



Welcome

to the first edition of Neighbourhood Planning News

Those of you who have read the recent media articles on planning and housing will realise that there are changes ahead for local planning and neighbourhood planning.

The recent **Housing and Planning Bill**, (13 October 2015), provides some detail about these changes but we are waiting for the regulations to understand the full implications.

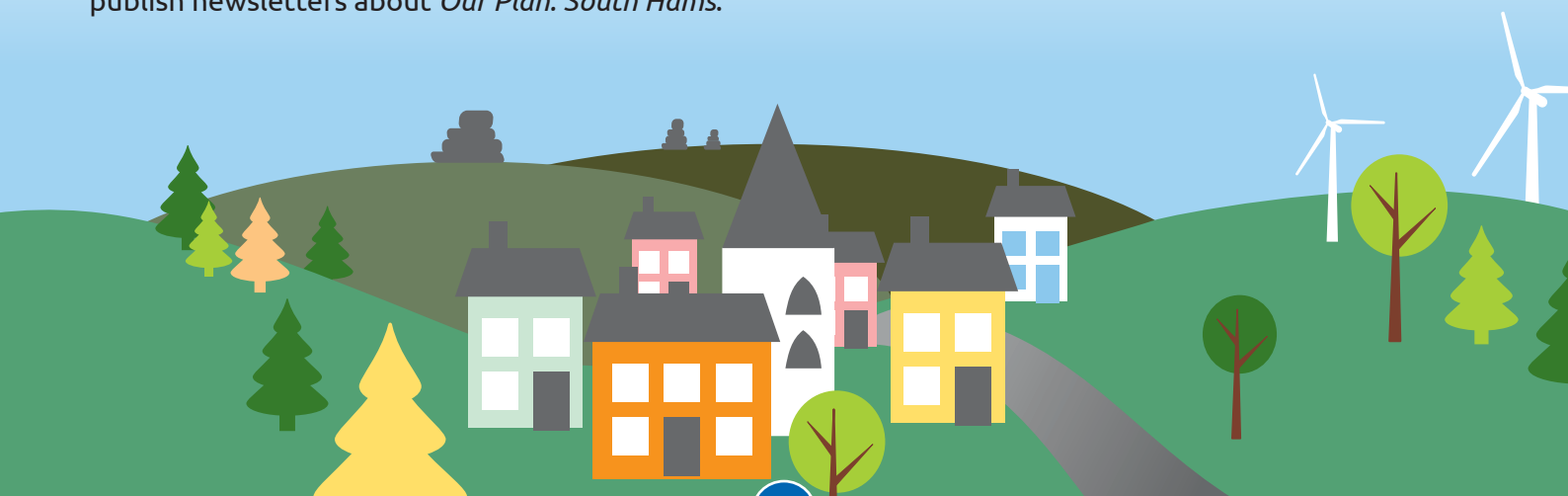
South Hams District Council welcomes the Government's commitment to speed up the neighbourhood planning process and we will keep you informed about the details as they come forward.

This newsletter has been prepared to provide guidance to neighbourhood plan groups. It contains information about:

- Neighbourhood planning in South Hams
- The relationship between neighbourhood plans and *Our Plan: South Hams*
- Planning for Housing and Employment
- Progressing your neighbourhood plan
- How the Council will support neighbourhood planning

It does not offer guidance about how to prepare a neighbourhood plan. There is a wealth of knowledge and expertise in our communities and a lot of information already in the public domain.

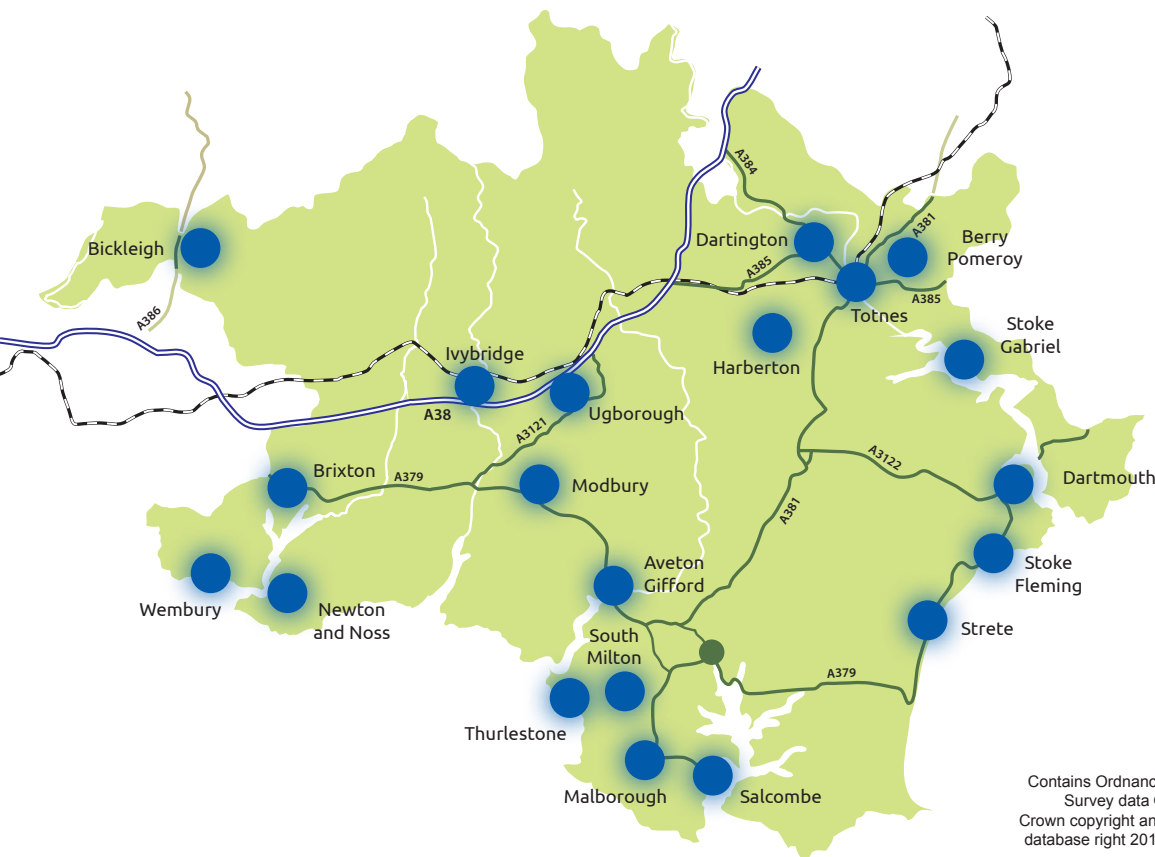
The Council's website at www.southhams.gov.uk/swneighbourhoodplans provides details about groups in our area and our protocol for supporting neighbourhood planning. We will continue to publish newsletters about *Our Plan: South Hams*.



An update on neighbourhood planning in South Hams

Neighbourhood planning has seen a positive response in South Hams with 20 communities now at various stages of preparing a neighbourhood plan.

This reflects the growing uptake nationally with the Government keen to promote neighbourhood planning as a 'powerful tool' for local people to use to address future development needs, particularly for housing.



Aveton Gifford
Berry Pomeroy
Bickleigh
Brixton
Dartington
Dartmouth
Harberton
Ivybridge
Malborough
Modbury
Newton and Noss
Salcombe
South Milton
Stoke Fleming
Stoke Gabriel
Strete
Thurlestone
Totnes
Ugborough
Wembury

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The relationship between neighbourhood plans and *Our Plan: South Hams*



Neighbourhood planning has its origins in the Localism Act (2011), which introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to help shape development.

This sits alongside the duty of local planning authorities to prepare and keep up to date development plans for their area, which is set out in the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

Put simply, neighbourhood plans allow local people to promote the right type of development for their community in the right location, providing it is in accordance with higher level plans and policies.

Once adopted, neighbourhood plans become part of the statutory development plan for the area so they must also meet the needs of the wider area. Therefore, they must be in 'general conformity' with the local plan, national planning policy and guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant European and human rights obligations.

Currently, the development plan for South Hams includes:

- Core Strategy (2006)
- Development Policies Development Plan Document (July 2010),
- Site allocation Development Plan Documents (SA DPD) for Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Totnes and the Rural Areas (February 2011) which contain sites for housing and employment for the period up to 2016 and beyond
- Affordable Housing DPD (September 2008)
- A number of 'saved policies' from the South Hams Local Plan (1996); and
- Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which provide further detail to support policy and decision making.

Following the introduction of the NPPF and the need to ensure the local plan covers at least a 15 year plan period, the Council is preparing a new local plan. The local plan will form an important part of *Our Plan: South Hams* which, when adopted, will be the single overarching strategic plan that sets out the vision, objectives and activities of South Hams District Council.

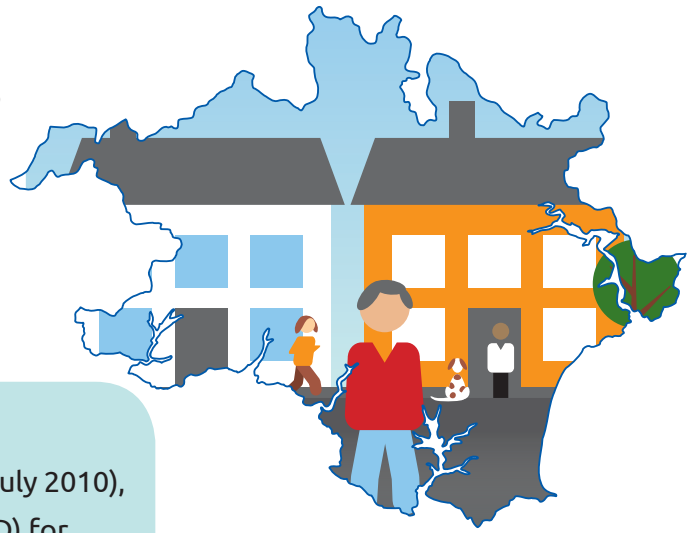
Neighbourhood plans must conform to the adopted local plan policies where these are consistent with the NPPF and updated evidence if groups wish to submit their plans for Examination ahead of *Our Plan: South Hams* being adopted.

Our Plan: South Hams and neighbourhood plans should aim to agree a shared understanding about how to support our communities, including key issues around:

- Will our children be able to live locally?
- Can they find jobs locally?
- Will our local pubs and shops have the customers to survive?

It is important that we find a way to meet these demands in a way that maintains, and enhances, the special quality of the South Hams and its communities.

A neighbourhood plan must address the development and use of land and its policies must be clear and precise so that, when they become part of the development plan, they can be used consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. A neighbourhood plan can provide local detail within the framework of the local plan and propose further development to support its communities. (Neighbourhood plans cannot propose less growth than the local plan).



Read the latest *Our Plan* e-newsletter on line at www.southhams.gov.uk/ourplan to find out more about the progress of the plan.





Planning for housing and employment

Neighbourhood plan groups have asked us about how they can plan for housing numbers while we continue to prepare *Our Plan: South Hams*.

The Council has an adopted local plan (set out above) but this only has a statutory time horizon to 2016. Although the adopted site allocation documents make some provision for development beyond 2016, new growth requirements for this period are yet to be established.

We continue to work with our neighbouring authorities (our 'Duty to Co-operate' partners) to establish these requirements and to ensure that we work together to co-ordinate supporting our communities across administrative boundaries. This collaborative approach recognises that people do not live their daily lives within the confines of one authority; many travel across boundaries to work, access services and facilities and for leisure and recreational purposes.

We are guided by the need to meet the government's policy to increase the supply of housing and to reflect population change in the area. As we prepare *Our Plan: South Hams* we also need to regularly update our work to reflect new government policy guidance and revised information. Until these issues are resolved, we suggest that neighbourhood plan groups fully embrace the government's challenge and take an active role in helping to meet future housing and other development needs. *Our Plan: South Hams* will establish a strategic housing requirement and the Council will consult on development strategy options to take that forward. Neighbourhood plans can help to deliver these development requirements and should take every opportunity to consider development opportunities in their communities. These should be in sustainable locations where housing and employment development could be accommodated. Government advice is clear in that we should be positively looking at every opportunity to identify and deliver new development sites. It is important that we take collective responsibility for doing this.

Progressing your neighbourhood plan

Whilst the work on *Our Plan: South Hams* progresses, there is still much that you can be doing to prepare your neighbourhood plans. You do not need to stop and wait for *Our Plan* to be adopted. Work might include:

Confirm the purpose of your neighbourhood plan and develop an agreed vision and objectives which reflect the community vision and can be taken forward in planning policies.

Make sure your neighbourhood plan group includes representatives from your town or parish council (as the 'qualifying body') and includes representatives from different sections and organisations in the community. This should be embodied in your 'Terms of Reference'.

Ensure your neighbourhood plan is supported by appropriate and proportionate evidence, as each policy must be based on evidence. This is absolutely critical to the success of your plan and should underpin all your policies.

Draft your policies. It's worth starting to prepare these even before you have finalised other aspects of your plan. Remember, you do not need to replicate higher level policies, but to add locally distinctive policies applicable in your area.

Support the Town or Parish Council to prepare an Open Space, Sport and Recreation Plan and consider what policies you could include to support its delivery.

Prepare your Consultation Statement. You need to keep a record of your consultation strategy, or approach, and events so that you have all the information ready to bring together when you submit your draft neighbourhood plan for consultation.

Make sure that you have identified sufficient land to meet the housing, employment and other land use needs identified in your plan. Check the latest South Hams Land Availability Assessment (www.southhams.gov.uk/siteassessment) and let us know of any other sites which you think have been missed.

Ensure that you understand the infrastructure requirements to support the proposed new development.

Demonstrate that your plan constitutes sustainable development, ideally through a Sustainability Appraisal. You will also need to determine whether your plan requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The Council will carry out a formal process to determine whether these assessments are required once you have draft policies prepared. This is really important so do this as soon as you have drafted your policies.

Continue to engage in the *Our Plan: South Hams* process by taking part in any consultations.

Remember that you can apply for funding of up to £8,000 to support the progress of your Neighbourhood Plan. More information on how to apply from http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/neighbourhood-planning/?_a=funding



How the Council will support neighbourhood planning

Each neighbourhood plan group is currently supported by a Lead Officer and Members may take an active role in the neighbourhood plan process.

The Council is currently reviewing how it can best support the neighbourhood planning process as we move forward with *Our Plan: South Hams*. Neighbourhood planning newsletters will increase our support and advice in the months ahead and we are looking at other ways to assist neighbourhood groups in a coordinated way. We have recently updated our decision making process at the Council for the formal stages of neighbourhood plan making and will revise our protocol to reflect this, and any other changes as these come forward.

The Council recognises the extensive neighbourhood planning groups have already undertaken and we hope that future newsletters will provide further guidance to support you. We would welcome any suggestions about what you would wish us to cover.

The legal bit....

Neighbourhood Planning was first introduced in the **2011 Localism Act**.

There are regulations which set out key stages of the process which you need to be aware of. You can view them online [here](#).

The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)** also provide more detail and guidance.

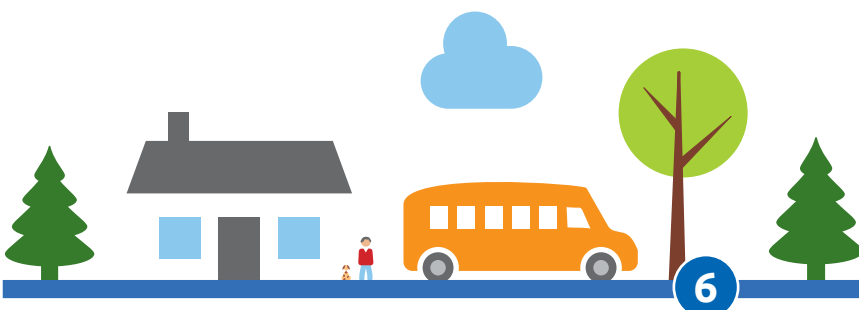
Other advice, guidance and case studies

There is a huge amount of guidance prepared by other organisations. We have highlighted some of them below ...

Locality

My Community this link will also provide you with information about the funding available to support Neighbourhood Planning Groups.

Forum for Neighbourhood Planning This website contains useful resources, case studies and examiners reports for neighbourhood plans around the country.



Happy
to help

Design and print service

The Council is able to offer a design and print service to help you promote, engage and consult with your community.

The Design Team of South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council, are very experienced producing planning documents such as Our Plan. They have access to GIS data and are specialists in producing maps. Their service includes design, print, display, video, photography and in the near future website design.

The team are able to help in many ways, including -

- Logos and Branding to create impact and make you stand out
- Printed material - posters (A4 to A0 and bigger), flyers, booklets, postcards, surveys etc
- Design and print OS maps or decorative maps for publication and consultation events
- Design and publish your Neighbourhood Plan and proposal maps
- Display material - pull-up displays, traditional display boards, A frames and outdoor posters
- Display board hire
- Signs and banners for events
- Video and photography support for events

They have already assisted other Neighbourhood Plan Groups in South Hams and West Devon who are at different stages in the process.

For further information please contact the Design Team by email at design@southhams.gov.uk or call 01803 861447



For more information

Follow us on Twitter and find us on Facebook to keep up to date with progress being made on Our Plan and to find out about events near you.



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South Hams
District Council



The Strategic Planning Team,
South Hams District Council,
Follaton House, Totnes, TQ9 5NE



Strategic.Planning@southhams.gov.uk



www.southhams.gov.uk/ourplan