

## A Charter for the Countryside and Seas Around Plymouth

This Charter is about the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth. It seeks to re-establish the important links between the city of Plymouth, its surrounding countryside, the maritime environment and the protected landscapes beyond. It also seeks to bring together all the local authorities and relevant agencies to improve the co-ordinated planning and management of these important, and often overlooked areas. But most importantly it establishes a Vision for the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth enabling it to make the most of the many opportunities and challenges that the urban fringe faces over the coming years.

Membership of the core project group is drawn from:

- Caradon District Council
- Countryside Agency
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- English Nature
- Groundwork
- The National Trust
- Plymouth City Council
- South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- South Hams District Council
- Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum
- Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- West Devon Borough Council

Funding for the initial stages of this project was provided by the Countryside Agency. Project management and administrative support has been provided by the Tamar AONB Valley Service.



## A Charter for the Countryside and Seas around Plymouth

# A Charter for the Countryside and Seas around Plymouth



Cover photos show (from top): the Plym estuary; the Plym Valley Trail; Tamerton Foliot; Jennycliff; Tamerton Foliot.

All photos © Tamar Valley AONB Service.

Illustrative map by Ian Pethers (01822 834289)

Design by Graphic Words (01822 810511), 2005.

## A Place Recognised for its Creative and Joined - Up Management

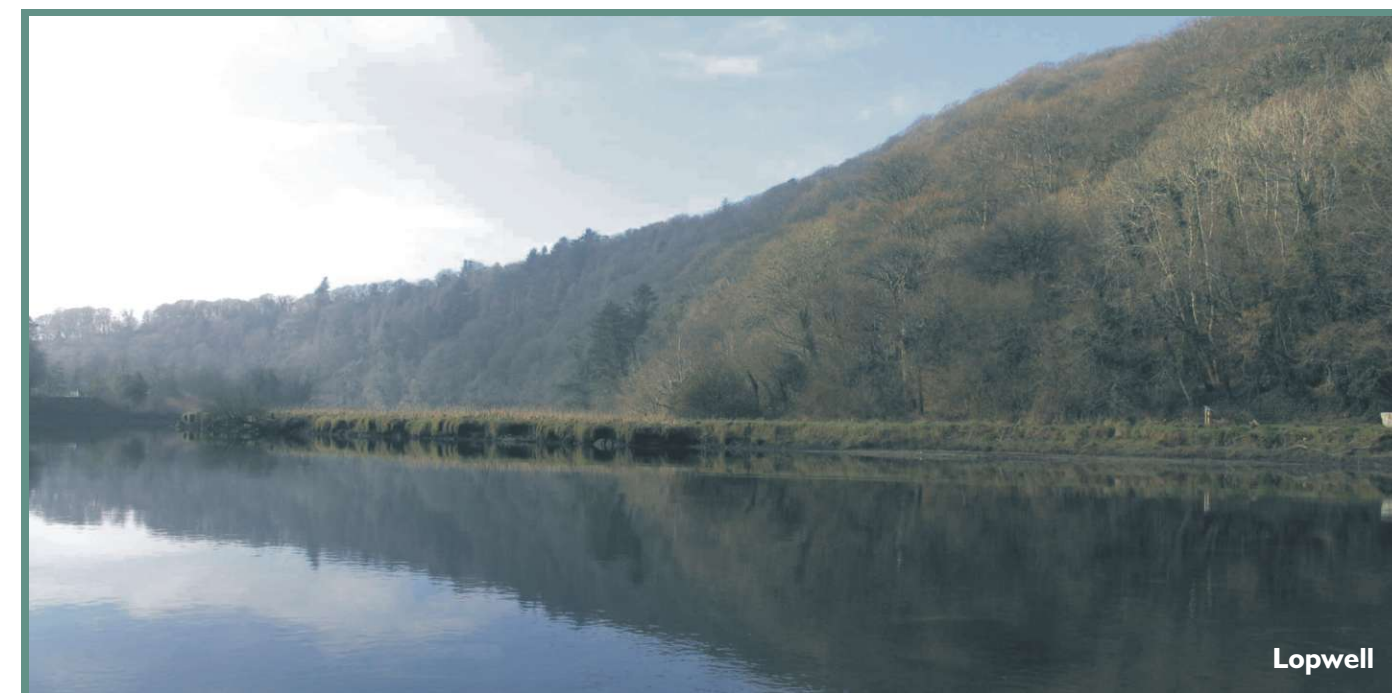
- To improve the co-ordination between planners and managers of the fringe
- To improve co-ordination between different geographical parts of the fringe
- To improve the scope for multi-functionality (using the fringe for a variety of purposes in a co-ordinated and complementary way)
- To provide, or support the acquisition of, resources to achieve these aims

## Delivering the Vision and Aspirations

The approach taken has been to identify a Vision and a series of Aspirations that can inform the separate plans and policies of the partner agencies.

The wide range of relevant plans that this document seeks to influence have been identified in the Delivery Plan; they include:

- The Regional Spatial Strategy
- Local Development Frameworks
- Local Transport Plans
- Protected Landscape Management Plans
- Protected Area Management Plans
- Community Strategies
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Environmental Stewardship
- Other local strategies and guidance - e.g. those covering Green Spaces and Design



In addition there are a wide range of potential projects that will help to deliver the Vision and Aspirations. These can be pursued, by partner agencies, either individually or working in partnership and given appropriate resourcing.

## Commitment from the Partners

The main partners must commit to this Charter, and principally agree to its contents, especially the Vision and Aspirations. This Charter marks a new era of co-operation between the main partners and it is only with their commitment that it can be realised.

## Next Steps

Following the publication and launch of this Charter, a number of important tasks have been identified by the Project Group to assist in delivery of the Vision:

1. Continue the group in order to maintain co-ordination and promote partnership working
2. Promote the vision statement to Local Authorities and relevant Partners, and ensure that policies and strategies are influenced appropriately
3. Implement joint projects that deliver the aspirations of the Vision

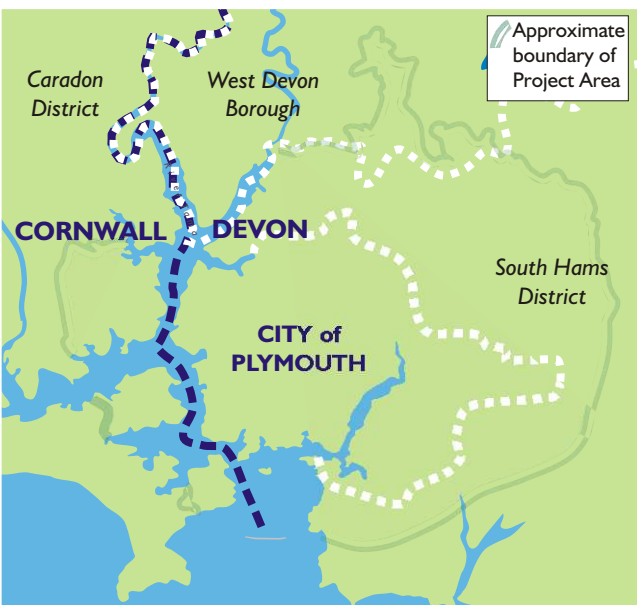
# The Countryside and Seas around Plymouth



Map 1: The Identified Project Area



The Plym Estuary



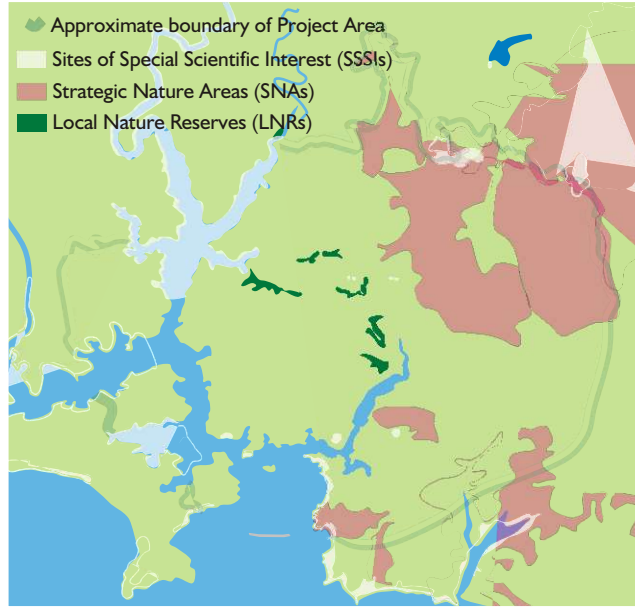
Map 2: Local authority administrative boundaries



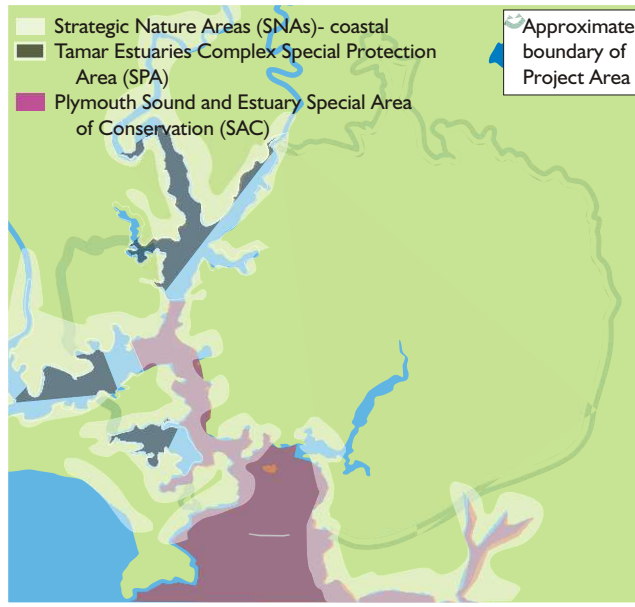
Map 4: Protected Landscapes



Map 3: Transport and recreational infrastructure.



Map 5: Environmental designations (terrestrial)



Map 6: Environmental designations (marine)

## The Aspirations

To deliver the Vision, partners will need to demonstrate their commitment to the following aspirations for the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth:

### A Bridge to the Country

- To establish and reinforce the links between Plymouth's urban green space and the fringe
- To establish and reinforce the links between Plymouth's maritime environment and heritage and the fringe
- To increase access to the fringe for those communities currently under-represented
- To establish the fringe as a place that people want to visit
- To repair damage caused by previous activities, poor management and planning
- To provide a network of accessible green space within the fringe, relieving pressure on the Protected Areas
- To protect outward views from the city into the countryside and coastlines beyond
- To promote the distinct and various characters of the urban fringe

### A Gateway to the Town

- To protect and enhance Plymouth's unique setting
- To improve the approach corridors, gateways (both land and sea-based), access routes and views into the city

### A Health Centre

- To develop opportunities for further use of the fringe as a major recreational resource for outdoor activities (both land and sea-based)

### A Classroom

- To promote the fringe as an educational resource
- To promote the rich maritime environment and heritage

### A Recycling and Renewable Energy Centre

- To support small-scale renewable energy projects where appropriate
- To promote sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and flood attenuation / green infrastructure
- To promote the fringe as a venue for community recycling and composting in support of the urban areas

### A Productive Landscape

- To re-establish the links between food producers and the consumer
- To promote the fringe as a source of local food production
- Promote a sustainable fishing industry working closely with Marine Protected Areas

### A Cultural Legacy

- To raise the profile, importance and quality of use of Plymouth's water environment, whilst reducing negative impacts
- To respect, promote and re-invigorate locally distinctive customs, events, festivals, traditions and culture
- To raise the profile, importance and understanding of both the built and industrial heritage of Plymouth's fringe

### A Setting for Sustainable Living

- To respect and promote the vitality and viability of communities within the fringe
- To promote a positive relationship between existing and new development and the surrounding countryside, and improve the character of the city's developed edge
- To evaluate and promote the distinct character of the Plymouth fringe

### An Engine for Regeneration

- To ensure that residents of city communities undergoing regeneration see the fringe and the maritime environments as their resource
- To promote development and regeneration that meets the needs of communities living in the fringe

### A Nature Reserve

- To promote the provision, creation and design of a well-designed network of linked, biodiversity-rich greenspaces (including water) at a range of scales within the City, new communities and the urban fringe
- To consider the location and needs of protected wildlife and geological sites at the earliest stages of spatial and land-use planning
- To promote wildlife friendly land/coastal management in the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth, with provision for learning and enjoyment by local communities

## The Vision

The countryside and seas in and around Plymouth are unique. They provide an accessible and immediate contrast to busy city living and are linked both physically and visually to its centre. They bring people closer to nature and the seasons, to remoteness and wilderness - the very things often craved for by city dwellers that actually exist on the doorstep or are visible from the rooftop.

The urban fringe is home to a number of independent and thriving communities, a wealth of flora and fauna, and offers access to a range of protected areas, which together contribute to the special character of the countryside and seas in and around this great city.

To keep this area special, whilst also realising its full potential:

1. We need to ensure that the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth continue to play a key role in the regeneration and long-term success of the city and the fulfilment of all its people.
2. We need to recognise that the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth are home to a number of communities whose vitality, viability and distinctiveness needs to be supported.
3. We need to make sure that the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth become places where the many demands placed upon it complement each other and are effectively planned and managed, whilst respecting the principles of sustainable development.
4. We need to explore new and more effective ways of managing our greenspace, creating new links between town, country and sea.
5. Finally, we need to ensure the protection and enhancement of the landscape, riverscape, seascape, culture, heritage, settlements and biodiversity so that the unique character of the countryside within Plymouth's urban fringe and centre can continue to be enjoyed by generations to come.

We will seek to deliver this vision by ensuring that the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth benefit from:

#### Wider Recognition of its Importance

- proper recognition needs to be given to the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth and the contribution they make to the city's unique setting, including the treatment of the gateways.

#### More Effective Co-ordination

- the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth should be seen as part of the wider landscape. The effective planning and management of these areas should not be constrained by administrative or institutional boundaries.

#### Proper Protection of its Qualities

- the natural, cultural, social and economic value of the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth should be given effective protection, not forgetting that they are home to a number of local communities who also have needs and aspirations. Due regard needs to be paid to the relationship between the countryside and the sea and the existing and future built form of the city.

#### Realisation of its Potential

- the potential of the countryside and seas in and around Plymouth should be realised for the benefit of everyone.