Our Plan is a long term strategic plan for the Borough which covers the period from 2011 to 2031. It sets out a vision, aims and objectives to manage future development across West Devon. The development strategy and planning policies cover the area of West Devon outside the Dartmoor National Park.

We are consulting on the Publication version of Our Plan West Devon. This is the document that we hope to submit for independent examination. Depending on the feedback we receive from this consultation, we may choose to make changes to the plan and re-consult with the community on an amended version later in the year.

The plan has a number of key themes, each of which are covered in separate chapters. The main themes are each shown on the exhibition boards. You can view the full plan or individual chapters here today or on our website -

www.westdevon.gov.uk/ourplan

Our Homes

Our Plan supports:

- an average rate of new housing development of 216 homes a year;
- accommodation suitable for an ageing population;
- 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses to provide more opportunities for entry-level households;
- opportunities for people to live and work in the same unit;
- self-build, custom-build and self-finish schemes; and
- homes which are affordable to people on low incomes by asking for up to 30% affordable housing on sites of 10 or more homes

Our Infrastructure

Our Plan supports:

- development which can be supported by existing infrastructure or which makes provision for new services and facilities to support it;
- development which contributes to the delivery of high speed broadband services, mobile broadband, Wi-Fi and mobile signal;
- new initiatives to improve community transport, public transport, walking and cycling links and local highways;
- the safeguarding of the former railway line between Okehampton and Bere Alston to support longer term ambitions for the reintroduction of regular passenger railway services; and
- the provision of public open spaces, allotments, sport and recreation facilities, leisure spaces, cultural experiences, health and education services.

Our Economy

Our Plan supports:

- an average rate of new net jobs of 120 a year;
- a ‘can-do’ attitude to business and employment development;
- innovative and new technologies;
- entrepreneurship;
- diversification of the rural economy;
- continued use of existing employment sites;
- proposals which help maintain attractive and vibrant town centres;
- the retention of retail units in our Primary Shopping Frontages*;
- more flexibility around different uses in our Secondary Shopping Frontages*; and
- out of town retailing where there is an identified need for the store, there are no suitable alternative sites closer to the town centre and where there is no significant adverse impact on the town centre.

* as shown on the Proposals Maps
Our Communities

Our Plan supports:

- development which meets the needs of all our local communities;
- development in our main towns, local centres and main villages where there are a range of services and facilities;
- small scale development to meet identified local housing and business needs in our smaller villages, hamlets and countryside;
- opportunities for communities to make their own decisions about the local delivery of services and where and how development takes place; and
- the need to explore the potential for a new community to meet the longer term development needs of West Devon to avoid overburdening existing towns and infrastructure.

Where will new homes and other large scale developments be located?

In all of our Main Towns, Local Centres and Main Villages (see right) we are proposing that some new housing and employment development takes place. These are considered to be the most suitable and sustainable settlements for accommodating new development. However, levels of development will vary between communities based on local circumstances, site availability, infrastructure capacity, outstanding development sites and how much development has been accommodated within the settlement in recent years. The map shows the different settlement classifications, the location of employment sites, existing strategic housing allocations and how many new homes are proposed in each settlement.

Our Plan does not propose to make any site allocations to accommodate these new homes (with the exception of Tavistock). Instead, there is the opportunity for communities to take the lead in identifying where and how the new development takes place, through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

If communities do not wish to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough Council will do this through preparing a separate Allocations Development Plan Document to identify and allocate appropriate sites.
What about small scale developments, e.g. 1 or 2 houses or a live-work unit in main towns, local centres and main villages?

We are proposing removing artificially created settlement boundaries to provide opportunities for proposals of up to 2 dwellings or small scale employment opportunities. Such proposals would have to demonstrate that they were sustainable and were contributing towards meeting local needs. This is a more flexible and positive strategy that will help to deliver housing, including more affordable homes, to meet local community needs. This doesn't mean that there will be a free for all; instead, we will use a set of robust criteria to assess whether proposals contribute to sustainable development for the community.

What about development elsewhere in West Devon?

Under normal circumstances we would not support development taking place in our smaller villages, hamlets and the countryside because of their lack of services and facilities, the potential for more people to rely on the private car and a risk of increasing rural social isolation. However, where there is an evidenced and overriding need for a particular type of development to take place, we would not wish to prevent this from happening.

For example, we may wish to permit the development of an affordable housing exception site which has been evidenced through a Parish Housing Needs Survey, support the provision of elderly or ancillary accommodation for local needs, or allow development where it would reduce use of the private car for care or business purposes and where it can be demonstrated that the need can most appropriately be accommodated there.

As per national policy, we would also support isolated homes in the countryside where:

- there is the essential need for a rural worker or family member to live permanently at or near their place of work or family unit in the countryside;
- such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would secure the future of heritage assets in the most appropriate way;
- the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting;
- the proposal is of an exceptional quality or innovative nature; or
- there is an identified need for a Gypsy or Traveller site in that location.

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood Plans allow local communities to develop their own plans for growth in their area. These plans, once adopted, carry legal weight when making planning decisions. Even emerging plans can be taken into consideration. Neighbourhood plans are about planning for growth not stifling it.

The Council is seeking to encourage communities to take a lead role in identifying where new homes and other development opportunities should be located within individual towns and villages through neighbourhood planning projects.

If you’re interested in finding out more about Neighbourhood Planning for YOUR community, come along to a Neighbourhood Planning event in Bridestowe on 23 April.
Our Resources
Our Plan supports:
- a low carbon future by:
  - locating most new development alongside services and facilities;
  - promoting sustainable travel;
  - improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings;
  - requiring new development to have a lower environmental impact;
- a positive approach to supporting renewable and low carbon energy sources whilst ensuring that such proposals are fully assessed and that any impacts can be made acceptable; and
- new development which responds to the ‘energy hierarchy’ (see right) by promoting energy conservation first, followed by energy efficiency, then renewable energy.

Our Heritage
Our Plan supports:
- the conservation, enhancement and promotion of the historic environment of West Devon, including designated conservation areas and national and local heritage assets; and
- the designation of the West Devon and Cornwall Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.

Our Wellbeing
Our Plan supports:
- a reduction in health inequalities and social isolation;
- positive health and wellbeing outcomes for communities; and
- access for everyone to housing, employment services, facilities and activities that promote healthy lifestyles.

Our Environment
Our Plan supports:
- the special high quality landscapes of West Devon, particularly the Dartmoor National Park and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- the conservation and enhancement of all local landscape characters;
- development which enhances green infrastructure, such as corridors for wildlife, places for recreation and play and spaces for local food production;
- the conservation, enhancement and restoration of habitats and biodiversity features affected by development, with special protection for internationally, nationally and locally designated sites; and
- the location of development in areas at the lowest risk of flooding.
Future Development in Tavistock

Our Plan supports:

- the continued allocation of land at Callington Road (OP9) for approximately 635 homes, alongside the reinstatement of the railway line to Bere Alston;
- the continued allocation of land at Plymouth Road (OP8) for employment uses, alongside the development of approximately 115 homes;
- the continued allocation of land at Pixon Lane (OP10) for market and community related uses;
- new allocations at Mount Kelly (OP15), Brook Farm (OP16) and New Launceston Road (OP17) for the development of approximately 155 homes;
- the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Tavistock to plan for an additional 45 homes to be delivered post 2026; and
- new and improved infrastructure to support new development, including a primary school, road improvements along Plymouth Road, playing pitch and open space enhancements, play facilities and a railway service to Bere Alston.
Our Plan supports:

- the identification and redevelopment of appropriate town centre sites;
- initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts and Heritage Based Schemes;
- provision of visitor attractions, events, festivals, weekly and permanent markets;
- proposals which create larger floorspaces for shopping in the town centre, particularly for a DIY store and garden centre;
- uses which increase variety and choice in shopping provision;
- business, social and residential uses above ground floor retailing, commercial and eating premises;
- improved walking and cycling links around the town centre;
- uses which boost the evening economy of the town;
- the retention of retail units in our Primary Shopping Frontages (see map below); and
- more flexibility around different uses in our Secondary Shopping Frontages (see map below).
Our Plan supports:

- the continued allocation of land to the east of Okehampton for new housing and employment development, including:
  - a strategic employment site and approximately 150 homes on land at Opportunity Okehampton (OP6);
  - approximately 600 homes at OP7;
  - a link road connecting Exeter Road and Crediton Road;
  - a railway station and associated car parking for 60-70 vehicles;
  - coach parking facilities; and
  - a Stockley Valley Park.

- redistributing 150 homes from land allocated to the east of the Stockley Valley as part of the existing allocation to alternative sites in the town.

- the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Okehampton and Okehampton Hamlets to plan for at the redistribution of 150 homes to be delivered post 2026; and

- new and improved infrastructure to support new development, including a primary school, a town centre access road, open space enhancements, play facilities and a passenger railway service to Exeter.
Our Plan supports:

- the identification and redevelopment of appropriate town centre sites;
- initiatives such as Business Improvement Districts and Heritage Based Schemes;
- provision of visitor attractions, events, festivals, weekly and permanent markets;
- proposals which create larger floorspaces for shopping in the town centre;
- uses which increase variety and choice in shopping provision;
- business, social and residential uses above ground floor retailing, commercial and eating premises;
- improved walking and cycling links around the town centre;
- uses which boost the evening economy of the town;
- the retention of retail units in our Primary Shopping Frontages (see map below); and
- more flexibility around different uses in our Secondary Shopping Frontages (see map below)