are met: (Tourist accommodation is dealt with separately under E2).

1. The residential amenity of nearby residents is protected.
2. The conversion is designed to respect the scale, form, historic character, fabric, architectural features, design and setting of the original structure, maximising the re-use of existing materials.

In addition:

- (a) To improve the thermal efficiency or utility of the building in its new role small changes to the footprint or profile of the building (e.g. the addition of a porch where appropriate) will be permitted.
- (b) Subject to paragraph (a) above, increasing the number or size of openings in a building will be supported to the extent that such changes are necessary to allow safe access, including but not limited to disabled access or provision of adequate natural light within the new dwelling.

SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Policy E1. a

Small-scale proposals providing office, retail or light industrial units, will be supported, subject to all the following criteria being met:

- a) The developer must provide evidence that the proposed use will not compromise the tranquil rural character of the area by excessive or adverse traffic/ noise etc. in the immediate area or access roads
- b) The developer must provide evidence that the proposed development will have no negative impact on biodiversity or provide an evidence-based biodiversity action plan to minimise and mitigate any such effect;
- c) The proposed use will not have an adverse impact on the amenity of nearby properties or on the landscape.

- d) Retail development outside existing settlements will only be permitted where the main purpose of development is either to provide an outlet for locally produced goods and artefacts, or to provide small-scale supply or servicing of domestic, agricultural or other equipment or facilities needed in a rural economy.
- e) The developer will be required to provide an appropriate traffic management plan to ensure the impact of any increase in heavy vehicle traffic, locally or through the village of Bridestowe is minimised.
- f) The proposal will either:
 - i) involve the re-use of existing permanent buildings by way of conversion to business light industrial use or,
 - ii) in the case of new build, be located either within existing farmstead clusters or on brownfield sites well related to Sourton village, Sourton Down or Bridestowe village.
- g) Any new build employment development not intrinsically linked to a farm's diversification is wherever possible located where it can be safely and conveniently accessed by residents of one of the two villages (Bridestowe or Sourton) on foot and minimises the need to travel by car.
- h) For businesses that meet these criteria applications will be considered for sites where it can be shown that the business would benefit from being easily accessible to passing traffic or intended clientele, but all related parking must be off the highway and include a loading and turning space.

For such developments, landscaping and green screening should be incorporated into the design to reduce the visual impact; for example, to ensure the visibility of the development is limited as far as possible to the road. All such development must meet the same standards of good design as those required for housing (see H3, H4 and H5).

Policy E1. b

Excluding those changes of use allowed under Permitted Development, Employment sites within the plan area shall remain as far as possible in or available for employment uses and not be redeveloped for other purposes. Only on production of evidence that advertising and publicity has failed to attract a new business can the site be considered for housing or other purposes.

Policy E1.c

Proposals to provide broadband and mobile telephone reception in suitably located positions and in line with other policies in the Plan will be encouraged, subject to an assessment of the impact on the landscape.

Policy E2.

Tourist and recreational developments that add to the sustainability of the local economy will be supported where the applicant can demonstrate that all the following criteria have been met:

- a) The developer must provide evidence that the proposed use does not have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of local residents, on local housing availability (Appendix IV) or on neighbouring land-use;
- b) The developer must provide evidence that the proposed development will have no adverse highways impact or adverse effects on other users of highways or other rights of way (including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders), or an implementable action plan to minimise any such effects;
- c) The developer must provide evidence that the proposed provision of caravan and camping sites will have no adverse visual impact;
- d) In addition to those changes of use allowed under Permitted Development, conversion of agricultural buildings for tourist use will be supported subject to the following conditions:
 1. The conversion and any extension is designed to respect the scale, form, historic character, fabric, architectural features, design and setting of the original structure, maximising the re-use of existing materials.
 2. To improve the thermal efficiency or utility of the building in its new role small changes to the footprint or profile of the building (e.g. the addition of a porch where appropriate) will be permitted.
 3. Subject to paragraph 3 above, increasing the number or size of openings in a building will be permitted to the extent that such changes are necessary to allow safe access, including but not limited to disabled access or provision of adequate natural light within the new building.

SECTION 3: HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY ASSETS

Policy HCA 1.a

Proposals that will enhance the viability and/or the community value of recognised community assets will be supported.

Opportunities to create new community assets will be encouraged. Future provision of similar facilities where compatible with conditions set out in the Bridestowe and Sourton Neighbourhood Development Plan may be considered as additional community assets.

No proposal that will result in either the loss of a community asset as listed in Appendix VI or significant harm to its community value or viability will be permitted, unless the proposal will provide a replacement asset of equal or greater value to the community.

Proposals that enhance or facilitate improvements to community assets will be supported provided that these are conveniently located to the villages of Bridestowe or Sourton.

Policy HCA 1.b

Non designated Heritage Assets including the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.

Development proposals affecting a non designated heritage asset including any building on the Local List of buildings of architectural or historic or interest must be accompanied by information which describes the significance of the heritage asset including any contribution made by its setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

SECTION 4: DELIVERING LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT

Policy LC1

Proposals will be supported for small-scale renewable energy infrastructure that is compatible with the landscape sensitivity of the Parishes and does not, either individually or cumulatively have an adverse impact on the special qualities of the landscape within the plan area or the setting of Dartmoor National Park.

Such development will be supported provided the following conditions are met:

1. The siting and appearance of any proposed development must ensure minimal impact on the landscape considering the landscape context, scale and openness, visual amenity, cumulative effects and settlement pattern;
2. Any associated structures must sit well in the landscape and be similar in height and extent to existing structures in the local landscape so as not to adversely affect visual horizons and the key vistas listed in Appendix VII;
3. The developer must show evidence that the energy produced is intended for local consumption on site or within the immediate local community;
4. The siting, scale and design of the energy generating infrastructure does not compromise public safety and allows continued safe use of public rights of way;
5. The developer must show evidence that the development will have no adverse impacts in terms of drainage, noise, vibration, amplitude modulation, visual reflection, dazzle, odour, electromagnetic interference or other adverse impacts on neighbouring properties associated with the installed equipment; and
6. The developer must show evidence that the development will have no adverse impact on the natural environment or local hydrology.

Policy LC1b

1. Support will be given to individual & community scale energy generation from Hydroelectric, Solar thermal, Photovoltaic, Biomass and Wood Fuel.
2. Developers will be strongly encouraged to build homes that exceed the minimum national standards for sustainable homes requirements will be strongly encouraged.

SECTION 5: COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Policy CW 1 Community and Sports Facilities and Services

Proposals that provide for additional public open space, sports facilities, or access to shared facilities, which meet the needs of schools and the wider community will be supported.

Policy CW 2 Communications Infrastructure

- a. Proposals which seek the expansion of electronics communication networks and high-speed broadband along with improvements to connectivity will be supported so long as the proposal does not have a harmful impact on the landscape.
- b. Developers proposing housing developments will be required to provide a 'Connectivity Statement' confirming and detailing how the development will be provided with internet connectivity that meets the agreed national standard of minimum download speed of 25 Mbps.

Policy CW 3 Developer Contribution

1. Proposals for new development of 5 or more dwellings must provide appropriate contributions to new community facilities on-site if appropriate, or directly deliver off-site facilities or a financial contribution to the provision of such facilities elsewhere, as determined by the Local Planning Authority.
2. Proposals that will provide appropriate public open space, allotments, sport and recreation facilities will be encouraged. Provision of facilities should include foot paths, linking new developments with other parts of the village where possible.

