Shaping our communities to 2031
Our District
The area Our Plan will cover
Foreword

Welcome to the first formal stage of us working with you to shape ‘Our Plan’. I am assuming if you are reading this that you are interested in what we are doing and how you might be involved.

Our biggest challenge is enabling growth and providing much needed homes and jobs whilst, at the same time, protecting the beautiful place that is South Hams – no mean feat as I’m sure you can appreciate. To do this we need to gather evidence of local need and think about what we need to provide and where to meet those needs.

Your views are important to us as we shape our plans and I do hope you will work with us over the next few months to do so. Unfortunately most people only get involved at a much later stage in the process, normally when a planning application directly affects them. By then it’s normally too late as the principle of development has already been established and we are keen to try and engage more people much earlier in the process.

Again this is a challenge and engaging people isn’t easy. Some of our more traditional methods such as holding exhibitions in village halls have limited success and we struggle to attract new people to get involved at these events. Whilst we will continue to do this we will also be making better use of technology and social media to try and reach a wider audience.

As the first stage of engagement this document sets out the proposed scope of our plan. It reflects on how things have changed in the area in the last decade or so and shows the major challenges ahead as we see them. It also sets out our timetable and the various ways that you can be involved.

What do you think? Are we focussing on the right things or do you feel we are missing something? Do please let us know.

Cllr John Tucker, Leader,
South Hams District Council
About the Plan

This is a high level, strategic plan for South Hams which will set out how the needs and aspirations of our communities will be met up to 2031.

The high level plan applies to the entire District. The planning policies set out in the plan will cover the area of the South Hams outside of the Dartmoor National Park who have their own plans and policies for their area.

To produce the plan we gather a significant amount of local evidence of need and put this alongside national guidance and policy. We also work with neighbouring areas and other public authorities, to ensure we plan effectively for the wider region as well as working with our local community and stakeholders to understand local needs and aspirations. The information we have gathered so far suggests that the plan should cover the following areas:-

Our Vision
- Aims and framework for future growth
- Our priorities and challenges

Our Communities
- The development strategy
- Role for neighbourhood planning
- Defining ‘sustainable development’
- Infrastructure
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Community empowerment and enabling

Our Nature
- Designated and protected landscapes
- Green infrastructure
- Trees and hedges
- Coastal change

Our Homes
- Future housing numbers
- Affordable housing
- Self-build
- Gypsy and traveller provision
- Housing mix and type
- Design standards

Our Economy
- Employment strategy
- Employment policies
- Town centre and retail policies
- Tourism
- Regeneration
- Diversification
- Enabling flexibility and supporting change

Our Heritage
- Conservation areas
- Listed buildings
- Heritage assets
- Reuse of land and buildings
- Archaeology

Our Resources
- Renewable energy
- Zero carbon
- Climate change
- Energy hierarchy
- Sustainable construction
- Flood risk

Our Wellbeing
- Social inclusion
- Public safety
- Open space and sport
- Community assets
- Health infrastructure

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Our Plan – how will it be prepared?

The diagram shows the plan preparation stages. In particular it shows when we will engage and consult with others.

We are required to undertake two formal consultations and this is the first of them. This first stage is quite broad and sets out what the plan will cover. Over the summer months there will be much informal engagement with individuals, communities and stakeholders to discuss various topics which will help us shape the detail of the plan. In the winter we will undertake the second formal consultation which will consult on the draft plan.
Our District - what are the big challenges we need to address?

Before we can start planning for the future we need to fully understand the big challenges we face as a District.

The evidence we have gathered thus far has given us a fairly clear picture of what these challenges are but we would be keen to know whether you agree with us.

These challenges are not new to us and our previous plans have made significant inroads into addressing these issues. However, there is still much to do. We still have many people in need of homes and jobs and we need to meet these needs whilst at the same time protecting the very special place that is the South Hams. We need to do all we can to ensure a good quality of life for our communities now and in the future.

The diagrams on the following pages set out the challenges as we see them. What do you think? Have we missed anything? Is there something you would like us to consider?
Enabling healthy and active lifestyles

Responding positively to climate change

Retaining young people and families

Finding innovative and flexible housing solutions

Increasing self-reliance for individuals and communities

Attracting a range of jobs

Improving access to services

Supporting an increasing older age population

Building a mix of housing to meet market and local needs

Encouraging community planning and ownership

Improving the overall health, wellbeing and resilience of our communities

Supporting and retaining existing jobs and local businesses

Recognising and promoting what makes the area ‘special’

Enabling the right amount of development in the right places

Enabling waste reduction

Improving transport links

Recognising and promoting what makes the area ‘special’

Enabling the right amount of development in the right places

Protecting and enhancing our natural landscapes

Ensuring adequate access to recreation and open spaces

Adapting to changing weather patterns

Making the most of new technologies

Encouraging sustainable construction methods

Maintaining services with less public funding

Making the most of new technologies

Encouraging sustainable construction methods

Maintaining services with less public funding

Maintaining and enhancing infrastructure (e.g. Schools, roads, healthcare etc.)

Enabling effective waste management

Enabling renewable energy

Making the most of our historic environment and heritage assets
Our Plan – what happens next and how can you be involved?

We will review all of the comments that you make and use these to help shape Our Plan.

We are also required to prepare other supporting documents such as a Sustainability Appraisal which allows us to understand the social, environmental and economic effects of our plans and policies. Your comments will help inform these documents as well.

We would like to know whether we have identified the right challenges and topics that Our Plan will cover or whether there are things missing. We have prepared a short response form for you to complete – just add your comments and press ‘submit’.

You can make your comments between Friday 9th May and Friday 20th June 2014. We would like to encourage you to send us your views electronically wherever possible.

However, should you wish to read a hard copy, you can find one at:

- South Hams District Council, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes, TQ9 5NE

Your comments can be sent to the Strategic Planning Team at the same address.

We will add as much information as we can about Our Plan on the Council’s website at www.southhams.gov.uk/ourplan

This will include consultation events that we plan to attend, with an Event Timetable explaining where we will be over the summer months. This will be regularly updated over the coming weeks as we confirm our attendance at more events.

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.

www.facebook.com/OurPlanSH  @OurPlanSH

Shaping our communities to 2031
This document meets the requirements of Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) and incorporates the Local Plan as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

For more information please contact

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This document can be made available in large print, Braille or tape format on request.