



BUCKFASTLEIGH AND BUCKFAST DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2015-2025 - SHAPING OUR FUTURE, BUILDING UPON OUR PAST



MAY 2015

Foreword

Welcome to Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish Draft Neighbourhood Plan. This report has been written by local residents, together with technical advice from a planning consultant and from Devon Communities Together. It is a 'bottom up' plan, devised by local people who have, in turn, consulted widely with neighbours and those who live and work in the parish, young and old. It is our vision for the town and parish that we would like to see developing over the next ten years. We hope you will support it. On the front cover are two logos. The first is of the Town Council, who invited residents to produce the plan eighteen months ago. The second logo is from Buckfast Abbey and is used as part of the plans to celebrate the Abbey and the parish's millennium in 2018.

Following a widely publicised and well attended public meeting in the town hall in November 2013, around twenty local residents including some town councillors, volunteered to work on producing the plan. Some took photos, some consulted young people, some organised the various public meetings, some laid out the trestle tables, some joined sub groups, some did research, some put pen to paper, and others drew maps. People volunteered the time they could spare and we are all enormously grateful for that.

We greatly appreciate the help that the Town Council, Buckfastleigh Community Newsletter, Buckfast Residents' Association Newsletter, Buckfastleigh Library, Buck the Trend and Buckfastleigh Community Forum gave us to promote our public meetings and to publicise progress. Our thanks goes also to the primary schools, businesses, shops, farmers, post office, residents' associations, voluntary and church organisations and youth clubs that helped us; to officials from Dartmoor National Park Authority, Teignbridge District Council and Devon County Council, who provided us with advice and information and met with our steering group; and to the post graduate Eco-design students from Schumacher College, who supported the process of community consultation and design.

Dartmoor and the Dart River Valley shape our community. Most of the residential parts of our parish lie within the National Park. The adjacent farms and woodlands are where some of our community work and where residents and visitors walk, cycle and enjoy the beauties of our countryside. The River Dart is home to a rich variety of water birds and migratory salmon and sea trout. Our local natural history is our inspiration, from the richness of its flora and fauna - otters, rare horseshoe bats and peregrine falcons, (the last two of

which now endangered), to our sites of special scientific interest at the Pengelly caves, where you can travel back 350 million years, to see coral reefs and the remains of elephant, hippo, bison and hyena.

The Abbey is the best known building within our parish. Hundreds of thousands of people come to visit it every year from around the world. It is a very special and inspiring place. All of us who live within the parish have heard the story of the six monks who rebuilt the Abbey in the early twentieth century. And many worldwide know of the Buckfast wine and Buckfast honey originally produced by the monks. Those who worked in the woollen industry are also a great inspiration to us. Much of the town we see today was shaped by that industry; the workers' cottages, the mill buildings and the town hall and park, philanthropic gifts by the former mill owners the Hamlyn family. We honour the hard graft of the mill workers and farmers (many with families still living in Buckfastleigh), who created our built and agricultural environment, and who also founded some of the earliest co-operative enterprises in the country. Now in the twenty-first century, we recognise that we need to rediscover that spirit of 'community' that the monks and millworkers had, to regenerate our parish.

Parts of our parish have been blighted by the closure of Dartmoor's woollen industry, by the dangers presented by recent proposed developments, such as the successfully opposed bottom ash waste repository, by the loss of biodiversity on our farms and, by the risks presented by climate change, so very directly experienced by residents in the floods of 2012. Past planning developments such as the A38, the main dual carriageway to the South West of England, built in the 1970s, created easier access to the South West for commuters and visitors, but it bypassed the town of Buckfastleigh and divided the parish physically and produces noise and air pollution for those who live nearby. Buckfastleigh's Steam Railway Station, from where tens of thousands of visitors each year take a slow and glorious riverside steam train journey to and from Totnes, was split from the town by the dual carriageway and few visitors to the station now come into the town. Indeed the road system has been designed almost to bypass the town centre and its pretty and architecturally rich Fore Street, where many shops have closed and are continuing to do so.

Buckfastleigh has higher indicators of socio-economic poverty and disadvantage than most other communities in Devon. This has been caused in part by past social planning decisions, (such as housing allocation policies), by

the loss of employment due to the mill closures and more recently by the five years of austerity and public service cuts. There is a sense that Buckfastleigh has been passed by. There has certainly been little inward investment in recent years, by either the private or public sector. Indeed cuts in public expenditure have seen a diminution in services and the potential loss of our public library, swimming pool and the Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Community Hospital. All of which have led to campaigns by local action groups, leading in the case of the swimming pool to success in securing some funds.

And then there's Sherlock Holmes. One of the most popular of Conan Doyle's stories, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, tells the tale of a despised, feared and hated man named Richard Cabell who sold his soul to the Devil and was entombed by Buckfastleigh folk on Church hill, fearful he would rise from the dead. So our community does get active when it wants to! In the past few years, through organisations such as Buckfastleigh Community Forum, local people have been preventing land use developments they did not wish to see and trying to protect public services they do not wish to lose. But an active, concerned community is one that not only campaigns to stop things, it also has ideas that can lift the local economy and has community pride. Interestingly not long after one of our earlier public meetings, where we showed photos of things that let the town down, residents, shop owners, the information centre and publicans along Fore Street were out with their paint brushes and putting up hanging baskets and flower boxes. When we pull together things happen.

This then is our town and parish. It's an amazing place, which today's generation and the next want to make better.

A place which, over the next ten years, we want to see as sustainable, economically vibrant, environmentally beautiful and protected, culturally rich and as a socially friendly and caring place to live, work and visit.

We invite the politicians and planners at Devon County Council, Teignbridge District Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority, the landowners of the development sites identified, business investors and all the people of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast and our new Town Council to work together to realise this vision.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2014 a Steering Group was formed by the Town Council, to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. A Neighbourhood Plan is a document that helps planning authorities to understand the needs, aspirations and concerns of our community in relation to planning issues over the next ten years. Although the recommendations made are not mandatory, the Government's Localism Act states that they must be taken into account when planning authorities make decisions that impact communities.

An ambitious community

The Neighbourhood Plan shows the level of ambition and care that the community has for its future. After two years of research and consultation, our community has created a vision of a more vibrant, healthy, caring parish that believes in protecting its environment and safeguarding its social and economic future.

The Neighbourhood Plan has identified several key opportunities for economic and social development and for environmental protection and amenity that require support over the next decade.

Tourism-led regeneration

Located within Dartmoor National Park, between South Devon Railway and Buckfast Abbey, the majority of the Parish fails to capitalise on these. Further tourist and business potential includes the link to Sherlock Holmes, Pengelly Caves, the Valiant Soldier, abundant and rare wildlife, the River Dart, industrial heritage, adventure tourism and the proximity to Dartmoor and the National Trust's Hembury Woods. Despite these assets, the town is short of good facilities and infrastructure such as shops, bed space, restaurants, cycle hire etc. Improving the tourism infrastructure has the potential to increase employment locally and simultaneously deliver facilities that both tourists and residents can enjoy.

Successful local businesses

The town has successful local businesses; particularly in agriculture, organic food production, craft and green industries as well as those who work from home or in small units in such areas as music, carpentry, consulting, design, publishing etc. It is these small and medium enterprises that the parish needs to encourage to meet the challenging economic conditions of the next 10

years. Our priority is to encourage these rather than industrial activity and to enhance the outdoor activities and historical image of the parish.

Need for affordable housing

There is still a significant need for more affordable housing within the parish. The Plan concurs with the Dartmoor National Park Authority and Teignbridge District Council assessments that there are sufficient and suitable allocated sites for new housing at Holne Road, off Barn Park and at the Devonian and Axminster sites. The Neighbourhood Plan encourages an element of open market housing on the Devonian and Axminster sites, but is especially keen to support affordable self-build housing and proposes that Barn Park be considered together with a green field location for this.

Protection of our wildlife and environment

The parish is an internationally significant wildlife habitat and home to Western Europe's largest maternal roost of protected Greater Horseshoe bats, as well as being home to otters, dormice, Peregrine falcons, dippers and numerous other endangered fauna and flora. The Plan encourages the need for the very highest levels of protection for local species and environment and considers that all new developments must enhance habitats and biodiversity. The Plan specifically recommends that there be no development of any sort on Church Hill and that Whitecleave quarry be returned to nature. The Plan also recognises a need to enhance the green spaces used by the community for leisure and recreation and in particular supports the regeneration of Victoria Park and creation and networking of footpaths and cycle trails.

10 key land use issues

The Neighbourhood Plan has identified 10 main land use and development priorities. They are:

1. Reverse the one-way system on Fore Street/Station Road to encourage more visitors to come into town, supporting local shops, pubs and cafes.
2. Use screening to reduce pollution (noise and fumes) from the A38
3. Develop the 'Devonian' site as a mixed use development in an exciting and architecturally sensitive manner.
4. Develop the 'Axminster' site as a mixed use development in an exciting and architecturally sensitive manner.
5. Return Whitecleave quarry to nature and to become an ecology and outdoor activities social enterprise.

6. Develop new housing on allocated sites and with an emphasis on affordable, sustainable housing in a style sympathetic to the local vernacular, including self-build housing.
7. Reconnect the South Devon Railway with the town by enhancing the use of the field and flyover area in front of the station to connect with the town centre.
8. Develop/open trails around the parish that link the rivers Dart, Mardle and Dean Burn and connect all the way from Beara Farm to Hembury Woods.
9. Prevent any development that could lead to increased flood risk in all areas of the parish.
10. Develop the Victoria Park area as a focal point for leisure in the town.

How the plan was created

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group set up several sub groups to look at such issues as tourism, business, environment, transport and housing. From May 2014 until May 2015 the Steering Group organised a series of open public consultation meetings held in the Town Hall and at other community venues. Members of the Steering Group have also been out meeting local businesses, landowners, young people and community groups. These public consultations have shaped the Plan.

We hope you enjoy it.

Cllr Simon Rines
Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Part One

1.1 What is our Neighbourhood Plan all about?

Community-led planning and development is not a new idea. As we have seen much of what we now know as Buckfastleigh and Buckfast was built by local people and shaped by our natural resources. Since the late 1940s central and local government and the National Park Authority however have determined land-use planning in the town and parish. Many of these developments have benefited the town, some have not. Local residents have had a say of course, but for many years we have often felt distanced from the planners, developers and political decision-makers, not least as our Town Council lost almost all of its powers in the early 1970s.

Localism Act 2011

The current 'right' for communities to prepare neighbourhood plans was established through the Localism Act 2011. The idea of localism reflects a growing political consensus that local people should have much more of a say in determining the development of the areas where they live. This Act, and subsequent planning regulations, are intended to give communities more of a say (albeit still within quite tight frameworks) over how our parish will be planned and developed in coming years. The aim is to give us, the people who live and work in the parish, an opportunity to influence what planned developments will look like. A Neighbourhood Plan can be as long or as short as the community wishes, it may only contain one policy proposal; ours contains ten.

What legal weight does the Neighbourhood Plan have?

A Neighbourhood Plan is asked to focus on development and land use. It should identify a vision and key local priorities. It can set policies in relation to development and the use of land within our parish. It can suggest sites for housing or other developments and special protection for green areas of particular importance to the community. Our Plan, however, cannot just say no to any development. Indeed here in Buckfastleigh and Buckfast we have found very few people who have taken a NIMBY attitude. The vast majority of people who attended our various consultation events want to see change.

Our Plan should also broadly align with the strategic development needs set out in the existing strategic and local plans of Devon County Council, Teignbridge District Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority, for example around housing and economic development. It should not promote

less development than is set out in their plans and strategies. Our plan must also contribute to achieving sustainable development. And last, but not least it must be in conformity with national policy and EU directives e.g. relating to habitat protection. So in summary we need to be experts in what previously was the terrain of the planning profession.

Very simply a Neighbourhood Plan is about identifying sites where the community wants development to go and policies for what it should look like. It can also identify sites that are valuable to the community and need to be retained and protected such as public open space and valued habitats. Whilst a Neighbourhood Plan cannot prevent sites from being used for existing lawful uses e.g. that already have planning permission, local communities are able to work with landowners and other stakeholders to develop proposals for alternative viable uses.

Figure 1. Survey form used in public consultation

1. What are you grateful for about living in Buckfastleigh?

2. What would you like to give to Buckfastleigh to make it a better place?

3. What do you need to have in Buckfastleigh to make it a better place?

4. If a community centre existed in Buckfastleigh, what activities would you like to see happening there?

ABOUT THIS SURVEY
THIS SURVEY AROSE FROM FEEDBACK RECEIVED DURING A BUCKFASTLEIGH COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ORGANISED BY SCHUMACHER COLLEGE STUDENTS IN MARCH 2015. THIS IS A DYNAMIC ENQUIRY, MEANING THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY HAVE A SAY AND CAN CONTRIBUTE TO COLLECTIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR TOWN ON AN ONGOING BASIS. YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THIS CELEBRATION OF THE PEOPLE, NATURE AND HERITAGE THAT PERMEATES BUCKFASTLEIGH, BY COLLABORATING IN THIS REGENERATIVE INITIATIVE WITH YOUR OPINIONS AND COMMENTS.

LET'S MAKE OUR TOWN FLOURISH!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND DEDICATION TO BUCKFASTLEIGH.

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS FLYER
1. ANSWER ANY OF THE QUESTIONS, AND
2. DRAW ON THE MAP ON THE BACK IF YOU WANT TO.
3. THEN LEAVE IT IN ONE OF THE DESIGNATED BOXES IN THE COMMUNITY.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP WILL FEED YOUR ANSWERS AND IDEAS INTO THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND PRACTICE.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT BUCKFASTLEIGH?

?

Your Say Matters

The guidance we have been given then, invites us:

- To create a vision for the Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish we want to see over the next ten years.
- To choose where new homes, shops, businesses and other developments should be built.
- To identify and protect local green spaces.
- To influence what new buildings and developments should look like.

After our Neighbourhood Plan is approved by the residents of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast in a referendum (planned for late autumn 2015), Devon County Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority and Teignbridge District Council are required to refer to the Neighbourhood Plan and to 'proof' any development proposals they have against the proposals the local community has made as to how we would like to see the town and parish developed. Similarly the legislation requires all local and outside developers to ensure that their proposals are consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan.

In the process of preparing our Neighbourhood Plan, we found that local people (young and old) are very keen to improve Buckfastleigh and Buckfast and have a myriad of fantastic ideas for projects to make the area a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Lots of these ideas have little to do with land-use planning decisions however - music and food festivals, an outdoor cinema, preventing the closure of public services etc. But these are really important and we wanted to include them in our report, as they are all part of a more integrated community development plan. We wanted to capture social themes, as well as housing and economic development and environmental protection ones.

The reality is that all developments have foreseen and unforeseen effects. What may appear a good idea in terms of local energy production may spoil the view. Additional housing has increased traffic, road parking and safety implications and will impact upon school rolls. The more elderly, isolated and unemployed within a community, the greater the need for good health and social care services and of just being good neighbours who look out for each other. A proposal by a landowner or developer may create jobs, but might scar the landscape and increase flood risks. We therefore need to look at Buckfastleigh and Buckfast's development holistically.

Population growth?

Our discussions with DCC, TDC and DNPA indicate that they do not envisage a significant increase in the population of the parish over the next ten years and, as such, are making their resource and planning projections accordingly e.g. for school rolls. Our public consultations confirm that there was a majority desire not to see the town grow much larger than it is. There was no consensus here however, as some residents felt that in order to attract inward investment, economic development and new retail opportunities the population of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast needed to increase.

Some growth will occur and we do expect an older population, with its particular needs, unless measures are put in place to enable young people and families to access both affordable and social housing in order to live here. People want to see more genuinely affordable housing developments, but do not want to see the town become a dormitory estate with no heart, lived in by commuters who do not shop here or get involved in community life.

The proposals below seek to address the issue of affordability of housing, as well as recognising that there will be a need for market housing that is attractive to people who want to set up new businesses here or to work from Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. As we were in the process of drafting this Plan, the Daily Telegraph and the Guardian newspapers both ran articles on how attractive and affordable Buckfastleigh was as a place to move and work from. Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish faces a number of challenges and it is the aim of the Neighbourhood Plan to address these by defining projects to improve the area and by setting out policies to influence planning decisions. The ten key project proposals that have emerged from our community meetings and which have implications for land use decisions are highlighted below. Other ideas, which we feel should also be taken into account and supported by the community, by funders and public authorities are then listed.

1.2 Our vision for the Buckfastleigh and Buckfast parish we want to see over the next ten years.

What is clear from our community consultations is that people are very concerned about the economic decline of the town, about the ugly industrial gap sites and the closure of shops in the town centre. This concern is shared across the parish. It was expressed by current businesses, the farming community, by young people, by those running the Tannery, the Abbey and

visitor attractions and by those who run places where visitors can stay, shop and eat.

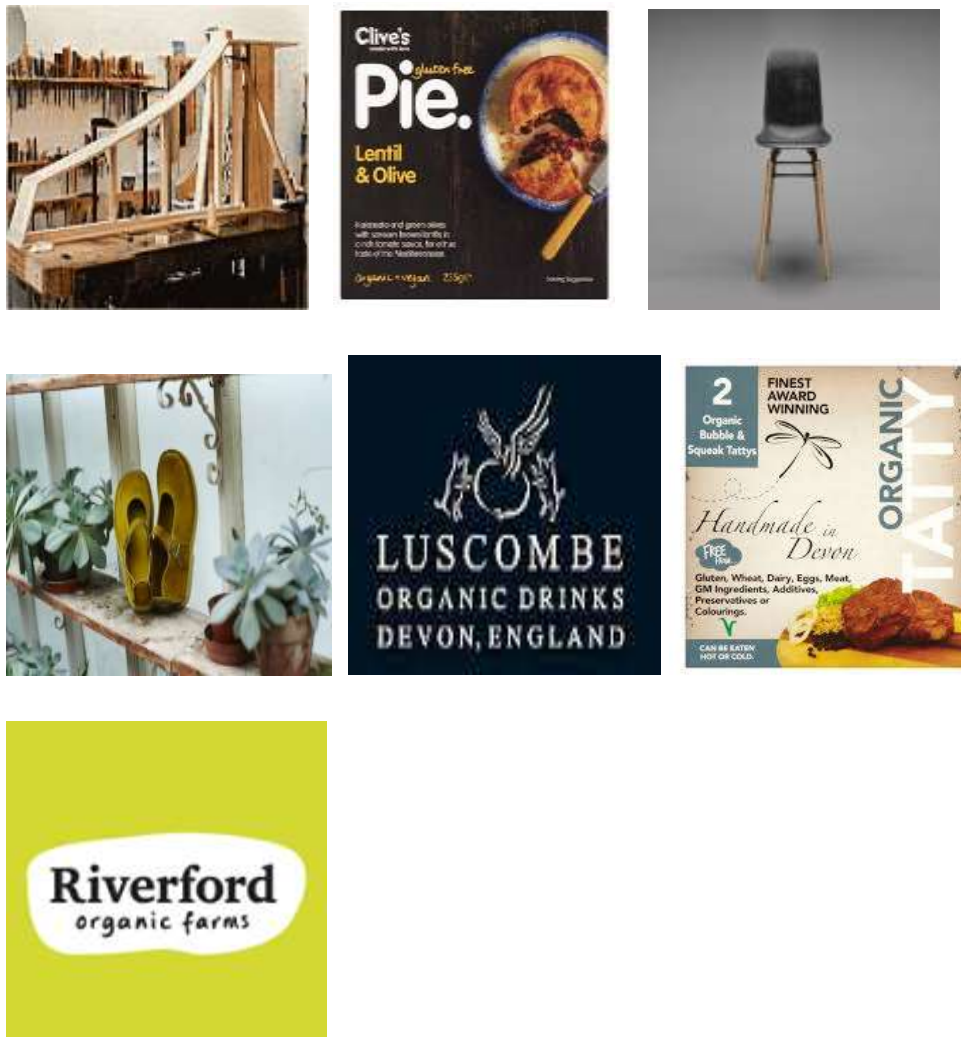
There is a feeling that we need to change the image of the town to attract more green enterprises, (e.g. along the lines of Dragonfly Foods and Luscombe drinks), together with business opportunities associated with the countryside and outdoor activities and with our rich history. We also want to be forward looking and to become an attractive location for the setting up of online businesses, with good access to Broadband, where they can combine the wellbeing of living and working in one of the most beautiful parts of the country, with the ability to sell products online anywhere in the world and, in doing so, to create jobs locally. And we also want to create better vocational training and leisure facilities locally for our young people.

We believe that future land use development needs to support such economic development, but in a way that is green and sustainable and does not lead to large population growth or the building of homes that people cannot afford.

We want to retain the best of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast's neighbourliness. We want to unlock the 'passed by' feeling within the town, and to change its reputation as a small post-industrial town with 'social problems'.

We want to see a parish that is sustainable, economically vibrant, environmentally beautiful and protected, culturally rich and a socially friendly and caring place to live, work and visit.

Figure 2. A green enterprise town:



Food and drinks, organs, shoes and solid wool furniture sold across the UK. Just a small example of sustainable businesses in the town.

... but we need to change our image!



[illegible]

1.3 So, how do we move from where we are now to where we want to be?

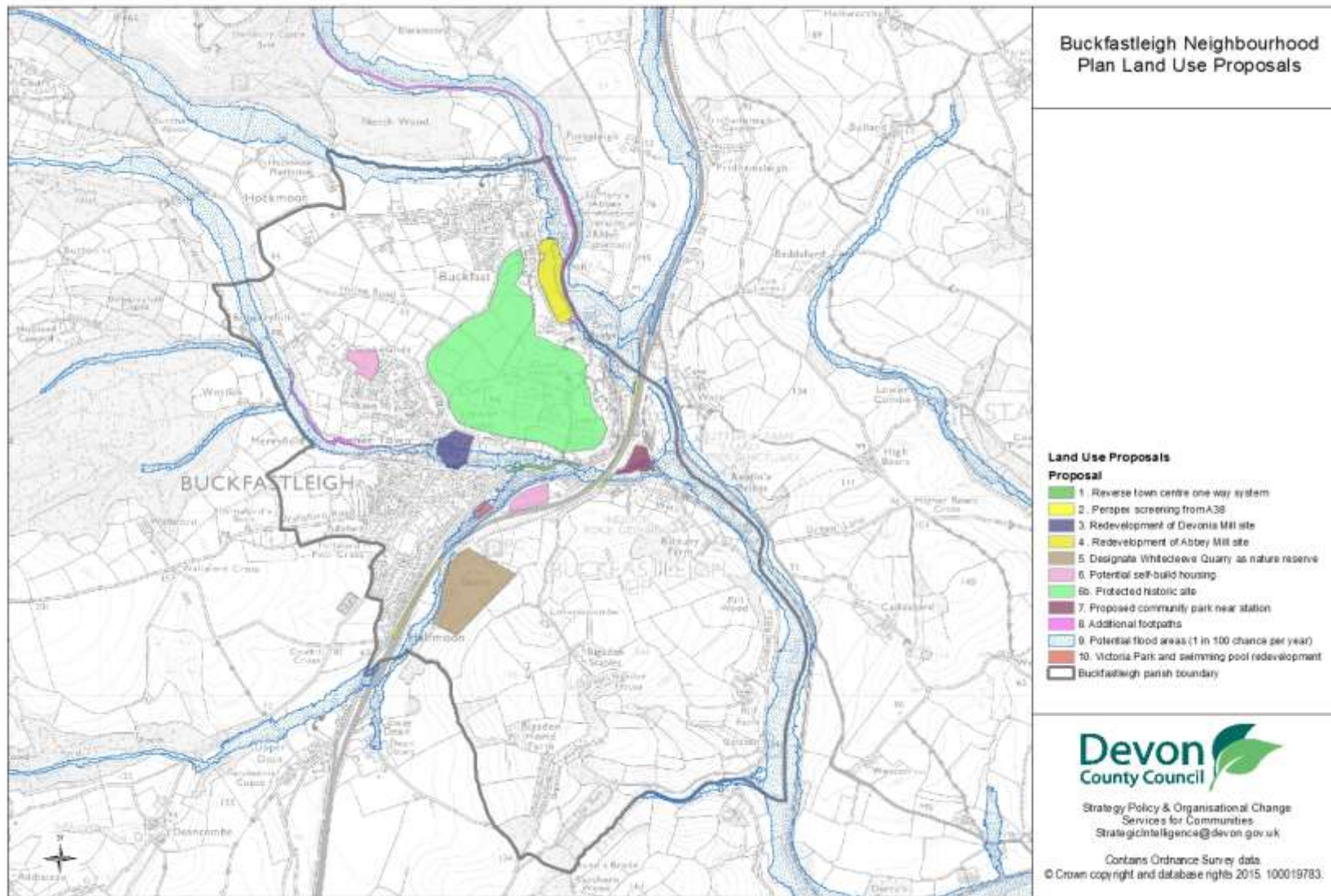


...with a little help from our friends.

Our 10 main land use and development priorities.

From our community consultations we have identified 10 key land use development opportunities that we believe could unlock and reverse the decline of the town and parish if realised over the next ten years. They alone are not the panacea for regeneration, but we believe that there are huge opportunities within the parish that we have to date not effectively tapped into and that these ten connected ideas will change the town and parish for the better. The elements are there, but perhaps we needed the detective skills of Sherlock Holmes (or as we now call them community café style meetings and focus groups and just talking to local people) to find the connections and the solutions.

Figure 4. Parish map with land use proposals



10.1. Fore Street traffic flow

We wish to see the one-way system through the town centre reversed as a matter of priority, creating a new ‘entrance to the town’.

We believe that the road planners have greatly exacerbated the challenges for businesses in the town centre and, in effect added significantly (albeit unwittingly) to the decline of the town by the introduction of the one-way system DOWN Fore Street and Station Road. This decision followed community consultation, however the evidence we received from our current consultations was that trade had fallen since the introduction of the one-way system DOWN Fore Street and Station Road and that further shops had closed.

We want to see the one-way system reversed to go UP the far prettier Station Road, with Millennium Orchard Green Park on the left, and thence up Fore Street. The Signage from the A38 at Dart Bridge directing traffic to Buckfastleigh to go into the town via the industrial estate should be changed, so that traffic, other than lorries going to the industrial estate, should be able to go into the town via Station Road. Here we would want to work together with Devon County Council, as the Highways Authority, to realise this change within the first year after approval of the Neighbourhood Plan.

We would want to see this ‘new entrance’ highlighting our town twinning on the new signage. We recognise that such a change, which IS intended to attract more visitors into the town and to shop there, will increase traffic. *[We do not have evidence of the need for the creation of more car parks within the town, although the proposed reversal of the one-way system would require clearer signage of available visitor car parking]*. Traffic calming measures will need to be introduced to ensure low speed and road safety. There will need to be a pedestrian crossing with controlled traffic lights between the two bus stops near the garage and Dart Motors.

(The new town entrance and reversed one-way system is highlighted on the map – page 22).

Figure 5. Fore Street, reverse the one-way system



Figure 6. Cars enter town via Station Road



Figure 7. A new town centre at Devonian?



Figure 8. Wall murals under the A38 flyover?



Figure 9. Screening at key points along A38 to reduce sound pollution



11.2. Pollution screening on A38

We wish to see a reduction in the noise and air pollution from the A38.

The A38 is an asset, but it brings environmental costs, producing considerable noise and air pollution. Our anecdotal evidence for this comes from our consultations and we would wish to see research being undertaken by an independent authority, to ascertain levels of noise and air pollution from the A38 at key points close to housing. Easy access to the South West's main arterial road network is a huge asset for the parish, allowing businesses and visitors great opportunities to come to the town.

One of the main commercial attractions for the opposed IBA proposal at Whitecleave quarry was that for the company involved the road infrastructure was already there. Equally this was one of the main reasons it was greatly opposed by local residents (by 95% in a Parish Poll), because of the huge increase in HGV lorry traffic in the town, with increased pollution and road safety implications and the negative commercial impact this would have upon other businesses and visitor attractions. Our community consultations have highlighted a wish by residents to have in place Perspex screening along those sections of the A38 close to houses on Dart Bridge Road, Plymouth Road and Old Totnes Road to reduce noise pollution. We would want to see the support of The Highways Agency to put this in place as a matter of some urgency.

Residents pointed out the Buckfastleigh was the only town in Devon to have such a major arterial route cutting through and causing noise and air pollution and a degree of community severance. Given the high level of intrusiveness, it is reasonable to expect significant mitigation in the form of screening.

(An indicative line is highlighted on the map; page 22).

12.3. *Devonia site*

We wish to see an environmentally and architecturally sensitive mixed use development of the old Devonia Mill site.

Devonia is one of Britain's oldest established sheepskin tannery and still employs traditional processing techniques. We are keen to support the expansion of the tannery as an ever more successful local business and part of our heritage (ideally with a re-opened visitor centre). We believe that the large unused Co-op mill built in the 1950s could be redesigned as a centre for small businesses, studios and for a vocational training centre, including courses based around craft skills and others building upon our aim to see Buckfastleigh grow as a centre attracting 'green' enterprises. Young people in Buckfastleigh have to travel many miles to the nearest FE College, incurring time and cost, especially for those with little income. We are keen to see an outreach training centre, perhaps linked with South Devon College providing a range of vocational courses.

Aside from the front section of the 'Co-op' building, and the older brick, stone and listed buildings, we would want to see the demolition the more modern warehouse/factory buildings on the site and their replacement with attractively designed housing, leisure and retail units in accordance with local vernacular. The site could, for example, host an arts centre, museum, craft

shops, cafes, business incubation hub etc. to create a 'festival market place' to stimulate demand for housing and other business relocation. We would support an element of self-build on the site. Although architecturally there is a desire to retain the stone/Victorian appearance of the site, modern, exciting architecture that complements the 'vernacular', would be welcome.

In addition we want to see much of the green field to the left of the River Mardle and behind the Methodist church either protected, or substituted elsewhere on the site as a landscaped public green space and community garden. It is expected that further parking spaces will be required should this mixed use development occur. These proposals require the preparation of comprehensive design brief/masterplan for the area, developed in association with the community, relevant stakeholders and the planning authority prior to any planning application being submitted.

(The Devonian mill site is highlighted on the map; page 22. An alternative use sketch design is illustrated below and includes an alternative energy centre using bio digesters, an amphitheatre and green, eco-roofed small business).

Figure 10. Devonia site now



Figure 11. Devonia site concept produced by Schumacher College students



13.4. Axminster site

We wish to see an environmentally and architecturally sensitive mixed use development of the old Axminster Mill site in Buckfast.

The Abbey, which purchased the mill site following its closure in 2013, has begun to build small business units behind the old mill. We have been impressed with the design and materials used and the Abbey's clear commitment to sustainability. From our discussions with the Abbey we see a developer keen to redevelop this site in an imaginative, environmentally sensitive way and who wants to support the social and economic development of the parish. We understand that they want to open the vista of the Abbey from the riverside road. We support this as greatly enhancing this part of Buckfast. We support the redevelopment of the older stone parts of the mill, perhaps as a hotel and the replacement of the other parts of the site with small business units, similar in vernacular to those recently built. We also support the development of social care and open market housing on part of the site, together with limited retail development.

We also wish to see the Abbey supporting community access to the river Dart along the whole site. Many thousands of canoeists use the Dart each year and park often unsafely on our roadsides, so we would wish to the creation of a new small public car park, together with storage, WC/shower and changing facilities built here for canoeists, ramblers and cyclists. We believe that funding could be available from the British Canoe Union and Sport England to put Buckfastleigh and Buckfast on the map as regional centre. As the river is generally shallow in the summer and the canoe season is limited we would wish to see this as a year round facility also for cyclists and ramblers etc. to use (*see also point 8*). All of these proposals require the preparation of comprehensive design brief/masterplan for the area, developed in association with the community, relevant stakeholders and the planning authority, prior to any planning application being submitted.

(This whole site is highlighted on the map).

Figure 12. Buckfast Mill: open the Abbey vista



Figure 13. Buckfast Mill, new business units



14.5. Whitecleave Quarry

We wish to see Whitecleave quarry re-designated as a Nature Reserve.

Whilst there are existing permitted uses for Whitecleave quarry which cannot be over ridden by the Neighbourhood Plan, from our community consultations it is very clear that residents across the parish are concerned that continued industrial use and mining will further endanger and destroy rare species' habitats, woodland, the water course and river eco-system. The Greater Horseshoe bat population in the Parish is the largest maternal roost in Europe and a critically endangered species requiring careful management and environmental protection. Devon Wildlife Trust is looking to create "Bat" towns – where sympathetic planning and land management create the best environment for bat species and we would support Buckfastleigh being one of these pilot towns.

We want to work positively with the landowner, Devon County Council as minerals planning authority, other public authorities, Wildlife Trusts, the Lottery and environmental grant making trusts to transform this site into a job creating social enterprise supporting environmental education, ecological research and outdoor sports activities following the ROMP review in 2017. Whitecleave quarry is subject to a ROMP (Revision of Old Mineral Permissions) review in 2017 and the temporary planning permission with the current tenant lapses in the same year. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the recommendations of HM Planning Inspector Mr John Woodcock, who recommended that the quarry be returned to nature after the cessation of viable quarrying. Given that the current operator declared that quarrying was not an activity delivering a commercial return on investment during the Planning Inquiry of 2013, and given the very limited reserve of winnable mineral in the quarry, the Neighbourhood Plan calls for the ROMP permission and current temporary planning permission to be ended in 2017.

Figure 14. Whitecleave quarry –



Figure 15. Quarry future - a nature reserve, ecology and outdoor activities centre?



(This site is highlighted on the map; page 22).

15.6. Housing

We wish to see housing developments within the parish over the coming decade giving priority to social and affordable housing, with high levels of sustainability and designs that are sensitive to the local vernacular.

New housing should primarily be built on brown field sites. We are however supportive of at least one affordable self-build eco-housing project being built on a green field site, with capacity for adjacent small scale horticulture and allotments. We do accept the argument for the building of some higher cost housing in order to encourage people with money to invest in the town, but not in high numbers. Given that the Barn park site has been allocated for housing, the Steering Group recommends that serious consideration is given to using the site for low density self-build construction. This will help to reduce infrastructure stress on the Barn Park estate, while providing a suitable site for self-build as identified by the Housing Needs Survey and promoted by the DNPA plan.

We do not wish to see further housing development creep up Holne Road between Buckfastleigh and Buckfast, other than at the site recently allocated by DNPA. We do not wish to see housing development on any other site outside of the current settlement boundaries, nor any housing development on the agricultural land opposite the Railway Station. New housing numbers should be broadly in line with the projections made by Teignbridge District Council and DNPA and the Housing Needs Survey. We do not wish to see any housing developments on Church Hill, which should be designated a site not only of special scientific interest but also historical importance.

(The possible self-build sites and the protected Church Hill site are highlighted on the map).

Figure 16. Self build eco housing



16.7. Railway

We wish to see the Railway Station re-connected with the town by designating the green field site between the Station and the A38 as a sympathetically landscaped park.

Our consultations came to the conclusion that we were compounding the business challenges of the shops and cafes in our town centre by not effectively addressing the severance between the Station and the town caused by the A38 and, by the failure of the road signs and the signage at the Station to encourage the visitors to the Station to come to see other sites within the town.

We are keen to see the South Devon Railway Trust and the community working together much more closely, with the support of the local authority, to raise funds to purchase this land as a landscaped park, possibly with additional car parking spaces, together with creating an attractively designed new footpath and cycleway from the station up towards the new entrance to the town at Station Road. We would support SDR's plan to develop the riverside land of the railway with new, sympathetically designed, and covered rolling stock sheds and an expansion of the parkland where the existing main car park is sited.

We support a proposal to approach the Highways Agency regarding a major landscaping overhaul of the space below the A38 flyover. This space is currently an eyesore, which damages the image of the town and SDR and acts as a barrier for pedestrian traffic between SDR and Station Road/Fore St. Landscaping, sympathetic murals and wall art that relate to the history of both the town and the SDR would transform this 'barrier' into an opportunity so that people want to walk under it, get a taste of the history of the parish and consequently explore the town centre. The community is keen to see the possibility of opening up commuter services from Buckfastleigh Station to Totnes - again with a practical, realistic timetable and affordable fares.

(The field opposite the front of the station is highlighted on the map; page 22).

17.8. Walking trails

We wish to see wider access to riverside and woodland trails within the parish, connecting to other county and national trails.

Residents love the surrounding landscape, the woodlands, the river and the hills and would like to have wider access to them. Farmers and landowners have legitimate anxieties especially concerning dogs and livestock. This is, after all, an area with sheep farming. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, has however extended rights of access, and we want to ensure that this is responsible.

Over the years ancient pathways, bridleways and more recently cycle ways have been opened up and we want to encourage more for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors and connections with our farming community. Residents wish to see a networking of trails, to allow for circular journeys. In terms of new walks, residents want to see the creation of a riverside walk along the full length of the River Dart on to Hembury Woods. Here we are keen to work with the Abbey to agree the route of this pathway, so that it is sensitive to their needs for quiet space and sanctuary.

Figure 17. Open up and link trails and cycle tracks



We also wish to see a new trail opened up from the top of the town from Old Mill Leat to Hillah Wood, alongside the bank of the River Mardle, connecting with the paths that already exist in the woodland. We wish to see the pathway entrance to the Railway Station opened from the old road bridge near Old Totnes Road. We also wish to see extended access for cyclists within the forests across the parish. The National Cycle route goes through Buckfastleigh and we want to encourage cyclists to see Buckfastleigh as a centre where they also stay in our B&Bs and hotels and eat in our local restaurants and pubs. We

are keen to work with neighbouring parishes and landowners to develop wider cycling/walking trails etc. to Totnes, Newton Abbot, Ashburton, Holne and South Brent. This links very well with the TDC green infrastructure plan, in particular the 'green way network'. (The two main indicative new trails are highlighted on the map; page 22).

Wider access to the River Dart

Figure 18. The River Dart – trails from Beara Farm to Hembury Woods?



Figure 19. Much more than ‘three to do and see’ in Buckfastleigh!



18.9. Flood defence

We wish to ensure no developments that exacerbate the problems of flooding within the parish.

Parts of Buckfastleigh are at considerable risk of flooding from rivers and surface water during extreme weather events and such events will increase over the coming decade due to climate change. We want to see measures taken that reduce flood and run off risk. A number of houses in both the upper and lower town flooded during the winter storms of 2012 when surface water was unable to drain away on Market Street and the River Mardle overflowed its channel along parts of Fore Street and Station Road.

There are also parts of town which suffer from significant water runoff from surrounding land, especially in areas around Wallaford Road, Rocky Land and Bossell Road.

In future, we should ensure that Buckfastleigh is adequately protected from flooding caused by significant rainfall events and that any building

developments do not add to the flooding risk further downstream. Landowners and farmers in high risk areas will need to take stronger measures to ensure that run off from surrounding land is minimised and does not block other surface water drainage systems. We need to Improve flood defence infrastructure along the Mardle and Dean Burn and to ensure the town drainage is adequate and able to handle the necessary water volumes and, take steps to require farming and agricultural practices which slow down existing runoff into the rivers and onto the road network.

(Areas of flood risk are highlighted on the map).

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Figure 20. Flooding in 2013 made national news headlines



10. Victoria Park

We wish to see Victoria Park, the swimming pool and the bungalow youth centre developed as a more imaginative town centre space for children and adult leisure and recreation.

Victoria Park, the outdoor swimming pool, skatepark and youth club provide important, but limited amenities for the local population and the local schools. Yet all of these are under high risk due to cuts and all look somewhat run down. We strongly support the work of the Friends of Buckfastleigh Swimming Pool to raise funds to make improvements, but further investment is essential for the whole area. We want to see Victoria Park and these adjacent amenities restored to reflect their importance as the town's most prominent leisure facility, with the park more imaginatively landscaped and the swimming pool and play facilities improved to support a wider range of leisure and sports needs of the community and to offer a commercial visitor attraction.

We see Victoria Park, the swimming pool and the Bungalow youth centre as catalysts to regenerate this space at the centre of our town and to create an opportunity to re-engage children, young people and adults in sporting and leisure activities and just to come together. We are keen to see a public/private sector/community partnership to secure investment to integrate the pool, park and youth facilities. We recommend that a review be undertaken of all designated parks and open spaces across the parish, such as Orchard Millennium Green, the football pitch and the tennis courts, in the light of future population demographics and demands, to assess whether additional land within the parish should be designated for public leisure use. We support the request coming from our youth consultations that more attractive all weather covered meeting spaces be made available for young people to meet safely in both Buckfastleigh and Buckfast.

(Victoria Park is highlighted on the map; page 22).

Figure 21. A refurbished swimming pool/leisure centre



Together, we believe that the ten priority developments we have highlighted, and which have been widely supported at our various consultations and public meetings, will change the image of the town and realise the vision we hope to see by 2025 and, ideally, long before.

Table 1. 10 priority developments in the parish

Proposals	Promotes more economic and business development	Promotes more social development	Promotes more environmental protection	Promotes more sustainable development
The one-way system should be reversed <u>as a matter of priority</u> , with the new 'entrance to the town' being UP Station Road and Fore Street.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Perspex screening should be introduced along those sections of the A38 close to houses on Plymouth Road and Old Totnes Road to reduce noise pollution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mixed use (business, housing, retail) development of the old Devonian Mill site, together with a centre for vocational training and to become more of a town centre focal point.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mixed use (business, housing) development of the old Axminster Mill site to open the vista to the Abbey, together with extending community access to the riverside.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Proposals	Promotes more economic and business development	Promotes more social development	Promotes more environmental protection	Promotes more sustainable development
Whitecleave quarry should be re-designated as a Nature Reserve and environmental and outdoor education social enterprise.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
More social and affordable housing within the parish in line with the projections made by Teignbridge DC, DNPA and the Housing Needs Survey.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Re-connecting the train station with the town by designating the green field site between the Station and the A38 as a community park, with landscaped footpath to Station Road.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wider access to the surrounding landscape, the woodlands, the river and the hills with extended trails along the River Dart and Mardle.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No developments that exacerbate any risks of flooding in the town.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Victoria Park/pool and the youth centre developed as a community owned leisure and recreation space.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Part Two

2.1 How the steering group prepared our Neighbourhood Plan

In November 2013, Buckfastleigh Town Council, with the support of Teignbridge District Council, Devon National Park Authority and Devon County Council, set up a steering group, reporting to the Town Council, to consult the residents of the parish, in order to prepare a draft Neighbourhood Plan for the period 2015-2025. (The membership and remit of the steering group is in the appendix). The steering group comprised three town councillors (including the Town Mayor) and at one time or another around twenty other residents from different part of the parish joined sub groups. The steering group met on several occasions and set up sub groups to identify and examine in detail various development issues and ideas. The steering group:

- Agreed boundary, terms of reference and delegated authority with the Town Council, budget and support role from Dartmoor National Park Authority, Teignbridge District Council and Devon Communities Together.
- Set up five working groups to look at Business, Tourism, Transport, Housing, and the Environment and Green Spaces, and an initiative to consult young people.
- Working groups met at least twice to identify key development issues to realise the vision. Conveners of each group met to co-ordinate.
- Undertook research about the parish e.g. population projections, unemployment levels, housing need, land use review etc.
- Met with the local Chamber of Trade, local businesses, residents associations, community forum, building developers, churches and the Abbey.
- Met with officials from Teignbridge Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority and Devon County Council.
- Worked through community consultations, to Identify what is good and the assets we have in the parish and what lets us down.
- Held three public café style consultation meetings in the town hall.
- Held consultations with local schools and youth groups, leading to the production of an exhibition display and a film made by young people.
- Held two focus group meetings for the community facilitated by eco-design students from Schumacher College.

- Updated residents through Town Council website, community and residents' newsletters and through a shop front power point at The SEED shop in the town centre.
- Produced large displays boards and power point photo presentations in Town Hall and other venues.

Figure 22. Public consultation exercises



2.2 The first thing we did was to identify the assets we have in Buckfastleigh and Buckfast parish

Incredible historic, religious, environmental and tourist sites - Attractions: Buckfast Abbey, Dartmoor National Park, River Dart, Steam Railway, Pengelly Caves, SSI and Rare Bats, close to Hembury and Kings Woods, Pennywell Farm, Dart Rock Climbing centre, Otter Sanctuary, Valiant Soldier Museum, Mill Heritage, Cabell's Baskerville link.

- Being largely within and a gateway to the National Park.
- A centre for cyclists, walkers and canoeists, with lots of walking trails. National cycle trail comes through town.
- Millennium of the Abbey and the parish in 2018
- A strong community willing to stand up against developments it does not want to see.
- Two excellent primary schools.
- Active churches and community organisations.
- Easy transport access for motorists, tourists and businesses.
- A range of places to stay/camp/eat.
- Victoria Park and Orchard Millennium Green and local woodlands.

2.3 We then identified the things that were not so good for our parish.

- High levels of unemployment, mill closures
- Ugly industrial gap sites.
- Poor public transport
- Poor quality of some private sector rented housing and lack of affordability.
- Noise and pollution from A38
- Poor signage from A38, sign takes visitors into the town via the industrial estate
- Loss of shops, and other retail outlets and change of use to residential along Fore Street.
- Cuts in public services – library, adult education, youth facilities, swimming pool, hospital.
- Relative lack of quality accommodation for tourists
- The quarry development not yet resolved.

- We undersell the parish (e.g. Baskerville connection) and sites of historic and environmental importance.
- Poor local/regional image (the town suffers from derogatory remarks such as the 'Chav Town' etc.).
- Are we doing the best we can to attract people to the town as a complete destination? Huge numbers are visiting the Abbey, the Railway Station and Otters & Butterfly centre, but not coming in to Buckfastleigh town centre.

2.4 Work of the sub-groups.

From the work of the steering group, sub groups and public consultations, we identified very many ideas for regenerating the parish. These included social, cultural, housing, transport, environmental, economic and physical developments. Many of the ideas below are not directly to do with land use planning and development, but we decided to keep these ideas within the Neighbourhood Plan, to present the wider range of ideas emanating from the community. Only those ideas that received high levels of support, as identified from café style, focus group and display board consultations using yellow 'post its', and which are to do with land use development, have been drawn out as the ten development priorities (listed in the previous section).

2.4.1 Business, tourism and enterprise issues.

- Change the image and marketing of the parish, from a declining industrial town to a tourist/ecological/outdoor activities centre.
- Devonian brownfield site should be developed as a mix of light industry, business units, studios retail, leisure (and possibly tourism) and housing, with landscaped park.
- How about a new 'town centre' at Devonian?
- Axminster brownfield site should be developed as a mix of light industry, business units, retail and housing with riverside access for walks.
- Salmon Park business site at Dart Bridge should be developed as Business Park.
- Opportunities for small business relocation – but need to improve internet connectivity. Currently quite poor.
- Market and encourage green enterprises and outdoor tourism businesses. Build upon the many green companies already in the parish/area (e.g. Dragonfly, Clive's Pies, Luscombe, Riverford, Green Fuse etc.

- Potential for FE college campus and especially craft and enterprise courses based at part of the Devonian site.
- Need to prevent the change of use of shops to residential in Fore Street and positively encourage new shops.
- Link up the various tourism/visitor attractions, with joint publicity, visitor bus and joint ticket
- Use landscaping, signage, trails and possibly e.g. 'audio posts' or apps to help link different sites in the parish to encourage walking and visitors to explore more.
- Create new outdoor activities centre for canoeists, cyclists etc. by the River Dart on Axminster brownfield site.
- Start annual food, arts and music festivals
- Maximise and promote town twinning with Fontaine-Henry, France.
- Farms which provide accommodation keen to support Buckfastleigh and Buckfast's development as a tourist destination.
- Farmers supportive of 'Open Farm Sunday' and similar ventures to enable local people to understand what modern farming entails.
- There was a mixed response to the desire for more local produce to be sold within the town. The principle was supported if a viable market could be shown. The current farmers market does not seem well supported.
- There was a desire to increase the number of agricultural apprenticeships for young people, with a local college maybe providing suitable courses.
- Create bike repair and hire centre

2.4.2 Transport issues

- Change road signage at Dart Bridge and from road to steam railway, with signs to town centre, turning left. HGVs turn right.
- Reverse the one way system on Station Road and Fore Street.
- Perspex screening alongside of A38 to reduce noise pollution.
- Zebra crossing and lights at junction between Old Totnes Road and Strode Road.
- Cheaper car parking for residents
- Improved bus service and later times
- Train station to run trains for school children to get to and from school in Totnes
- Improve footpath signage and trails for walkers and cyclists. Name key trails and colour code how difficult to walk.

- Open up new path alongside Old Mill Leat to Hillah Wood alongside river, with sculpture trail.
- Open up new riverside trail from Dart Bridge to Hembury Woods, by side of Axminster and Abbey.
- Open up Kings Wood for cycle trails and link trails to Dartmoor.
- Open footpath from the railway bridge on Old Totnes Road to Otter & Butterfly centre and South Devon Railway.
- Farmers spoken to were less enthusiastic about increasing access-ways, not because they do not want people enjoying the countryside, but come from the experiences of people misusing and abusing the current access-ways across farm land.
- Parking along Jordan Street and Barn Park has made access for farm vehicles (as well as emergency and refuse collection vehicles etc.) to the fields and farms beyond very hard.
- Parking under the A38 at the SDR entrance is detrimental to the image of the SDR and is thought to be mainly used by outside commuters arranging lift share meets in the town. It is recommended that parking restrictions are introduced at this point.

2.4.3 Housing issues

- Brownfield rather than green field sites prioritised for new housing developments. Economic benefits to the town in getting 'ugly gap' sites used. Environmental benefits in preserving countryside and habitats.
- More affordable housing within our parish for families and single people and more affordable sheltered housing for older people.
- We must ensure that at least 50% of all new housing developments are affordable. The Housing Needs Survey identifies some need for more social housing, but data analysis suggests that the survey was predominantly completed by owner occupiers. Data analysis of town undertaken as part of NP, suggests a much higher degree of social deprivation and greater need for improved social housing.
- Barn Park and Holne Road developments required to comply with the 50% affordable housing figure.
- Barn Park to be encouraged for self build scheme. A 'dense' housing development on Barn Park would, residents fear, with justification based on an inspection, create major traffic and parking problems.
- No housing on field opposite SDR Station. This is flood plain. Housing would be detrimental to success of SDR, a key economic and social asset to the Parish.

- Community aspiration is to use Station field and landscaped park, with some parking spaces and a new footpath, to help link the SDR with the town; and to open up space for more parkland at the river side of the SDR.
- No housing on green field sites outside the current settlement boundary identified as sites of important landscape character in the Local Plan or identified as potentially important wildlife habitat by TDC.
- DNPA and TDC to require developers to ensure that all new housing developments and improvements to existing housing stock, comply with the highest sustainability standards with regards to energy efficiency/CO2 and use of sustainable building materials.
- DNPA and TDC need to work with landlords to improve the housing conditions of some private rented housing stock.
- Development land to be made available at Strode Road and Sevenacres, for affordable self-build housing.
- Need to ensure that all new housing developers and individual house builders consult the Neighbourhood Plan with regards to design.
- No further ribbon creep housing development towards Holne Road and thereon to Buckfast, be allowed beyond that already approved and we wish to ensure that no housing developments take place on Church Hill.
- Any further land for housing development coming out of the SHLAA be limited to small scale developments of under five houses per site and to local small scale agricultural/horticultural plot holders who seek to build a new house on their land as their main (and not second home) residence.

2.4.4 Environment and green spaces

- Change of use of Whitecleaves from an active mineral quarry site, to become a protected ecological site of biodiversity importance, at the time of the ROMP review in 2017.
- The whole area between Buckfastleigh and Buckfast encompassed by Holne Road, Buckfast Road and Dart Bridge Road, known as Church Hill be designated as green space with no industrial and housing developments permitted.
- Church Hill is a site of great scientific, cultural and historical importance that should be protected from development and given stronger protected designation.

- The flood plain part of the Devonia site be designated for a landscaped town centre public park.
- The part field next to the tennis courts in Buckfastleigh, behind the children's nursery, becoming a community garden and more green spaces being made available within the parish for community gardens and allotments.
- Restore cycle ramps in Victoria Park.
- The whole of the area abounded by the parish boundary from John's Brake, Colston, Rill Wood, River Dart, Stent Wood, Loverscombe to Whitecleaves remain agricultural land and woodland; this whole area to have wider public access and clearer trail signs.
- An urgent need to reduce the sound and air pollution affecting the town from the A38.
- An urgent need for agricultural landowners in the parish to introduce low carbon farming and agroforestry.
- Greater use of land for appropriate renewable energy production introduced in a way that is sensitive to increasing biodiversity and to visual amenity.
- No housing, industrial or agricultural developments be approved that would endanger the polluting of rivers within the parish or increase risks of flooding.
- Need for bio-diversity plan for the parish.
- Change in regime of main road verge grass cutting, so as to encourage biodiversity.

Figure 23. Residents vote to fight appeal by Whitecleave Quarry operator



2.4.5 Health issues

Although we did not have a sub group looking specifically at health, we did discuss this in terms of ways in which to reduce pollution (from the A38) and about generally improving wellbeing through encouraging people of all ages to get outdoors to walk, cycle etc. Deni Rudgley, our former Mayor and the person who instigated the Neighbourhood Plan, is an expert on community health and submitted the following evidence.

Over the past eighteen months there have been many different consultations that affect our health and wellbeing for all ages. From these it is evident that many residents who have attended indicate that General Practitioners (GPs) need to be fully involved in improving services for patients and design these services to meet our health needs. It is also important to shift the balance and the way funding is delivered, to prevention of ill health and improving health and wellbeing for all. A Health and a Well-Being Hub could be developed around the medical centre for example offering information, advice and alternative therapies.

The Care Act 2014, which came into force in April 2015 states that local councils must have services to meet different people's needs with a new focus on prevention and well-being, information and advice for everyone, care would be more 'person centred' with personal budgets offering more choice, everyone who is referred will be entitled to an assessment of need as well as carers, and adults will need to be kept safe.

A Healthwatch Devon survey in 2014, highlighted transport issues to health and care services with 76% of respondents relying on public and patient transport. The majority 61% were using buses to access these services and two thirds felt that public transport was not convenient or affordable. These issues need to be considered when looking at public transport in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The 2011 census also looked at Households by Deprivation Indices, which can impact on our health and well-being. These dimensions of deprivation are based on four selected household characteristics, namely: employment, education, health and disability and housing. Of 1,594 households in the Buckfastleigh parish, 530 reported deprivation of one dimension and 321 households reported being deprived in two dimensions with a small number reporting three or more. These are more worrying as they total more than half

of the households and although our 'perceived health' scores highly, the deprivation indices suggests we need to be more concerned about how these can affect our health and well-being if not addressed. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider these for a healthier population. It is already embracing use of the countryside in helping people adopt healthier lifestyles and some of our local businesses support these principles also.

2.5 Young people's consultation

2.5.1 Engaging the young in the parish

At an early committee meeting of the neighbourhood plan steering group, we recognised that though the consultation process had been pretty successful in reaching a reasonable selection of the parish population, there were some groups who were under-represented and whose voices were therefore going unheard – in particular we identified that young people had not been heard from at all. We recognised that these are a very important body to canvas, as they represented a significant percentage of the long-term future population of the town. We also felt that the young people might have a more vibrant vision of the future; be less inclined than adults to self-limit and respond with cynicism or discouragement, and that therefore some ideas might emerge that would otherwise be missed.

In addition, we thought that the consultation itself would be a valuable process that might help to engender in them a sense of being engaged and involved in the life and development of the community - that this might result in them feeling more enfranchised and empowered and help promote and develop a perspective of engagement that could prove useful to them and be a valuable resource to the neighbourhood in future years. *(Janet Jones and Andy Stokes facilitated a group to explore this, which also included Jenna Clegg, Sylvee Phillips, David and Celia Lebbon and Nathilde O Rapp).*

2.5.2 Method.

We decided to present two initial questions used to kick off the adult consultation process: 'What do you like about the town/parish - What is good about living here?' & 'what would you like to see different - what would you like to change?' In addition, we recognised that many of the young people might not stay in the town (after all they were here as an accident of birth and had not exercised any choice in the matter). We wondered if that might change if the town were to have different resources, so where appropriate we also asked them 'Do you see yourself still in the town in ten years' time?', and if not, 'what, if anything would need to be different for you to change your mind?'. We were surprised to find that a large number of the young people did imagine themselves staying in the area, having expected a greater desire for a mass exodus to the bright, city lights – instead there was a widespread perception and appreciation of the community and freedom of a semi-rural lifestyle.

We felt that it would be appropriate to invite interaction from the young people using a range of different media, so as to inclusively engage everyone, whatever their skill level at spoken and written communications and in order to encourage a full range of expression. We also thought that it might make a valuable contribution to the communication of the finished plan if we had information presented not just in conventional written form - so to this end we collected their contribution using audio and video recordings and artwork as well as written material.

It was even clearer to us with this target group, that for us to reach people, we would need to go out to them rather than waiting for them to come to us. We identified several opportunities for consulting with young people - the two primary schools, the two youth clubs and through individual personal contacts. We spent some time in each context working with the young people and collecting their responses.

Buckfastleigh Primary School

We spent some time with year 6 (age 10-11) at Buckfastleigh Primary school, asking the questions, starting with breakout groups, followed by a group discussion ('circle time'), where we made an audio recording. We then asked the children to draw a picture showing some of the elements of their ideal town and have some videoed feedback of a presentation of these to the class (the image with voice-over to avoid having to obtain parental permissions). On an on-going basis, we highlighted the school council as a good, existing mechanism to engage and collect feedback with the whole student-body of the school and we would like to follow this up.

St. Mary's RC Primary School

We visited for the morning assembly with the whole school to present the context and the two main questions with pupils volunteering their first responses. There was little opportunity to pursue in any depth so we asked staff and pupils to spend some time looking at the questions and responding by writing, drawing or any other means. [The work is to be collected on week of 18th May - too late for inclusion in this draft report]

Buckfastleigh Youth Club

The youth leaders agreed that we could spend an evening in the club to get the opinions of the young people (ages 7-10). We introduced the idea of the plan (broadly) and sat at tables where youngsters could come and chat to us

through the course of the evening. We made written notes and also audio recordings (but the environment was very noisy so these are of limited use except for review!)

The Bungalow Youth Project

We met the youth worker and he agreed to prime the young people with the questions we had posed, a few days before we would attend the club to interview them. We spent two sessions at the club interviewing and videoing the young people's responses in groups and singly. The age range was from around 12 to 18. We also had large sheets of paper on the walls on which written responses could be made to the questions if the young people were reluctant to talk or be recorded.

Some of the interview segments were made into a film with the help of Jellyfish (but again the selection was limited by the sometimes noisy environment). We then reviewed the film with the young people [review has been delayed till the 26th May - too late for inclusion in this report]. We hope to move the discussion to the next level by starting off with the film to gain feedback at greater depth.

Figure 24. Feedback from primary school students



2.5.3 Responses

Appreciation for the neighbourhood...

The aspects of the area that young people appreciated were:

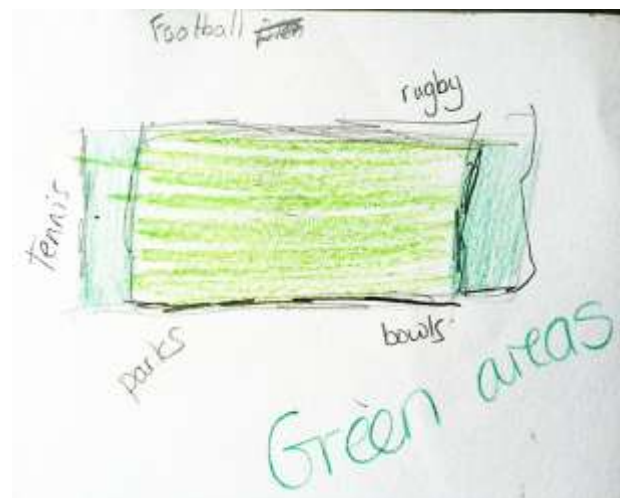
1) The sense of community

- a) Not crowded - know everyone - people are friendly'
- b) 'Feel safe- it's not scary like big towns'
- c) 'A lot of the adults know us, so they're not scared if they bump into a load of us hanging out'

2) The environment

Comments range from 'Beautiful' to 'Not scabby'!

- a) the woods and wild spaces
- b) the parks
- c) the river (particularly for swimming)
- d) the caves
- e) the Abbey



3) Activities/resources

- a) the swimming pool,
- b) the skate park,
- c) the youth club,
- d) the Bungalow youth project,
- e) the play park,
- f) sports facilities - football, rugby, tennis etc.,
- g) the shops (especially Huccabys, which is a veritable cornucopia!),
- h) the eating places - chip shop, pizzeria, kebab shop etc.
- i) school (at least some of the pupils at Buckfastleigh Primary School like being there, which says a lot for the school).

Areas for improvement...

The 3 main areas we identified are:

1) Retail

A big issue for lots of the young people is access to shops (pet shops, toy shops, supermarkets, clothes shops, sports shops). They don't have independent transport so have to rely on adults for access to shops. The younger children especially revealed a somewhat scary vision of a Buckfastleigh covered in chain-stores and supermarkets! Mentioned were:

- a) Clothes shops
- b) A Superstore
- c) Toy shop
- d) Pet shop / fish shop
- e) Local food shops - bakers, butchers, fishmongers ('So we don't have to go out of town to a supermarket')
- f) A café
- g) Book shop
- h) A bank
- i) A gym / leisure centre
- j) An ice rink
- k) A cinema (this was one of the most widely suggested additional resources to the town)
- l) An aquarium
- m) A zoo



At the same time as wanting access to more local retail resources, some of the older teenagers (for whom independent travel might be an option) felt that better & more affordable transportation links to local towns could be a more practical solution.

2) Transport

For the older teens especially, this is a big issue – total dependency on adults for access to anything outside of the town is tough both for the young people and their

parents! They would like more frequent and affordable bus services and maybe a train service, so they could meet up, go out to cinema etc. and go shopping.



The kind of things mentioned were:

- A. More frequent, later and weekend running bus services that are more affordable - bus fares even to local destinations are becoming out of reach of young people who have no independent income.
- B. The possibility of opening up commuter services from Buckfastleigh Station to Totnes - again with a practical, realistic timetable and affordable fares.
- C. The provision of cycle paths - these offer youngsters the option of free, safe and independent transportation
- D. Mention was also made of possible provision of double-yellow lines along the old Totnes road - presumably as young people have to rely on walking more than adults, they notice also where risks are posed by pavement parking.

The future development of the town for the older young people is clearly a balance between developing resources locally and providing accessible transport to resources outside the town.

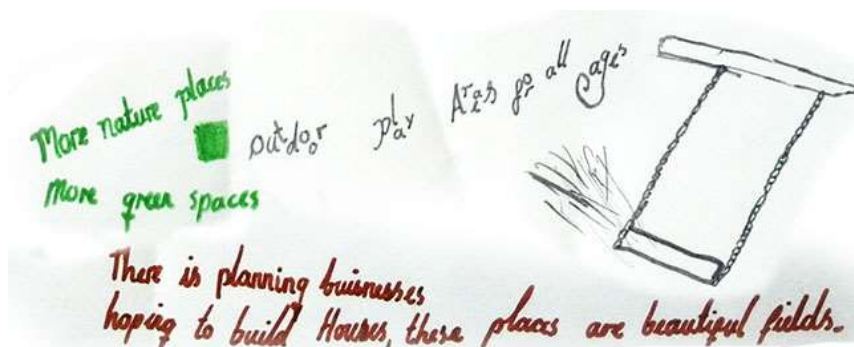
3) Jobs and housing

Several young people across the age range expressed their discouragement with the lack of employment in the town. With Buckfastleigh increasingly becoming a 'dormitory town' due to continuing loss of its local industries and retail outlets, young people seeking employment, part- or full-time, do not have the commuting possibilities that are available to adults. The possibility of improving transportation links to enable greater access to employment opportunities outside the town was again mentioned in this context.

The young people generally seemed to be enthusiastic about growth in the town and several suggested that more housing is needed to enable this, presumably because they could see the link between this and increasing local resources which would then be available to them.

We also got the sense though, that they envisaged the Buckfastleigh of the future to be a bigger, more dynamic and bustling place and that they saw growth as the way to go.

Several young people did however express their concern about the potential loss of wildlife and green spaces that this would entail.



4) Resources/activities within the neighbourhood

Young people suggested:

more footpaths and cycle trails for activities for themselves and also to attract tourists

- A. a nature park/ reserve (ditto)
- B. more facilities/ activities based in the town's parks - improvements to the skate-park being the most commonly cited across all ages and both genders
- C. improvements to the swimming pool, including diving boards, slides and, suggested by many, a roof (preferably removable) so that it could be used year-round
- D. a need for outdoor shelter (particularly in park spaces) was a common request.

It was clear that the young people felt that the only places they can really relax and feel comfortable in, that they can 'own' for most of the time (apart from when the youth clubs are open), are outdoor public spaces. This is where they can be together as a group without overwhelming restriction, where they can feel *free*. This means mainly parks, and though fine on a warm day, they lack any comfortable, friendly sheltered space where they can meet when the weather is not so good.

Figure 25. Skate-park – before and after Teignbridge District council removed ramps



Facilities clearly need to be enhanced and expanded - the youth clubs to be open more evenings, the skateboard park to be improved and the swimming pool to be roofed so they can use it all year round.

However, at the time of the interviews, all these resources were currently under threat, with the skateboard park closed (and dismantled) without funding for repair, funding for youth workers slashed (and the bungalow reduced to two nights a week opening) and the pool at risk of closure. The library was also mentioned in this context as it was under threat of closure due to Devon County Council Budget cuts.

It seems clear that young people - because they don't have access to transport or funds of their own - are to a very large degree dependent on localised and publicly funded resources, and are therefore sadly being expected to disproportionately bear the brunt of public-sector spending cuts, as local services are closed or reduced. They are at the sharpest end of current austerity measures.

Several of the young people expressed concern about what might happen to them, other youngsters and the town if the youth project and other resources were forced to close.

"There'll be nothing left and more people will end up on the streets getting into trouble..."

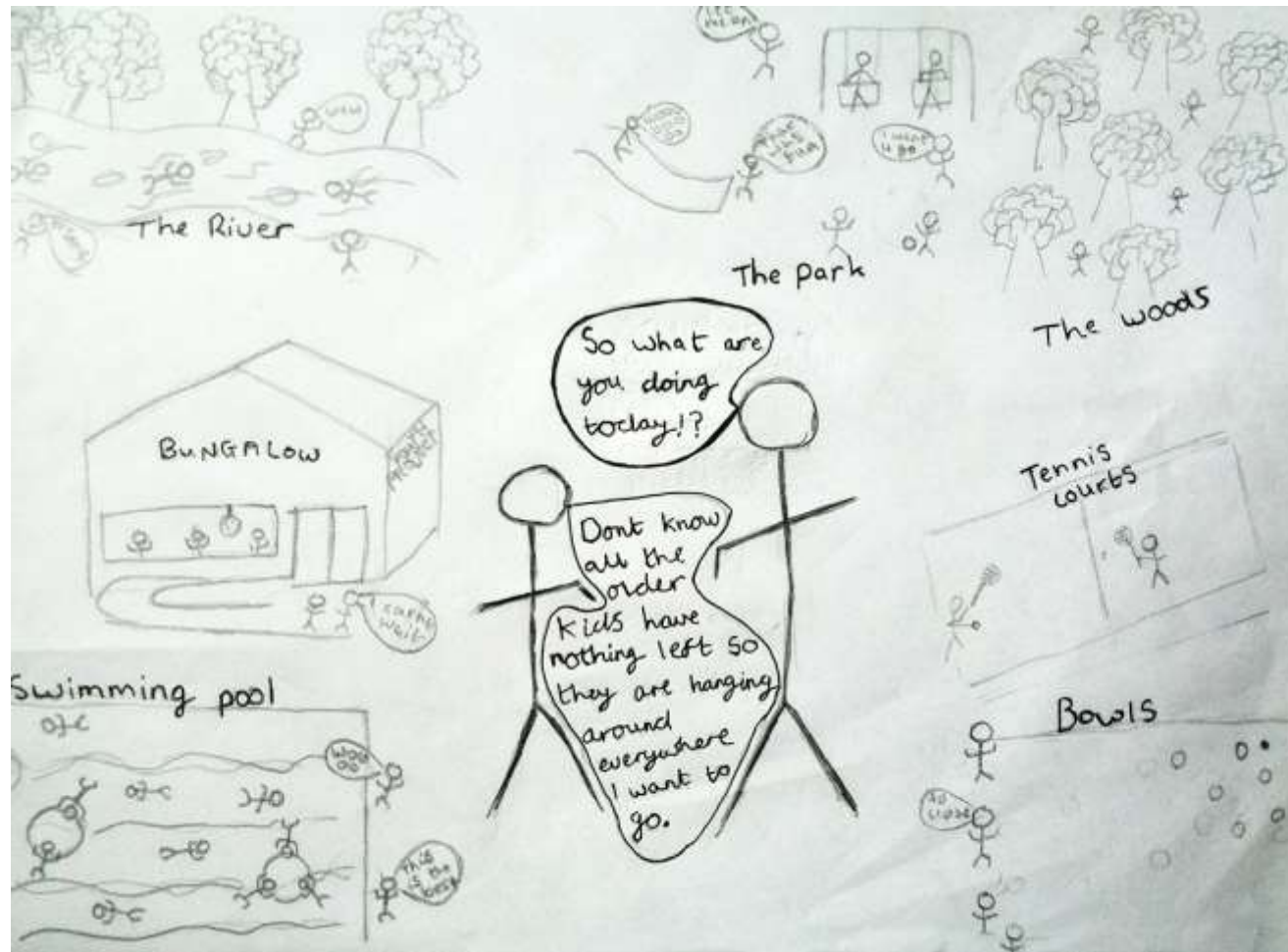


During the course of the consultation exercise, there was good news on some fronts. The swimming pool has been the subject of a successful funding bid for community take-over, so is saved for the time being from closure. The library is to remain open (though with an unknown future with continuing pressure to reduce funding and a move from the public sector to charitable status) and there are plans afoot to generate funding for the repair of the skate-park. However, the future of the Bungalow Youth Project remains uncertain, with opening times reduced and with only short-term funding currently in place.

It seems sometimes irrelevant talking to young people about the future development of resources for them in the town, when in reality in many cases,

we are fighting a rearguard action to hang on to vestiges of the resources we currently have. It is clear to us that as adults taking responsibility for planning the future of our community, we must do whatever is in our power to protect these resources for this, and future, generations.

Figure 26. Concerns expressed by junior school children



Reasons for leaving town

To the older group of young people, we asked the third question, 'Can you see yourself here in five years' time? If not why not and what would need to change?'

The answers to this varied, but where negative these related mostly to the need to move away to access further and higher education and, to gain access to a wider range of employment opportunities. It was difficult for them to see how the town could be changed in order to offer these facilities, except to some extent by improving transport links and re-developing localised industry and therefore employment.

2.5.4 Conclusion

On more than one occasion, we were thanked by young people who appreciated that we were taking the time to ask for their thoughts and opinions and this was also presented as a rare and privileged opportunity by their teacher to the pupils at Buckfastleigh Primary School. This saddened us and we apologised for the fact it didn't happen more often.

Although we had much useful and constructive engagement and ideas from the young people involved, the lack of any prior invitation, encouragement and experience of future-planning as well as the lack of depth in this first, limited enquiry, clearly meant that to expect in-depth analysis was a big ask.

Just like for the majority of us adult citizens therefore, the initial responses were sometimes one-dimensional and simplistic - of no great depth. This is not meant as an argument for discounting the opinion of young people (or adults!) in the consultation process, but rather it highlights the need for an on-going framework of engagement, starting at a young age, that will develop the mental muscle and skills needed to think through at depth the complex issues and challenges that face our community. It may take years of engagement before citizens of all ages are fluent enough in the process to start coming up with elegant and profound solutions to these challenging questions.

We often complain these days that people have little sense of civic responsibility and engagement in community. It strikes us that the process of engagement that we have initiated here is the very thing that, as an ongoing process will train and acclimatise young people to become engaged citizens. We need to start early-on and persist in encouraging young people to think

about their community and to have a voice in the decisions that are made, otherwise they will likely end up as disenfranchised, dis-empowered adults and both they and our society will have lost out.

The Future...?

Both the adults who were engaged in this process, and more importantly the young people themselves, have been enthusiastic and engaged. We would like to find a way that we can make this engagement and consultation an ongoing process rather than a one-off, for the reasons already mentioned. To this end some ideas to continue this and take it forward are:

- That the consultation exercise be repeated within the context of the schools on a regular basis, and that school staff be encouraged to integrate this process into classroom activities
- That the Buckfastleigh Primary School Student Council (and whatever similar structure might be found within St Mary's) be invited to review and feedback their views on a regular basis to a representative of the Town Council
- That there be a young people's emissary who could report to the Town Council at regular intervals, in association with regular (but infrequent) meetings of young people at the youth project - particularly when there are urgent issues of importance for the young people, such as the recent closure and subsequent removal of the skateboard ramps.

It is also clear that we need to find ways to engage other young people who will not be part of these target groups e.g. those who attend South Dartmoor Academy, SANDS school, the Steiner School and not the youth clubs, And also young people and young adults who are not part of any of these groups. One way we have discussed that might help accomplish this, is by working in conjunction with Jellyfish Arts around one of their youth-orientated projects. It has been suggested that the questions, artwork and accompanying video could be put on display (with a video booth so youngsters can record their own contribution, perhaps) and/or made the subject of a multi-media workshop which would compile and record their responses.

These processes may serve not only to encourage and facilitate the development of citizens who are adept at the skills necessary to engage in building our future, but could also serve as a communications channel whereby young people can know their voices are being heard by the adult community.

Part Three

How our plan relates to existing planning policies

3.1 To ensure that the planning and development decisions take into account the views of the community, policies have been prepared which have been developed in the context of, and help deliver, Dartmoor National Park's Core Strategy and Development Management DPD as well as the Teignbridge District Council Local Plan. When development is proposed within the Parish either by developers, private individuals or other organisations, these policies will be referred to by Dartmoor National Park Authority, Teignbridge District Council and by Devon County Council (in relation to minerals and roads planning decisions).

3.2 Planning decisions are guided by policies which are referred to when planning applications are made to Dartmoor National Park Authority or Teignbridge District Council. The Localism Act allows communities to develop their own policies, provided that they are based on sound evidence, community input and proper principles of planning. Policies have been developed which seek to influence planning and development outcomes in order that they help to achieve the vision for the parish of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. The policies are compliant with UK Government Policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and strategic policies set out in the Dartmoor National Park Core Strategy and the Development Management & Site Allocations Document and the Teignbridge District Council Local Plan.

3.3 In line with the principles of sustainable development, which require that planning addresses environmental, social and economic issues, the main policy areas are specified under each of the following five headings:

- ❖ Business, tourism and enterprise developments
- ❖ Transport
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Environment and green spaces
- ❖ Heritage and Design

These main policy areas link back to the 10 key proposals for the plan and provide additional detail to the overarching requirements of the 10 key proposals

Business, tourism and enterprise development policies

3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to support local businesses, encourage new businesses, home working and social enterprises that benefit the community, and help to move Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish towards a low carbon economy by encouraging local jobs and enterprise.

BTE1: Employment and enterprise:

Proposals that support the development of small scale social enterprises and other businesses that meet the needs of the community, such as the creation of live work units, will be permitted provided that they would:

- a) not involve the loss of dwellings;
- b) contribute to the character and vitality of the local area;
- c) be well integrated into and complement existing clusters of activity, such as the businesses at Salmon Park, Devonian Mill and the Axminster sites;
- d) protect residential amenity;
- e) not adversely impact upon road safety.

Devonian Mill

Both the Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Neighbourhood Plan have recognised that the Devonian Products Mill site in Buckfastleigh would provide an opportunity to improve the character and appearance of this part of the town, as well as providing an opportunity for sustainable development through increased local employment. This site could be used more efficiently as employment land whilst conserving the area's mill heritage and improving the setting of the River Mardle. Redevelopment of this site should provide for a mix of uses including development for employment purposes and potential community and leisure uses.

BTE2: Devonian Mill site:

Development in this area may include:

- (a) new commercial uses comprising principally business use (B1), financial and professional services (A2), shops (A1), and restaurants and cafés (A3) as well as assembly and leisure uses (D2);
- (b) community uses;
- (c) FE college campus.

Development of this site should:

- (i) identify heritage significance, conserve and enhance the site's mill heritage,

and the Buckfastleigh Conservation Area;
(ii) not impact upon the integrity of the South Hams Special Area of Conservation.

Axminster Site

The former Axminster Carpet factory site in Buckfast was acquired by Buckfast Abbey in 2013 following the administration of the Axminster business. At present the large factory buildings are vacant and there is little prospect of the site returning to major industrial use. Buckfast Abbey is exploring concepts for a sympathetic redevelopment of the site that will help to safeguard the future of the Abbey, the local environment and the community of Buckfast. Plans are still at an early stage and the Abbey has had positive meetings with members of the NP Steering Group. It is believed that any new development will include residential and business use and could feature residential care accommodation.

BTE3: Axminster Site

Development in this area may include:

- (a) new commercial uses comprising principally business use (B1), financial and professional services (A2), shops (A1), and restaurants and cafés (A3) as
- (b) well as assembly and leisure uses (D2);
- (c) community uses.

Development of this site should:

- (i) identify heritage significance, conserve and enhance the site's heritage, and that of the Abbey;
- (ii) not impact upon the integrity of the South Hams Special Area of Conservation

Salmon's Leap Business Park

The site is situated alongside the River Dart. The A38 Devon Expressway is adjacent to the site and the site is visible from this to all Plymouth to Exeter traffic.

The A384 extends from the adjoining A38 junction to the east and provides the main route leading to the South Devon towns of Totnes, Dartmouth and Kingsbridge. The B3380 runs from outside the site to the west and provides

access to Buckfastleigh and beyond to Dartmoor. The adjoining A38 junction allows access to and from the A38 in both directions.

BTE4: Salmon's Leap Business Park

Development in this area may include:

(a) new commercial uses comprising principally business use (B1).

Shops and services

The Neighbourhood Plan would like to reverse the recent trend of the loss of shops in particular to dwelling house use through the conversion of premises to dwellings. The availability of local shops, a post office and public houses, among others, are important ingredients of a sustainable community. The closure of these facilities can mean increased inconvenience for local people and sometimes hardship.

BTE5: Retention of existing shops

The change of use of shops, post offices and public houses serving the local community to other uses will not be permitted where it would harm the level of service locally and where it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the business continuing.

3.5 Transport policies

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan will work to create a movement network that reflects the predominantly residential character of the area, serves local transport requirements and encourages more sustainable means of transport.

The Parish of Buckfastleigh is a sustainable location with good links to both Plymouth and Exeter. The primary means of transport within the parish should be walking, cycling and public transport. Measures should be taken to increase the attractiveness of these modes of transport, and support will be given to Dartmoor National Park Authority, Teignbridge District Council and Devon County Council to implement sustainable transport proposals, in particular greater use of the bus and railway.

T1: Sustainable transport

Development as appropriate to its scale and location should include proposals which enhance the attractiveness of walking, cycling and public transport within Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. Specific development proposals to improve and increase to use of the railway link will be supported.

T2: Improved accessibility

Local networks of pedestrian and cycle routes will be sought as opportunities arise to provide such routes. Where appropriate, provision should be made for these routes within developments. Planning permission should not be granted for development that would prejudice the implementation of these routes or the continuity of existing routes.

The movement of traffic in Buckfastleigh is considered to be vital in order to ensure the success and vibrancy of the town centre. Any development which would have an adverse impact on this network will be resisted. Any proposal which involves the reversing of the one way system to allow traffic to travel up Station Road and Fore Street will be supported.

T3: Highway Network

Development should not be permitted where it would have a detrimental impact on the functioning of the highway network within Buckfastleigh and Buckfast unless appropriate necessary remedial measures are undertaken.

3.6 Housing policies

Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish has few opportunities for large scale housing development, and where sufficient land is available it has already been allocated by Dartmoor National Park Authority. Three areas for housing have recently been allocated at Barn Park, Holne Road and part of the Devonia Mill site as a larger mixed use scheme. However throughout both Buckfastleigh and Buckfast there are a number of small infill sites or sites that may arise due to the closure of commercial uses and that may be suitable for development. Proposals should be informed by consultation with the owners and residents of adjacent properties. The Neighbourhood Plan will support the development of such sites, where appropriate planning conditions apply, for affordable homes for local people or good quality private residential development

There are two sites currently allocated for housing in the Parish by DNPA. The current status of the site at Barn Park is that the developers appear to be no longer trading. Without a clear plan for the site on the table, the NP Steering Group has several recommendations following consultation with local residents at Barn Park, as well as the Housing and Transportation special interest groups. It is felt that a new development with high housing density will cause major problems for existing residents of Barn Park in terms of traffic congestion and parking.

The Steering Group is also mindful that the Housing Needs Survey of 2014 clearly established that the demand for both open market and affordable housing could be met through the existing site allocated at Holne Road as well as the potential at Devonian and Axminster sites.

Given that the Barn park site has been allocated for housing, the Steering Group recommends that serious consideration is given to using the site for low density self-build construction. This will help to reduce infrastructure stress on the Barn Park estate, while providing a suitable site for self-build as identified by the Housing Needs Survey and promoted by the DNPA plan.

For both Holne Road and Barn Park, the public consultations and special interest groups in Housing, Economy and Tourism in particular, recommend that the visual style of the developments departs from typical, standard modern housing. The recommendations are that the housing should be varied in character rather than uniform and that in appearance local stone, traditional brick, timber and slate are used where possible. Although the Steering Group accepts that housing can have a modern appearance, and encourages this where good design is shown, encouragement is given to plans that are in keeping with the rural Devon landscape, the location in a National Park and the heritage of the Parish.

H1: Barn Park

The development of the land at Barn Park which has been allocated in the Dartmoor National Park Development Management DPD is supported. Any scheme not satisfying the 50% requirement for affordable housing provision should be supported by a robust viability assessment justifying the shortfall. The development of this site as a low density self-build site (given the potential traffic problems a more dense development could cause for Barn Park) is supported.

H2: Holne Road

The development of the land at Holne Road which has been allocated in the Dartmoor National Park Development Management DPD is supported. Any scheme not satisfying the 50% requirement for affordable housing provision should be supported by a robust viability assessment justifying the shortfall.

The Devonian site is the key site for regeneration of Buckfastleigh. At present the majority of the site is either derelict or used for what appears to be temporary storage of woollen products. It was felt that mixed housing on the site, such as market value flats and houses could be mixed with affordable housing to help to create a vibrant economic hub. An element of self-build housing would also be welcome and indeed if this was in a similar style to that of the development in e.g. St Werburgh's, Bristol, with housing of varied style, budget and size, it could serve as a catalyst for further development and help to generate a thriving community in the centre of Buckfastleigh.

H3: Devonian Mill

Proposal for housing development on the Devonian Mill site will be supported particularly where it includes a proportion of affordable housing. It is recognised that the affordable housing provision would be subject to an assessment of viability. Open market housing, particularly for flats and possibly self-build, is also supported to help create a mixed 'town centre' community.

Where development is proposed on sites which are not allocated for future development such developments will be supported where they meet the requirements of the existing Dartmoor and Teignbridge Local Plan requirements. Infill plots can have a positive impact on the area in which they are located as well as contributing to the local economy. Proposals should be informed by consultation with the owners and residents of adjacent properties. The community will support the development of such sites for affordable homes for local people or good quality private residential development.

H4: Infill / Windfall Sites

Proposals to develop small infill/windfall sites for affordable homes for local people or good quality private residential development will be supported where they:

- a) have a scale and form which would be complementary to surrounding

- properties and would not result in the loss of amenity for existing residents;
- b) would achieve high standards of sustainable and low carbon design;
 - c) would be accompanied by appropriate provisions for parking, access and storage of waste.

3.7 Environment and green spaces policies

The Neighbourhood Plan will work to protect and enhance the natural environment of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish and ensure that natural resources are used prudently. The aim will be to ensure that Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish is an attractive, environmentally healthy and sustainable place.

Of key importance is the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which should be enhanced and protected into the future. As part of this aim it is considered that the area between Buckfastleigh and Buckfast encompassed by Holne Road, Buckfast Road and Dart Bridge Road, known as Church Hill be designated as green space with no industrial and housing developments permitted.

Church Hill

Church Hill is an important site in the town as it overlooks the town from the approach from the east. It is the site of the former Holy Trinity church which burnt down in 1992. The Church is potentially an important tourist attraction which could help link Buckfastleigh to Buckfast Abbey as it lies between the two settlements and could draw visitors into the town.

The site is indirectly responsible for Arthur Conan Doyle's story, the Hounds of the Baskervilles, following the tale of hounds from the Dartmoor coming to return the soul of local land owner Richard Cabell to the devil.

The hill is also home to the Pengelly Centre, an organisation of international importance that studies all aspects of caves including preservation of wildlife and geology. Higher Kiln Quarry Caves, the main cave network on the hill, is an important roosting site for Greater Horseshoe bats.

There is also evidence to support the theory that the hill was once a site of an Abbey that pre-dated Buckfast Abbey and as such, there is archaeological significance to the site.

Finally, the hill is a popular walking trail and the NP Steering Group believes it could be enhanced to form part of a network of circular walks of interests in the Parish.

ENV 1: Church Hill

No development would normally be permitted in the area known as Church Hill as defined on the proposals plan. Proposals that would enhance the accessibility, understanding or enjoyment of the biodiversity assets of the area may be considered provided its distinctive character, biodiversity and recreational value is retained and there would be no harm to its special qualities including its wildlife habitats, corridors and any other features of ecological interest including those related to protected species. Where appropriate, development should also restore, conserve or enhance the biodiversity value of the area, for example through the incorporation of biodiversity features into buildings and landscape.

Whitecleave Quarry

Whitecleave Quarry is a strategically and ecologically important site located opposite the main entrance to the town of Buckfastleigh. It is home to Peregrine falcons, dormice, ancient woodland and sits on a water table directly above the Dean Burn, a tributary to the River Dart home to otters, kingfishers, dippers and salmon. The Quarry site includes an area of SSSI, which is another Greater Horseshoe bat roost and the quarry itself is a flight path and foraging area for up to 11 bat species. It is within the South Hams SAC buffer zone.

Whitecleave Quarry was the subject of two highly contentious planning applications and a Planning Inquiry in recent years. Operator, Gilpin Demolition had wanted to use the site as a construction and demolition waste 'recycling' centre and an Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA) processing plant. Devon County Council Planning Officers were in favour of the proposals and found no planning-related problems with the application. A huge campaign from local residents citing traffic problems and environmental damage among other issues, culminated in a Parish Poll in which 95% of voters opposed the plan on a turnout of 49% - very high for a Parish Poll. The proposal was turned down by DCC Development Management Committee in April 2012. However this decision was challenged when Gilpin Demolition and MVV Environment appealed. A month long Planning Inquiry in 2013, with a decision made in October, saw the appeal dismissed on numerous grounds. The Planning Inspector declared that the site should be returned to nature following its use as a working quarry and cited the ecological importance of the site as a reason.

The inspector also cited that the plans, including “restoring” the quarry void through the deposition of hundreds of thousands of tonnes of waste material, were unnecessary and did not constitute “Sustainable Development”. The void is to remain unfilled.

The ROMP conditions applied under auspices of the 1995 Environment Act note that quarrying is a temporary permission and land should be returned to nature/amenity after-use as soon as possible at the cessation of quarrying. This was indeed formally discussed with the owner in 2006 when it was declared that quarrying should be considered as henceforth having ceased. It is currently unclear as to how Devon County Council have any objective measurement or desire to restrict this temporary permission, despite the fact that the owner declared cessation of quarrying in 2006 before Gilpin Demolition took over the site to use as a waste processing and storage depot.

Gilpin Demolition has since extended its planning permission for the site to allow it to become a base for its demolition business and to include additional storage, despite opposition from local residents. At the time of the application, Gilpin was in breach of a series of planning conditions and had ignored notices from DCC relating to the breaches.

Neighbourhood Planning consultations, including public meetings and feedback from the Economy, Environment and Tourism special interest groups, have all recommended that industrial activity in the quarry is halted completely upon exhaustion of mineral workings. The reasons cited include the considerable potential danger to protected wildlife. The Waddenzee (precautionary) Principle should be applied to this site, which has already seen an area of ancient woodland destroyed, which falls outside the area that the operator is permitted to quarry. The NP Steering Committee also notes that DCC’s monitoring officer for the site has declared that DCC does not have the resources to properly monitor activities at the site. As such it is the strong opinion of the NP Steering Group that this site should cease to be associated with any industrial activity at the earliest possible opportunity. This finding is in keeping with the most in-depth planning study of the site, which was undertaken by the Government’s Planning Inspectorate.

Following widespread public consultation and the investigations of the special interest groups on Economy, Environment and Tourism, it is recommended that for the long-term benefit of the Parish and its ecology, which is of international importance, the site should be a wildlife haven and restoration

should take place under the ROMP conditions. The NP Steering Group would welcome proposals to create safe and ecologically sensitive walking trails and, ecological assessments permitting, the establishment of an ecological study centre.

ENV2: Whitecleaves Quarry

Proposal to restore or change the use of Whitecleave Quarry to other uses will be supported where the proposals will enhance the biodiversity value of the area including wildlife habitats, corridors and any other features of ecological interest including those related to protected species. In particular, the recommendation from Her Majesty's Planning Inspectorate that the site be returned to nature in accordance with ROMP conditions is supported.

Devonia Mill

The Devonia site is the key site for regeneration of Buckfastleigh. At present the majority of the site is either derelict or used for what appears to be temporary storage of woollen products. The site also has the Mardle River passing through its centre. As such the site is in a flood plain which potentially restricts new development to higher ground. Accordingly it was felt that a community space such as a green, amphitheatre, riverside café area, or garden would enhance the site and help to create a focal point for the town and attract people to the site.

ENV3: Devonia Mill

Proposals which provide a landscaped town centre public park within the flood plain part of the Devonia site will be supported.

The Parish of Buckfastleigh has a good network of green spaces and good biodiversity being a rural parish. Biodiversity is important to the parish and its residents. The key biodiversity assets of the parish are the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which should be enhanced and protected into the future and Church Hill which connects Buckfastleigh to Buckfast.

These areas are rich in invertebrates, small mammals and nesting birds and of course the greater horseshoe bat colony. These are assets for the Parish and should be appropriately protected.

ENV4: Biodiversity

Proposals which result in a loss of biodiversity will not normally be permitted. Development that is likely to have either a direct or indirect adverse impact upon areas of local biodiversity importance should demonstrate that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation could be provided and where possible achieve a net enhancement to the biodiversity within the parish.

Trees and hedgerows perform a number of important roles in supporting biodiversity, providing attractive shade/shelter for wildlife and generally improving health and amenity of their immediate environs. Trees also provide a wider visual amenity benefits. Trees should be retained where possible and hedgerows replaced. New development should include the provision of suitable tree and hedgerow planting where appropriate.

ENV4: Trees

Development that damages or results in the loss of ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be permitted. Proposals should be designed to retain ancient trees or trees of arboricultural and amenity value. Proposals should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees.

The effects of climate change are well documented and Buckfastleigh is not immune to this. The Neighbourhood Plan recognizes this fact and seeks to make the fullest contribution possible to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and the transition to a low carbon economy.

ENV5: Adapting to climate change

All new development should seek to achieve high standards of sustainable development and, in particular, demonstrate in proposals how design, construction and operation have sought to:

- a) reduce the use of fossil fuels;
- b) promote the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy;
- c) adopt and facilitate the flexible development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies;
- d) link the provision of low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in new developments to existing buildings;
- e) adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage.

d) link the provision of low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in new developments to existing buildings.

3.8 Heritage and design policies

The Neighbourhood Plan supports Dartmoor National Park's Core Strategy objective to achieve excellence in design. The DNPA's Conservation Area Character Appraisal should be referred to e.g. Use of natural materials such as limestone, granite, slate, etc. For Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish this will mean reflecting local character and historic interest while also encouraging innovative design to create sustainable buildings and spaces. A rich variety of architectural styles creates individuality to a number of different streets across the parish. New development will be expected to contribute to this variety but also respect the scale and rhythm of streets

The Neighbourhood Plan will work to conserve and enhance the historic built environment of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish. Buckfastleigh and Buckfast have a rich variety of architectural styles and periods including details which give character to individual buildings, streets and spaces. The original field pattern of the area can still be read in the urban form and many streets and spaces are named with reference to historic features, for example Well Street. The streets of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast, whilst in some places declining in urban quality, are defined by simple and confident urban design, consistent street frontage treatments and architectural richness.

HD1: Good quality design

All new development within Buckfastleigh Parish must demonstrate good quality design. This means responding to and integrating with local surroundings and landscape context as well as the existing built environment. In Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish good design means:

- a) achieving high quality design that respects the scale and character of existing and surrounding buildings;
- b) respecting established building set back and arrangements of front gardens, walls, railings or hedges;
- c) ensuring proposals relate to established plot widths within streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm to the architecture in a street;

- d) using good quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials used within Buckfastleigh and Buckfast;
- e) adopting the principles of sustainable urban drainage;
- f) meeting the requirements of 'Secure by Design' to minimise the likelihood and fear of crime;
- g) innovation to achieve low carbon sustainable design.

Good design should provide sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape. Planning permission will not be granted for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving local character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Improving the quality of shop and commercial frontages, including signage, would have a positive impact upon the appearance and general character of several key parts of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish. In this instance 'quality' could be deemed ambiguous, so for the avoidance of doubt, quality relates not only to the standard of materials, workmanship and maintenance, but also to being sympathetic to the surrounding environment.

HD2: Retail and Commercial Frontages

New or renovated shop frontages should be of a high quality design and where possible improve the character of their local environment. The design of frontages should complement the architectural design of the rest of the building where that building has historic or architectural merit. Signs for shop fronts should be well-designed at a suitable scale and if illuminated should be lit appropriately and discreetly.

The Neighbourhood Plan will work to conserve and enhance the historic built environment of both Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. These settlements have a rich variety of architectural styles and periods including details which give character to individual buildings, streets and spaces. Each settlement is dominated by buildings that have helped shape the settlement, the Abbey in Buckfast and the Devonia Mill site in Buckfastleigh.

In developing the Neighbourhood Plan the community has placed considerable emphasis on the importance of heritage. Buckfastleigh benefits from having a Conservation Area and there are a number of significant listed buildings which are of importance to the community in both settlements. Development

proposals and refurbishments must also be carried out sensitively.

HD3: Heritage

Development affecting heritage assets within Buckfastleigh and Buckfast Parish must pay special regard to the need to conserve and enhance their settings and any special architectural or historic features of significance.

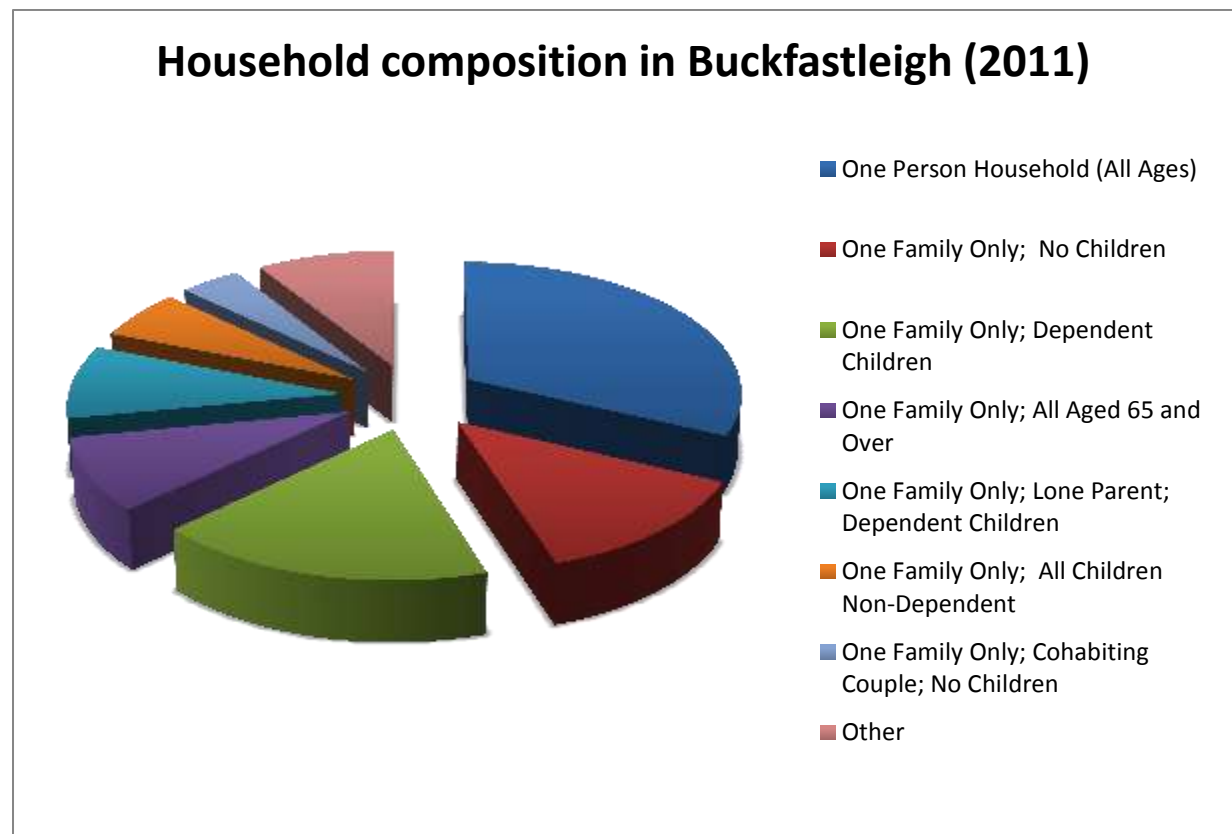
Appendices

- 1. Some statistics about the parish**
- 2. How we consulted**
- 3. The remit and membership of the Steering Group**

Table 2. Age structure in Buckfastleigh

Variable	Measure	Buckfastleigh	Teignbridge (Non- Metropolitan District)	South West	England
All Usual Residents	Count	3,631	124,220	5,288,935	53,012,456
Age 0 to 9	Count	420	12,025	568,783	6,291,081
Age 0 to 9	%	12	10	11	12
Age 10 to 17	Count	355	11,485	489,830	5,045,879
Age 10 to 17	%	10	9	9	10
Age 18 to 24	Count	207	8,332	468,305	4,970,636
Age 18 to 24	%	6	7	9	9
Age 25 to 29	Count	144	5,432	307,159	3,650,881
Age 25 to 29	%	4	4.4	5.8	6.9
Age 30 to 44	Count	696	20,957	994,693	10,944,271
Age 30 to 44	%	19	16.9	18.8	20.6
Age 45 to 59	Count	789	26,993	1,063,214	10,276,902
Age 45 to 59	%	22	21.7	20.1	19.4
Age 60 to 64	Count	299	9,980	361,507	3,172,277
Age 60 to 64	%	8	8	6.8	6
Age 65 to 74	Count	352	14,749	532,902	4,552,283
Age 65 to 74	%	10	11.9	10.1	8.6
Age 75 to 84	Count	262	9,659	348,759	2,928,118
Age 75 to 84	%	7	7.8	6.6	5.5
Age 85 to 89	Count	67	2,997	99,900	776,311
Age 85 to 89	%	2	2.4	1.9	1.5
Age 90 and Over	Count	40	1,611	53,883	403,817
Age 90 and Over	%	1	1.3	1	0.8

Chart 1. Household composition in Buckfastleigh



Deprivation

There are three Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that are either fully or partially in Buckfastleigh.

Two (E01020198 and E01020199) are completely within the parish boundary with another (E01020197) covering Buckfast, but also parts of Ashburton and Buckland in the Moor.

LSOAs are a statistical geography produced by the Office for National Statistics. There were created to provide a geographic level where each are had a similar number of people, roughly 1,500. There is also a middle layer with an average population of 7,500.

The English Indices of Deprivation, produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government are the most widely used measure of deprivation. The following table shows the ranks for overall deprivation and the seven components used in the indices of each of the three LSOAs in the Buckfastleigh parish. Ranks are out of 32,482 with 1 being the most deprived.

Table 3. Indices of deprivation: Buckfastleigh

LSOA	Overall IMD	Income	Employment	Health deprivation & disability	Education, skills & training	Barriers to housing and services	Crime	Living environment
E01020197	20,682	18,283	22,995	21,892	23,661	5,919	28,359	11,968
E01020198	11,273	10,465	9,824	13,484	9,846	25,611	26,323	2,732
E01020199	14,296	12,055	14,490	21,974	13,017	13,049	23,366	4,891

Benefits claimants

Table 4. Benefits claimants in Buckfastleigh

	Nov-09	Nov-10	Nov-11	Nov-12	Nov-13
Income Support	120	105	90	65	55
Job Seekers Allowance	65	40	60	55	40
Employment Support Allowance	35	30	50	90	115
Pension Credit	245	250	245	225	210

Employment

Approximately two thirds of 1,250 employees in the three LSOAs covering the area work full-time. The largest sectors of employment are Health and Manufacturing, each employing about 20% of the workforce. There are smaller, but still significant, levels of employment in Information and Communication, and Retail each employing about 10%.

The number of people unemployed and claiming benefits is shown in the table below:

Table 5. Unemployment in Buckfastleigh

LSOA	May 2010	May 2011	May 2012	May 2013	May 2014
E01020197	13	6	9	12	12
E01020198	17	22	25	36	12
E01020199	20	26	27	23	12
Total	50	54	61	71	36

Figure 27. MOSAIC profile of Buckfastleigh

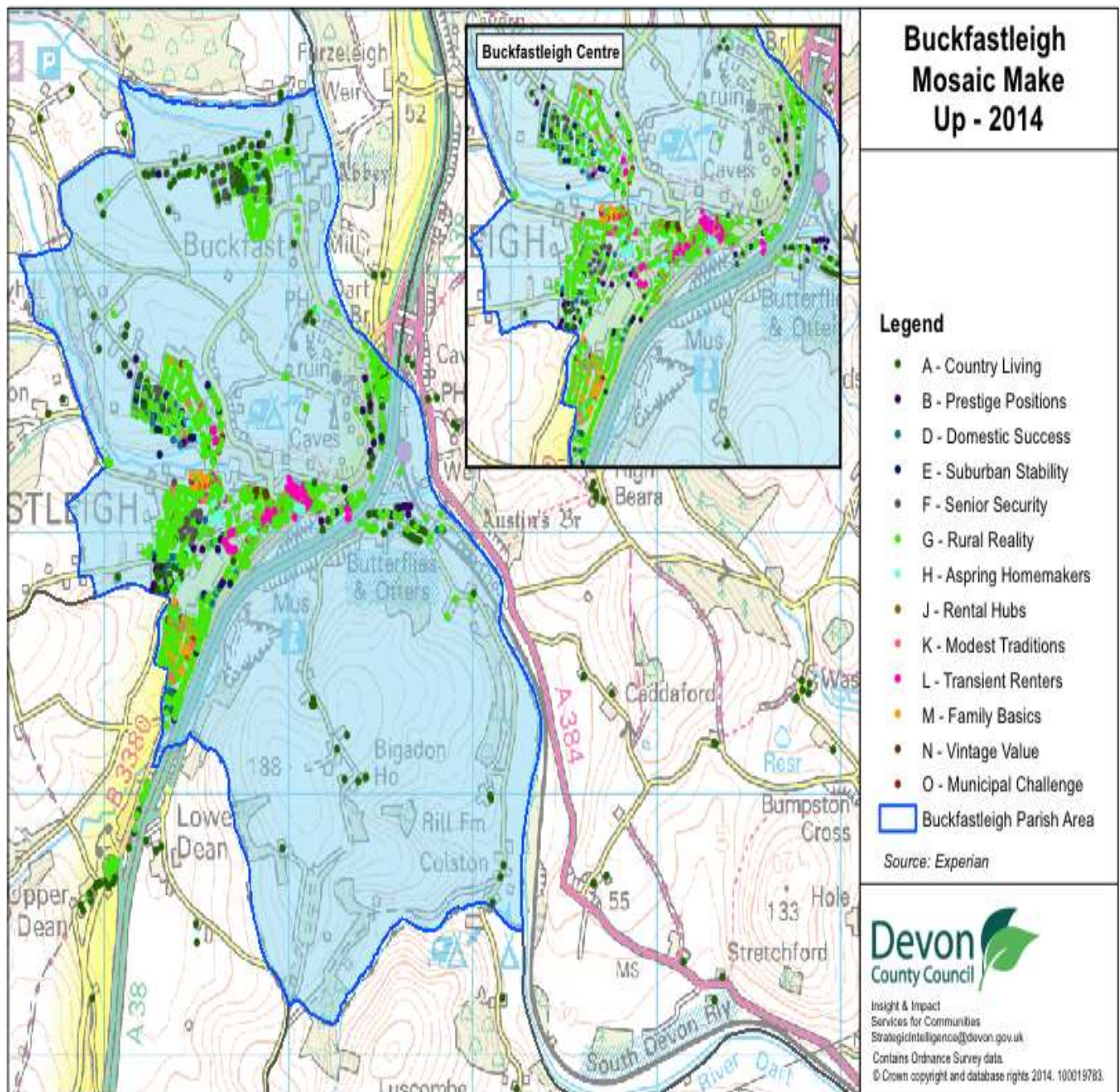


Table 6. Buckfastleigh Parish Mosaic Make up (2014)

Group	Group Name	One-line Description	Count of Postcode	Percentage
A	Country Living	Well-off owners in rural locations enjoying the benefits of country life	16	9.3%
B	Prestige Positions	Established families in large detached homes living upmarket lifestyles	30	1.7%
C	City Prosperity	High status city dwellers living in central locations and pursuing careers with high rewards	0	0.0%
D	Domestic Success	Thriving families who are busy bringing up children and following careers	32	1.8%
E	Suburban Stability	Mature suburban owners living settled lives in mid-range housing	51	2.9%
F	Senior Security	Elderly people with assets who are enjoying a comfortable retirement	53	3.1%
G	Rural Reality	Householders living in inexpensive homes in village communities	10 01	57.7%
H	Aspiring Homemakers	Younger households settling down in housing priced within their means	65	3.7%
I	Urban Cohesion	Residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity	0	0.0%
J	Rental Hubs	Educated young people privately renting in urban neighbourhoods	5	0.3%
K	Modest Traditions	Mature homeowners of value homes enjoying stable lifestyles	65	3.7%
L	Transient Renters	Single people privately renting low cost homes for the short term	16 2	9.3%
M	Family Basics	Families with limited resources who have to budget to make ends meet	59	3.4%
N	Vintage Value	Elderly people reliant on support to meet financial or practical needs	40	2.3%
O	Municipal Challenge	Urban renters of social housing facing an array of challenges	10	0.6%

Table 7. Demographic profile: Buckfastleigh

Usual Resident Population (2011)					
Variable	Measure	Buckfastleigh	Teignbridge (Non-Metropolitan District)	South West	England
All Usual Residents (Persons)	Count	3,631	124,220	5,288,935	53,012,456
Males (Persons)	Count	1,772	60,179	2,590,608	26,069,148
Males (Persons)	%	49	48.4	49	49.2
Females (Persons)	Count	1,859	64,041	2,698,327	26,943,308
Females (Persons)	%	51	51.6	51	50.8
Lives in a Household (Persons)	Count	3,570	121,337	5,175,084	52,059,931
Lives in a Household (Persons)	%	98	97.7	97.8	98.2
Lives in a Communal Establishment (Persons)	Count	61	2,883	113,851	952,525
Lives in a Communal Establishment (Persons)	%	2	2.3	2.2	1.8
Schoolchild or Full-Time Student Aged 4 and Over at their Non Term-Time Address (Persons)	Count	38	1,744	71,157	650,145
Area (Hectares) (Areas)	Count	555	67,387	2,383,736	13,027,843
Density (Number of Persons per Hectare) (Persons)	Rate	~	1.8	2.2	4.1

2. How we consulted.

Table 8. Neighbourhood Plan consultation process

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
20/11/13	Town Hall drop in presentation about what the NP is, questionnaires and wall charts for people to put ideas on	Community newsletters and Town Council website and Boards	Local residents. Around 418 responses to questionnaires	Large Boards produced and shown in main hall of town hall, showing all of the ideas people had. All participating invited to next meeting to join steering group. Note of meeting put in community newsletter and on Town Council website
08/01/14	Open meeting in the Town Hall, all attending sat in the round. Town Mayor explains what next steps are. Steering group to be formed, to build upon the public meeting and to undertake further consultations. Participants looked at the display Boards from the first meeting and brainstormed any other issues. These were then clustered into several themes.	Community newsletters and Town Council website	30+ residents attended, expressing interest in joining steering group	Steering Group formed, with Chair and Vice Chair appointed. Terms of reference drafted. Based upon the clustering into themes several sub groups were formed, with convenors appointed, to look at key development/non development opportunities, business, shops, tourism and visitor attractions, transport (roads/tracks/cycling etc.), Housing, Environment/rural land use and green spaces. Meeting minuted and put on website. E mail list drawn up of interested residents. Anyone invited to join sub groups.

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
06/02/14	Second full meeting of steering group in Town Hall held in the round. DNPA adviser outlines what the NP process is all about and makes large maps of parish available	Community newsletters and Town Council website	Local residents 25+. Terms of reference agreed together with parish boundary i.e. encompassing Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. Membership of sub groups agreed and each of these asked to encourage other residents to join	Meeting minuted and put on website. E mail list drawn up of interested residents. Residents invited to join sub groups.
27/03/14	Third meeting of steering group in Town Hall.	Community newsletters and Town Council website	Sub groups have begun to meet and give initial feedback. Agree to focus upon challenges and opportunities, especially to build upon the assets	Sub groups now working in more detail, each with several residents. Agreed that residents with photography expertise will photograph what is good and not so good about the parish and what development site opportunities there are. Agree to set up smaller convenors group of the Chair, Vice Chair and the convenors of

			the parish has.	each sub group with three Town Councillors
Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
April	Sub groups meet to identify development opportunities for the plan. Steering group meets to receive feedback from the sub groups	Community newsletters and Town Council website	Local residents on the sub groups and convenors' group	Agree to make presentation of work to date to an open public meeting in the Town Hall.
01/05/14	Town Hall public meeting organised café style. Feedback from the sub groups given with focus on housing and business/tourism. All attending invited to look at the large parish maps and to comments on the ideas emerging from the sub groups and to add any others.	Community newsletters and Town Council website and notice Boards	Local residents (c40) attend	Power point slides and Report of meeting taken and put on website and sent to all residents on the e mail list. Note also put in community newsletter. Residents invited to comment and feedback.

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
June	Sub groups meet to consider all of the ideas coming out of the café style public meeting. Convenors' group meets to prepare for another public meeting. Convenors' group meets with officials from Teignbridge DC, DNPA and Devon RCC		Local residents on the sub groups and convenors' group	TDC and DNPA and provide range of reports, stats and info on development. Agree need to meet with key business groups, tenants and residents' associations and church groups and to commission Jellyfish to consult young people.
24/07/2014	Open café style Public meeting in town hall to look again at large parish maps, receive further reports from the sub groups on transport, housing and environment/greenspaces . Participants invited to add other ideas on the maps.	Community newsletters and Town Council website	Local residents (c40) attend	Power point slides and Report of meeting taken and put on website and sent to all residents on the e mail list. Note also put in community newsletter. Residents invited to comment and feedback.

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
August	<p>Convenors' group meets with DCC Head of Strategy and Cllr Barker</p> <p>Range of meetings held with resident/tenants' associations, businesses, shops, abbey, landowners, churches etc.</p>	Community newsletters and Town Council website	C 100 people met at various meetings.	DCC provides range of statistics about the parish and DCC plans for the area
September	Convenors' group meets, application made for grant support to do further work on the plan. Grant scheme unavailable until New. Planning consultant identified (Ed Persse) but cannot be appointed until we secure grant.			Agree need to keep public interest in the process by putting updates on Town Hall website, community newsletters and to place the power point in a shop front window in Fore Street.
30/01/15	Chair and Vice Chair meet with planning consultant and with adviser from DRCC. Grant confirmed. Review of key ideas coming out of the			Agreed to contract consultants and to identify where further public consultation required. Go ahead given to consult young people, talk more with landowners and to find out more about the key brownfield developments – Devonian, Abbey and

	consultations to date prepared by Vice Chair. Agree to set up a 'writing group' to prepare outline Neighbourhood Plan			Whitecleaves.
25/02/15	Writing group meets			

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
18/03/15	Update presentation to be made to Town Council			
27/03/15	Open Public meeting to update on progress	Community newsletters and Town Council website and Boards		
March/April 2015	Two focus groups run by Schumacher Eco-design post graduate students in Town Hall	Article in local press, Community newsletters and Town Council website and Boards	40 Residents attended	Eco design options presented to Steering Group

Date	Consultation Approach	How publicised	Who was engaged	Outcomes
May 14 th	Public library open café meeting	Library	30 residents attend	Discuss draft ideas in the plan
May 27 th 2015	Open public meeting to consider draft NP	Community newsletters and Town Council website and Boards	TBC	Support for the draft's ten key proposals?
July/October	Meetings with DNPA, TDC and DCC to discuss project proposals. Work on any redraft changes/further evidence gathering required Plan passed on the independent Inspector			Planning authorities and Inspector gives positive feedback
Nov 2015/January 2016?	Public referendum	Local media, Community newsletters and website		Neighbourhood Plan approved

The membership and remit of the steering group

Membership.

Simon Rines (Chair), Charlie McConnell (Vice Chair), Cllr Katie Coates, Cllr Janet Jones, Cllr Martyn Thomas, Andy Stokes, Martin Parkes, Tim Stacey, Lindsey Drey, Hannah Floyd.

Name

1. The name of the group shall be **Buckfastleigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**.
(Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG)

Aims & objectives

2. The overall object of the Group shall be to give the people of the Parish of Buckfastleigh a voice and inclusive process by which to determine development in the Parish through the delivery of a Neighbourhood Plan and Community Charter, thereby helping to achieve their vision, their future.
3. Aim – To create a Neighbourhood Plan including a Community Charter, based upon evidence, to have weight in the local planning and development process by all current and future Planning Authorities.
4. Objectives –
 - a) To engage with and be inclusive of as many of the peoples of the Parish of Buckfastleigh as possible, regardless of location, age, gender, ability, occupation, religion, etc.
 - b) To act as a focal point for development in and of the Parish and its towns, villages and settlements.
 - c) To engage and liaise with other bodies and organisations, public and private, to achieve the group's overall object and aim.
 - d) To enhance social cohesion and quality of life of peoples living in and visitors to the Parish.
 - e) To improve understanding of and the necessary actions to achieve a shared vision for the Parish.
 - f) To ensure the legalities of planning and development take full account of local views and issues and respects those tangible and intangible assets cherished by people visiting, living in and working in the Parish for to be managed and protected for future generations.

Membership

5. The membership of the Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG shall consist of:
 - a) Steering Group Members – These will be volunteers from those people living for any length of time anywhere within the Parish of Buckfastleigh. Every effort will be made for Members to be representative of the different areas of the Parish and residents with regard to age, gender, ability, occupation, religion, etc.
 - i. A register of members will be kept up to date by the Secretary, to include names and contacts details of Members.

- b) Officers of the Steering Group – These will be Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and such other officers as the Steering Group may from time to time decide.
 1. Officers will be drawn from the Steering Group Members, those who have been proposed and voted on by the majority of Steering Group Members present at any Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG meeting.
 2. Officers shall hold their position for a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 1 year. Should the Chair wish, he/she may choose to share the responsibility of chairing meetings through rotation of Steering Group Members as ‘vice-chairs’.
 3. An Officer may delegate his/her role on a temporary basis to another Steering Group Member, or resign his/her role after 6 months. Changes of officers shall be by vote by a majority of the quorum at any meeting.
6. The number of Members will be limited to a maximum number of 35. However there must be a minimum of 6 Members in the Steering Group at any time.
7. Members are not limited to a specific length of membership and may join, leave and re-join the Steering Group.
8. The Steering Group may from time to time co-opt Members to increase number and/or gain members who are specially qualified or with specialist experience to further the object and aim of the Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG. The Steering Group shall decide for what period such co-opted members shall serve.
9. The quorum of the Steering Group shall be half its members, and a simple majority of the quorum shall be required for changes to the Terms or Reference or for passage of resolutions. The Chair shall have a casting vote if required.

Powers & responsibilities

10. The Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG shall have the following powers and responsibilities:
 - a) To create working groups or subgroups to assist in achieving their object and aim.
 - b) To formally report on a monthly basis in writing via minutes and documentation to Buckfastleigh Town Council. This will be the joint responsibility of the Chair and the Secretary.
 - c) To identify funding and other resource requirements and apply for funds through appropriate bodies and organisations in order to achieve the Groups’ object and aim.
11. Members, working groups or subgroups shall propose agenda items and prepare findings, proposals, information, etc. at least 10 clear days in advance of scheduled meetings, and email or post to the Secretary to allow him/her to circulate agenda and minutes to all Steering Group Members at least 7 clear days in advance of Steering Group meetings.

Meetings

12. The Steering Group shall meet as the Members deem necessary in order to achieve their object and aim. However this should not be more than twice a month, and not less than four times each year.
13. The Chair will chair meetings, or the chair may choose in advance to have rotating ‘Vice-Chairs’ chair meetings.
14. At least 14 clear days’ notice shall be given of meetings by the Secretary, by email and/or telephone.
15. The Secretary shall record minutes of all meetings and circulate minutes of the previous meeting at least 7 clear days in advance of upcoming meetings, by email or post.

16. Minutes of meetings will be noted as accepted by a simple show of hands of Steering Group Members attending a meeting, or amendments will be noted, made and accepted at the meeting.

Control of funds & property & records/documents/data

17. The Steering Group shall raise and control monies.
18. The monies and income and any property purchased or acquired by the Steering Group shall be applied solely towards the promotion and delivery of the Group's object and aim. No portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to any Steering Group Member. Provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration or reimbursement to any Officer or Member of the Steering Group or the repayment of reasonable and out-of-pocket expenses.
19. The Steering Group shall appoint a Treasurer from its Members.
20. All monies and sums and property collected, raised or donated to the Buckfastleigh Parish NPSG shall be handed over to the Treasurer who shall keep a record and shall pay same into a bank account in the name of the Buckfastleigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
21. Cheques and any cash or electronic withdrawals shall be authorised by vote of majority of quorum of the Steering Group at any meeting.
22. Cheques shall be signed by at least two persons, Officers, so authorised by the Steering Group.
23. The Treasurer will report accounts of the Group at each meeting. If unable to attend, the Treasurer will ensure that the accounts are made available to any other Officer of the Steering Group so that they may report at the meeting.

Changes to terms of reference & dissolution

24. Changes

Approved by vote of majority of quorum of members

Acknowledgements

A BIG THANK YOU to all of the residents, young and old, of the parish of Buckfastleigh and Buckfast. In particular we want to thank former Mayor Deni Rudgley who proposed the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan and all of the members of the Steering Group and sub groups, who, at one time or another made an active contribution to the community consultation process. Thanks also to Buckfast Abbey, Devonian Products Ltd and South Devon Railway for showing us around their sites.

The report was written and edited by Charlie McConnell, Vice Chair of the Steering Group. The section on consulting young people was written by Andy Stokes and Section Three by our Planning Consultant Ed Persse. Statistics were provided by DCC, DNPA and TDC. Illustrations are from the young people's consultations and from Schumacher College post graduate Eco design students. Further design sketches, by Dean Owens, for the ten key sites will be included in the final report and will be on display at the May 27th 2015 public consultation. Photos: Thanks to Penghelly Caves Trust, Buckfast Abbey, Buckfastleigh Community Forum, Schumacher College, Solidwool, Buck the Trend, Devon Wildlife Trust, Gordon Henderson, local residents (young and old), Schumacher College, the web, Sky News and the BBC.

