



## Welcome to the latest Our Plan: South Hams newsletter

This issue will provide you with an update on the progress of *Our Plan: South Hams*, some of the current challenges nationally and locally and the next steps.

*Our Plan: South Hams* is the single strategic plan that sets out the vision, objectives and activities of the Council. It is the comprehensive story of what the Council wants to achieve.

Following widespread public consultation the Council has adopted the following vision

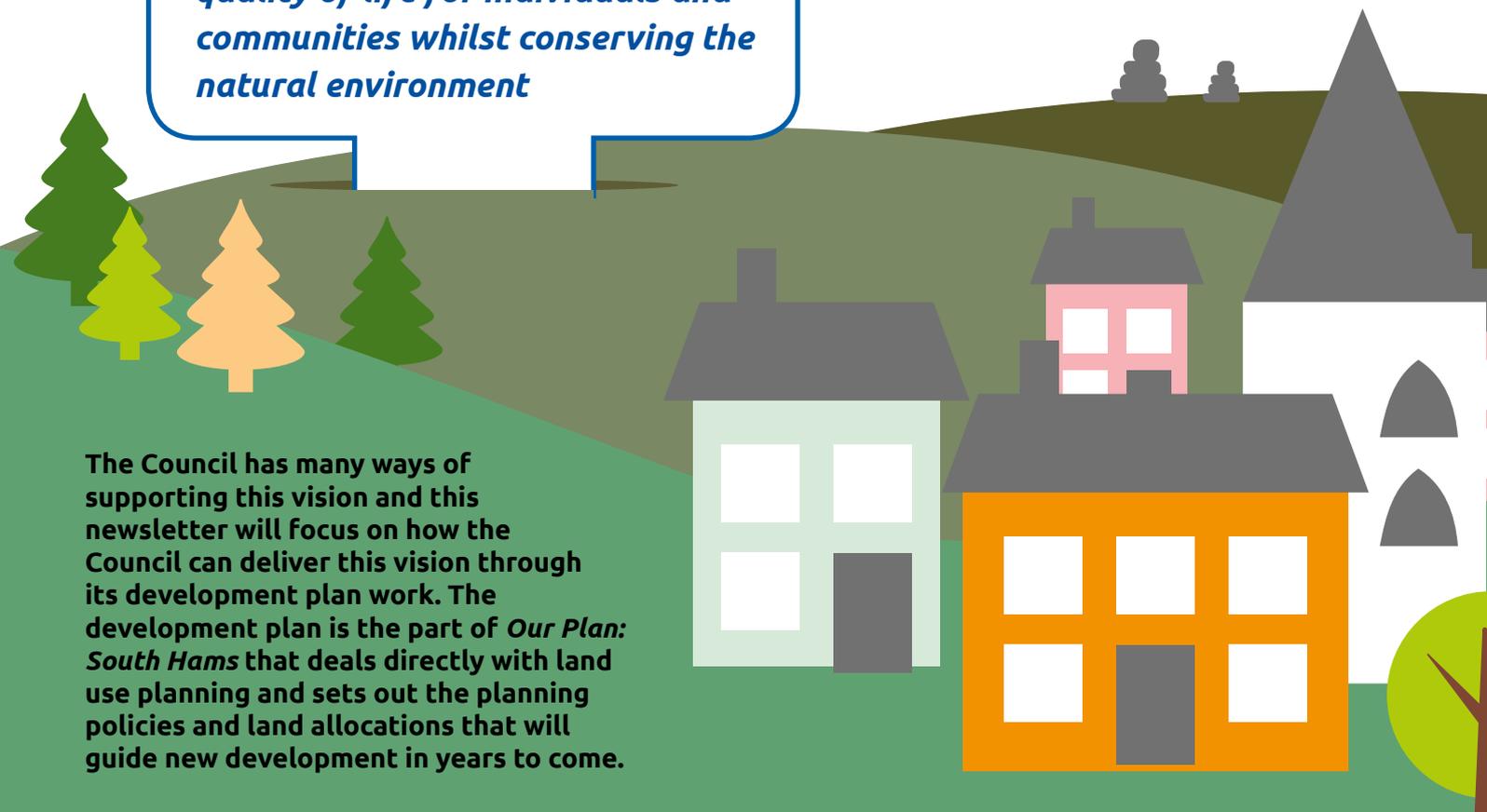
***Supporting Vibrant Towns and Villages and enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities whilst conserving the natural environment***

The Council has many ways of supporting this vision and this newsletter will focus on how the Council can deliver this vision through its development plan work. The development plan is the part of *Our Plan: South Hams* that deals directly with land use planning and sets out the planning policies and land allocations that will guide new development in years to come.

### Contents

This e-newsletter will cover ...

An update on the progress of the development plan part of <i>Our Plan: South Hams</i>	Page 2
Changes nationally and locally	Page 3
A Call for Sites for new sites across the District	Page 4



# Where are we now?



Work started back in 2014 to prepare a new local plan for the South Hams, which would form part of the overall strategic plan for the District. Following the regulation 18 consultation during the summer of 2014, a lot of work has been going on to understand the future development requirements for the South Hams and how we can play our role in delivering growth, whilst ensuring that we also conserve and enhance the special qualities of the District. There will be lots more opportunity for people to engage in shaping the new local plan throughout 2016.

As part of the plan making process, we also need to make sure that we are talking and co-operating with our neighbouring authorities, particularly Plymouth, Dartmoor and West Devon, so that we understand what is going on in the wider area. People do not live their lives within one administrative area, and through the planning process we have a requirement (called the Duty to Co-operate) to make sure that we have co-operated on issues which arise across these boundaries which are then reflected in the *Our Plan: South Hams*. This includes, for example, roads, schools and housing numbers. Without this co-operation, the plan is likely to fail at an Examination in Public.

Along with West Devon, Plymouth City Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority, South Hams is exploring the possibility of working together on a Joint Local Plan to work with its neighbours on the strategic distribution of new homes and jobs. Details are yet to be agreed and we need to do further work with our neighbours to best understand the context in which any joint plan will be prepared including the objectives and priorities, governance and working arrangements, timescales, evidence, infrastructure requirements and policies and allocations. We will also be looking at how we engage and consult with our communities.

If you wish to receive email notification of further consultation opportunities and progress on Our Plan, please email [strategic.planning@southhams.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@southhams.gov.uk)



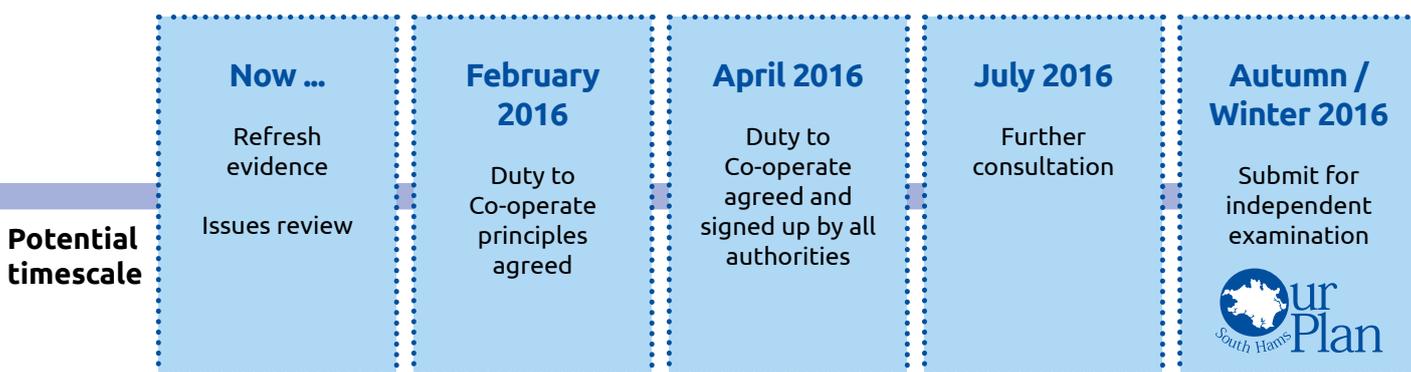
# What is happening nationally?

Since the Parliamentary election in May, the government has made a number of announcements about further changes and reforms to the planning system. All of these have an impact on the preparation of *Our Plan: South Hams*, particularly around the scope of individual policies. We therefore need to review the draft policies and ensure they appropriately reflect the latest national policies and guidance. The emerging Housing and Planning Bill, which was published in October 2015, and proposed amendments to National Planning Policy Framework, published in December, contain significant proposals including:

- **Starter homes** for first time buyers under the age of 40 able to purchase at a 20% discount of market value
- A requirement to maintain a register of those interested in **self/custom build** projects
- **Rent control** for Registered Providers
- **Brownfield land release** for housing, including maintaining a register of such land and automatic planning permission in principle.
- The requirement for Local Plans to be **in place by 2017**.
- **Right to Buy** for Registered Providers.
- **Planning permission in principle** for certain types of land.

## ...and locally?

Work is continuing on the preparation of *Our Plan: South Hams*. There will be more opportunities for you to engage in the plan making process as we will carry out more consultation, both informal and formal, before we submit the plan for Examination. Members have recently considered a potential timescale which is set out below – and will be confirmed following further discussions.



As a result, we will also have to prepare an update to the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Over the coming months we will be working closely with our neighbouring authorities to get a better understanding of the amount of development required across the Plymouth housing market area. This will help to clarify what is needed in each local authority area, including the South Hams. We intend to undertake further informal consultation regarding future levels of development and how to accommodate this in the spring, once the overall requirements are clearer. This may include workshops, further e-newsletters and events.

We recognise the importance of getting this work progressed quickly and efficiently, not only to ensure that *Our Plan: South Hams* is robust, but to provide some certainty and guidance for the Neighbourhood Planning Groups in the District.

# What can you do locally?



In addition to responding to consultation opportunities, there are other ways in which you can help shape the area in which you live.

## Neighbourhood Planning

Many of our communities are already in the process of preparing Neighbourhood Plans. We have produced a new Neighbourhood Planning e-newsletter including information about the process, relationship with *Our Plan: South Hams*, and the support available. Please visit [www.southhams.gov.uk/shneighbourhoodplans](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/shneighbourhoodplans) to view this e-newsletter. There is also lots of information on this page to look at if your community has not yet decided on whether to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, but you wish to find out more. You will also need to speak to your Town/Parish Council as the body responsible for the preparation of any neighbourhood plan.

## Land availability

It has been two years since we commenced this exercise to help identify available land that could provide new homes and employment sites. We asked landowners and others to tell us what land may potentially be available for development. Over 200 submissions were made at this time and others have been received during the two year period.

These sites were assessed and interim results of the Land Availability Assessment were published in the summer of 2015. You can view the site information in the Parish Information Packs by visiting [www.southhams.gov.uk/siteassessment](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/siteassessment). Additional sites that were submitted after this publication have been assessed and the results are also available via this link (but please note that these sites are not included on the site maps in the Parish Information Packs).

We are still looking to identify further land to ensure we have enough land to meet identified development needs of our communities. So, if there are other sites which have not been previously identified to the Council, or further extensions to existing ones, which are now available for development, we'd like to know more! We are particularly interested in sites within or close to settlements or sites that are well related to public transport routes, footpaths, cycleways and local facilities. It is important that development takes place in the right places with minimal impact on our environment. Please complete the response form and send this, with an OS based map clearly identifying the site.

The deadline for submitting sites is

**Monday 22 February 2016.**

**Please note, this is not an opportunity to re-submit or re-assess sites that were identified in the 2015 assessment.**

## 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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