

WEST DEVON

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

April 2015

NOTE

This framework has been written by West Devon Borough Council Officers to help guide green infrastructure development across the Borough. The framework places a particular focus on green infrastructure provision in relation to the development promoted through the West Devon Our Plan, which covers the period to 2031. The framework underwent informal consultation in December 2014/January 2015 with comments received from the following organisations: Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, Devon County Council, Devon Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Natural England, North Devon Biosphere Reserve, RSPB, Sustrans, Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit, Westcountry Rivers Trust and the Woodland Trust. The comments received have been taken account in this formal consultation draft.

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1

INTRODUCTION

This framework provides a strategic overview of the green infrastructure network in West Devon in order to guide further green infrastructure development to support the existing and growing population over the coming years.

The framework is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction - provides an introduction to the framework explaining what green infrastructure is, its benefits, why green infrastructure is important in West Devon and links to other plans.
- Chapter 2: Objectives and Themes - introduces the key objectives of the framework and the four themes which underpin it. A background to each theme is provided along with key issues and strategic aims and actions.
- Chapter 3: Green Infrastructure and Development - identifies green infrastructure opportunities in relation to proposed development in the Area Centres of Tavistock and Okehampton and the Local Centres of Bere Alston, Lifton, Hatherleigh and North Tawton.
- Chapter 4: Green Infrastructure Delivery - explains how green infrastructure across the borough is likely to be delivered and funded.

The framework is supported by several appendices:

- Appendix 1: Supporting Maps provides baseline maps related to each of the themes identified in Chapter 2 of the framework.
- Appendix 2: Green Infrastructure Checklist for Developers provides a checklist for developers to ensure they have met the Council's green infrastructure requirements.
- Appendix 3: Key delivery partners lists the delivery partners identified in relation to the strategic actions (Chapter 2).

1.1 What do we mean by Green Infrastructure?

Green infrastructure is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as: *"a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities"*.

Green infrastructure is equally important at local and strategic levels and in both an urban and rural context, providing important linkages between town and country. In urban areas and at a local level it includes the benefits provided by trees, green roofs and walls, gardens, parks, playing fields, cemeteries and allotments. In a rural context and at a strategic level it can include farmland, woodland and other natural features providing important ecosystem services such as flood protection, carbon storage and water purification.

Green infrastructure also includes water and wetland features including ponds, streams, rivers and estuaries, which are sometimes referred to as 'blue' infrastructure. Public rights of way and linear features such as rivers can provide important connecting corridors between green infrastructure assets for both people and wildlife.

1.2 Benefits of Green Infrastructure

"Our natural environment is essential to our wellbeing, and it can be better looked after than it has been. Habitats that have been degraded can be restored. Species that have been isolated can be reconnected. Green Belt land that has been depleted of diversity can be refilled by nature – and opened to people to experience it, to the benefit of body and soul."

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Ministerial Foreword of the National Planning Policy Framework

Green infrastructure has wide-ranging benefits including:

- Providing space and habitat for wildlife with access to nature for people.
- Helping us adapt to climate change through flood alleviation, cooling urban heat islands and provision of wildlife corridors to allow species migration.
- Providing places for outdoor relaxation and play.
- Creating space for local food production in allotments, orchards, gardens and through agriculture.
- Providing opportunities for environmental education and helping to reconnect people with the natural environment.
- Improving health and well-being by lowering stress levels and providing opportunities for exercise.
- Providing a catalyst for regeneration and stimulating employment opportunities by attracting investment and tourism.
- Fostering community spirit and providing a focus for community participation.
- Enhancing local sense of place.

1.3 Why is Green Infrastructure important for West Devon?

1.3.1 *Planning for Green Infrastructure*

It is widely recognised that planning for green infrastructure is as important as planning for grey infrastructure such as roads and new houses. Planning for green infrastructure helps to ensure that there is a coherent network of green and blue space for both people and wildlife, preventing further fragmentation and decline of habitats and species and ensuring a good quality of life for future generations. In terms of development, high quality green infrastructure can be thought of as enabling infrastructure; it is key to making development truly sustainable through the provision of multiple environmental, social and economic benefits for local communities.

The NPPF recognises the importance of planning for green infrastructure, stating that Local Planning Authorities should “*set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure*” (NPPF, paragraph 114).

This framework will provide an important evidence base for the emerging West Devon Strategic Plan, ‘Our Plan’, ensuring that the plan embraces the concept of green infrastructure and places it at the heart of decision making. Our Plan will include a specific policy on Green Infrastructure. The Green Infrastructure Framework will also help to inform Neighbourhood Plans, provide a basis for partnership working and provide supporting evidence for future funding bids.

1.3.2 *Local Context*

West Devon’s green infrastructure is of utmost importance to the borough. Much of the borough is within Dartmoor National Park and the beautiful landscape, rich heritage and wildlife provide it with a strong green infrastructure network which attracts numerous visitors and makes it a place where people want to live and work.

Although the borough is largely rural, development within the key towns will increase pressure on this green infrastructure resource. ‘Our Plan’ proposes an increase in housing numbers of 4,320 between 2011 and 2031, including 1,000 new homes in Okehampton and 950 new homes in Tavistock. In addition national declines in biodiversity, increases in health problems such as mental health and obesity and recent flooding attributed to climate change all provide a compelling case for protecting, managing, enhancing, linking and creating new green infrastructure assets.

Whilst some green infrastructure assets may have a primary function, e.g. amenity and recreation within local parks and biodiversity within designated wildlife sites, the focus will be on providing high quality green infrastructure which delivers multiple environmental, social and economic benefits.

1.3.3 *Neighbouring Green Infrastructure Strategies*

Green infrastructure does not recognise the boundaries between different planning authorities and cross boundary working and cooperation is therefore critical to ensure important strategic natural and recreational corridors are taken into account and the greatest possible gains are achieved.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the duty to cooperate requiring local authorities and other public sector bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis on strategic planning matters. West Devon Borough Council has signed up to a Devon-wide protocol which recognises the need to co-operate on a number of topics including green infrastructure.

A number of green infrastructure strategies have already been produced in the surrounding local authority areas. Devon County Council is currently preparing a Green Infrastructure Strategy to guide the planning and delivery of Devon’s green infrastructure to 2031. The draft strategy provides an analysis of Devon’s green infrastructure assets and sets out guiding principles and priorities for action. Cornwall Council adopted a Green Infrastructure Strategy in 2012 which sets a strategic framework for managing and enhancing the wider natural environment for the benefit of people, biodiversity and places and sets out how the Council want to guide and shape the planning and delivery of green infrastructure up to 2030.

Green Infrastructure Plans have also been developed for Plymouth City Council (2010), Mid Devon Council (2013), Torrington and North Devon District Councils (2014) and the 'Heart of Teignbridge' area (2011). Teignbridge District Council adopted an updated plan covering the rural areas of the District in 2014. South Hams is currently preparing a Green Infrastructure Framework which it intends to complete in 2015. Whilst Dartmoor National Park Authority has not produced its own Green Infrastructure Plan, this framework covers the area of Dartmoor National Park within the West Devon administrative area and there are several joint projects between the Dartmoor National Park Authority and neighbouring local planning authorities.

1.4 Relationship to Existing Directives and Plans

The relationship between this framework and other European, national, regional and local directives and plans is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Relationship of the West Devon Green Infrastructure Framework to European, National, Regional and Local Directives and Plans

European	European Habitats Directive				European Landscape Convention				Water Framework Directive								
National	National Planning Policy Framework				Natural Environment White Paper				Biodiversity 2020				Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act				
Regional	Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan	Dartmoor National Park Management Plan	Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan	North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Strategy and associated plans ¹	Devon Biodiversity Action Plan	Devon and Plymouth Local Nature Partnerships	Devon Minerals Plan	Devon Waste Plan	Devon Rights of Way Improvement Plan	Devon & Torbay Local Transport Plan	Heart of South West Local Enterprise Partnership	River Basin Management Plan: South West	Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum Management Plan	Tamar Catchment Plan	Draft Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy	Cornwall Green Infrastructure Strategy	Devon Health and Wellbeing Strategy
Local	Emerging West Devon Strategic Plan, 'Our Plan'	Dartmoor Local Plan	Neighbourhood Plans	West Devon Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study				Dartmoor Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study		West Devon Borough & Tamar Valley AONB Landscape Character Assessment		West Devon Strategic Flood Risk Assessment			Neighbouring Green Infrastructure Plans (Plymouth, South Hams, Teignbridge, Mid Devon, Torridge and North Devon)		
West Devon Green Infrastructure Framework																	

¹ Associated plans include: Biosphere Reserve Biodiversity Offsetting Pilot, Biosphere Reserve Woodland Policy Framework, Biosphere Reserve Biodiversity Action Plan, Biosphere Reserve Energy Strategy and Biosphere Reserve Catchment Action Plan.

1.5 What area does the framework cover and who is the framework for?

To acknowledge the important green infrastructure role of Dartmoor National Park, this framework covers the whole of the West Devon Borough Council administrative area, including that part under the planning control of the Dartmoor National Park Authority.

The framework is designed to be read by a wide-ranging audience including:

- Planning Officers making decisions on planning applications for new developments;
- Strategic planners involved in land allocation and future plans for the West Devon borough;
- Developers and their consultants involved in the design, construction and management of new development and associated green infrastructure;
- Local authorities and organisations involved in protecting and enhancing the natural environment, enhancing access, improving health and well-being of local residents, improving our resilience to climate change and providing local food growing opportunities;
- Local businesses, farmers and landowners operating in West Devon; and
- Local communities and neighbourhood planning groups involved in the planning and enhancement of their environment.

Green infrastructure delivery will involve actions by numerous organisations, authorities, landowners, farmers, local businesses, community groups and individuals.

Delivery can be funded through a wide variety of means including government funding, grants, conservation organisations, agri-environment schemes, private sector sponsorship/support and developer contributions. Further detail regarding delivery and funding can be found in Chapter 4.

2 OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

2.1 What are the objectives and themes of the framework?

2.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this framework are led by the three pillars of sustainable development: Environmental, Social and Economic.

The overarching objectives under each of the 'pillars' is set out below.

ENVIRONMENT: Enhancing Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage and Responding to Climate Change

To conserve, enhance and restore existing biodiversity, landscape and heritage assets; create new habitat of principal importance for nature conservation² (priority habitat) and improve connectivity between habitats, reducing their isolation. To promote the use of green infrastructure to help adapt to the existing and future effects of climate change through provision of urban shade, sustainable drainage, flood alleviation and space for local food production.

SOCIAL: Improving Access to Green and Blue Spaces and Supporting Healthy Lifestyles

To improve access to green and blue spaces and support healthy lifestyles through: the provision of new green and blue spaces; improved accessibility to existing green and blue spaces; and linking of green and blue spaces through provision of multi-use³ paths. The focus will be on areas deficient in existing green and blue space provision.

ECONOMIC: Attracting Economic Growth and Increasing Nature-Based Tourism

To promote the use of green infrastructure in place-making, ensuring that West Devon is a place which people want to live in, invest in and visit on holiday.

2.1.2 Themes

Four key themes have been identified as follows:

- Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage;
- Access, Health and Recreation;
- Sustainable Drainage, Flood Alleviation and Water Quality; and
- Local Food and Fuel.

An introduction to each of the four themes is presented in the sections below, providing justification regarding its inclusion in the framework, highlighting some of

² Habitats and species of principal importance are those listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

³ The term multi-use refers to routes available for all users including walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or buggies. Provision for multi-use will be preferred although it is acknowledged that this is unlikely to be possible in all instances.

the key existing assets and key issues in West Devon and presenting strategic aims and actions for each theme.

It is acknowledged that climate change is likely to play a key role across all of the four themes with potential impacts including:

- Habitat and species loss;
- Increased flooding; and
- Crop and tourism failure.

Education and understanding of green infrastructure is also important and is relevant across the four themes to increase awareness of the multiple benefits which green infrastructure can provide.

2.2 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage Theme

2.2.1 Vision

Restored, enhanced and connected habitats supporting resilient wildlife populations, allowing wildlife to adapt to climate change and other pressures and respecting the distinctive character, valued features and special qualities of landscape and heritage

2.2.2 Background

Biodiversity

West Devon has a high concentration of designated nature conservation sites, particularly within Dartmoor National Park and the Tamar Valley, as well as numerous habitats and species identified as being of principal importance for nature conservation⁴ (priority habitats and species). The northern part of the Borough is within the UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve⁵.

However there are increasing pressures on the biodiversity resource particularly through habitat loss and fragmentation (often from development), decline in habitat condition (through poor management practices), climate change and the effects of diffuse pollution. In addition increased pressure on biodiversity resources can result from existing, and likely increases⁶ in, recreational pressure.

Many designated sites and individual species are protected by legislation and/or planning policy, but in order to deliver enhancement and restoration of habitats, as well as improving connectivity between them, conservation efforts need to operate

⁴ Habitats and species of principal importance are those listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

⁵ A biosphere reserve is an area proposed by its residents, ratified by a national committee, and designated by UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) program, which demonstrates innovative approaches to living and working in harmony with nature. One of the primary objectives of MAB is to achieve a sustainable balance between the goals of conserving biological diversity, promoting economic development, and maintaining associated cultural values. Further details, including a map of the Biosphere Reserve area, can be found at <http://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/>

⁶ Increases in recreational pressure are likely due to population increases.

on a landscape-scale reflecting the Lawton Review principles of 'more, bigger, better and joined' wildlife sites. Where possible, conservation efforts should thus be within the already identified Strategic Nature Areas⁷ in order to create a strong network for biodiversity.

Biodiversity networks not only offer important habitats for wildlife but also provide a number of other benefits including pollination services, flood risk reduction and recreational opportunities, providing access to nature for people.

With regard to recreational pressure, development and accompanying green infrastructure should be located and designed so as not to add to existing damaging or disturbing recreational pressure.

Landscape and Heritage⁸

West Devon's landscape and rich heritage are of utmost importance. A large proportion of the Borough is covered by Dartmoor National Park and parts of the south-west of the Borough fall within the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In addition there are numerous designated landscape and heritage assets including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings. Undesignated assets also provide a valuable contribution to the landscape and heritage resource.

Current and future pressures on our landscape and heritage resource include pressure from new development, such as the loss of land and features to built development, cumulative landscape and visual impacts, and the implications of climate change.

Green infrastructure planning, design and management has the potential to safeguard locally distinctive landscapes and heritage features which contribute to the character and identity of a place. New green infrastructure networks in areas of change can also shape future character, setting and identity. In turn landscape character and heritage can add to the richness and diversity of green infrastructure networks, adding to their multi-functionality.

Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs) have been produced for West Devon and the Tamar Valley AONB and Dartmoor National Park. These provide an evidence base describing the character and distinctiveness of the landscape throughout the Borough and defining the special qualities and distinctive characteristics of each landscape type. The LCAs set objectives for the protection and management of valued qualities and characteristics as well as providing guidance for landscape change and enhancement. The LCAs provide an evidence base for the West Devon Our Plan and should be taken into account in the protection, management, enhancement, and creation of green infrastructure.

2.2.3 *Existing Designations and Green Infrastructure Assets*

- Western half of Dartmoor National Park, part of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS and part of Tamar Valley AONB.

⁷ The Strategic Nature Areas are groupings of existing wildlife sites which have been identified as priority areas for the management, restoration and expansion of habitats.

⁸ Covering both built heritage and archaeology

- Part of UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve and part of Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area.
- Part of Tamar Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).
- Part of four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), (including part of one Inshore SAC with a marine component) and part of a Special Protection Area (SPA) with a marine component.
- Whole of twenty-seven and part of four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) for biodiversity and geological conservation⁹.
- Two National Nature Reserves (NNRs), four Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and numerous County Wildlife Sites (CWSs), Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGSs), Other Sites of Wildlife Interest (OSWIs) and Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites (UWSs).
- River corridors including the Tamar and its tributaries, the Thrushel, the Lyd and the Lew; the Tavy and its tributary the Walkham; the West and East Dart, meeting at Dartmeet; the West and East Okement Rivers meeting in Okehampton; the River Taw; and the River Lew, a tributary of the Torridge.
- 2,408 hectares (ha) of ancient woodland (2.07% land cover compared with a Great Britain average of 2.4%).
- Large number of ancient, veteran and notable trees, approximately 500 of which are protected under Tree Preservation Orders.
- Two Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) Reserves
- Greater Horseshoe Bat maternity roost near the Tamar Trails Centre and associated sustenance zone (feeding area).
- Identified Strategic Nature Areas.
- 39 Conservation Areas, 6 Registered Parks and Gardens, 748 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, over 2000 Listed Buildings and numerous undesignated assets.

The following baseline maps can be found in Appendix 1:

- Biodiversity designations (statutory designated sites – MCZ, SACs, SPAs, SSSIs, NNRs and LNRs; non statutory designated sites – CWSs and OSWIs; and ancient woodland with Strategic Nature Areas overlain.
- Strategic Nature Areas by habitat type.
- Landscape and Heritage designations – World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings.

⁹ Fourteen of the SSSIs are designated for their geological interest, thirteen for their biological interest and four for mixed interest.

2.2.4 *Key Issues*

Key issues in relation to biodiversity, landscape and heritage have been identified as follows:

- Pressures of habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation particularly from intensive farming practices and lack of woodland management, and the resulting effects on associated species and landscape character.
- Pressure on biodiversity resource from existing, and likely increase in, recreational use.
- Hedgerow tree resource dominated by mature trees with shortage of younger replacements¹⁰.
- Few planning applications achieving a net gain for biodiversity.
- Effects of diffuse pollution on our watercourses.
- Predicted effects of climate change on habitats and species.
- Lack of up to date survey information regarding the condition of our CWSs and other non-SSSI habitat.
- Unfavourable condition status of some of our SSSIs.
- A number of heritage features listed on the English Heritage 'Heritage at Risk' register.
- Cumulative landscape impacts of many small scale changes affecting local landscape character and eroding special qualities and local distinctiveness.

2.2.5 *Related Projects*

Much work is already taking place in order to protect, conserve, enhance and restore the biodiversity, landscape and heritage resource in West Devon. Some examples of existing projects are provided below.

Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area

This project is working in partnership with landowners, farmers and the wider community to restore and recreate a wildlife-rich area across Northern Devon's unique and internationally important Torridge river catchment.

The project will:

- Restore internationally important habitats such as Culm grasslands, wetlands, neutral meadows, woodlands, hedgerows, rivers and streams;
- Use innovative land management techniques to re-create threatened

¹⁰ Countryside Survey 2007 (www.countrysidesurvey.org.uk) and Devon Hedgerow Surveys 2007-2009 (Hodgson C 2010. Devon Hedgerow Surveys 2007-2009. Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) cited in Devon Hedges, Devon Hedge Group 2014.

grasslands;

- Help to improve the management of watercourses;
- Restore stretches of river for the endangered freshwater pearl mussel;
- Stimulate the development of a local woodland economy;
- Engage with the local community through a diverse programme of events and activities

The project is a partnership project within the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The partnership consists of 16 organisations with Devon Wildlife Trust as the lead partner. In West Devon, the project covers an area of land to the north of Okehampton.

For more information see <http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/northern-devon-nature-improvement-area/> and <http://www.northerndevonnia.org/>

The first stage of this project comes to an end in March 2015. Devon Wildlife Trust is keen to continue the project to 2020 and beyond and funding to enable this is currently being sought.

Greater Horseshoe Bat Project

The Greater Horseshoe Bat project aims to ensure the long term resilience of Greater Horseshoe Bats through landowner advice and community engagement in the key feeding areas around the principle roosts.

In West Devon, this project covers the area around the maternity roost site near the Tamar Trails Centre.

The project has received Heritage Lottery Funding for a one-year development phase in 2014/2015. A second round application will be made for a five year delivery project ending in 2020.

For more information see <http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/greater-horseshoe-bat-project/>

Dartmoor Mires Project

This project is investigating the feasibility and effects of restoration of Dartmoor's blanket bog in order to conserve and enhance this crucial habitat:

- for upland wildlife;
- to improve water supply; and
- to increase the potential of blanket bog to store carbon and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

For more information see <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/lookingafter/laf-naturalenv/dartmoormiresproject>

Two Moors Threatened Butterfly Project

The Two Moors Threatened Butterfly project aims to reverse declines in the three threatened target species (Marsh Fritillary, High Brown Fritillary and the Heath Fritillary) by restoring and re-connecting areas of suitable habitat. The project works with farmers and landowners, providing management advice and support by sourcing funding for required management, and by organising practical work.

In West Devon, this includes the area of the Borough within Dartmoor National Park.

For more information see <http://butterfly-conservation.org/4497/The-TwoMoorsThreatenedButterflyProject.html>

Moor than Meets the Eye

This project seeks to conserve the unique historic landscape and natural habitats of Dartmoor, enhance access to the heritage landscape, increase community involvement, improve the ability of local people to share, celebrate and enjoy their local landscape, sustain a living and working landscape and support a well trained and coordinated volunteer workforce

In West Devon this includes the corridor between Two Bridges and Hangingstone Hill and land east to Chagford.

The project has obtained Heritage Lottery Funding until 2019.

For more information see <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/aboutus/landpartbid>

Helping Hands for Heritage

This project aims to expand the potential of volunteering in the Tamar Valley, and to work towards helping to protect and care for its remarkable natural and cultural heritage. This unique project will provide expert training for volunteers over a range of heritage topics, many of which have been identified to be at risk, across the entire Tamar Valley AONB and the Tavistock Area of the Cornwall & West Devon Mining Landscape WHS.

This project has Heritage Lottery Funding until May 2016.

For more information see <http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/projects/hh4h/>

The Catchment Based Approach (see details at section 2.4.5) also has biodiversity aims.

2.2.6 Strategic Aims and Actions

Strategic aims and actions have been developed to help address the key issues identified in the section above.

Aim				
Conserve, enhance and restore existing biodiversity assets; create new habitat of principal importance for nature conservation ¹¹ (priority habitat) and improve connectivity between habitats reducing their isolation ¹² . The aim of any green infrastructure provision will be net biodiversity gain.				
Action		Key Partner(s)¹³	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits¹⁴
BLH1	Promote land management for biodiversity through schemes such as Countryside Stewardship ¹⁵ .	NE, FC , WT, DWT, WRT, ND Biosphere Reserve, TVAONB, DNPA	Existing organisational budgets	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH2	Manage existing, restore degraded and create new habitats with a focus on habitats of principal importance ¹¹ (priority habitats), including arable field margins; hedgerows; traditional orchards; species-rich grassland; woodland; intertidal habitats; purple moor grass and rush pasture (culm grassland); rivers; and those habitats which support species of principal importance (priority species).	NE, FC, WT, DWT, EA, WRT, ND Biosphere Reserve, WDBC, DNPA, landowners/land managers , developers	Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes, grants, developer contributions	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH3	Promote the connection, enhancement and extension of Culm and moorland habitats in order to store, filter and regulate water.	NE, DNPA, DWT, SWW , landowners/land managers	Countryside Stewardship previous schemes, grants	SDFAWQ

¹¹ Habitats and species of principal importance are those listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

¹² These actions will help to provide a coherent and resilient ecological network capable of responding to the challenges of climate change.

¹³ The lead partner(s) is highlighted in bold.

¹⁴ AHR = Access, Health & Recreation theme, SDFAWQ = Sustainable Drainage, Flood Alleviation and Water Quality theme, LFF = Local Food and Fuel theme

¹⁵ Countryside Stewardship will replace Environmental Stewardship in 2016 bringing together Environmental Stewardship and the English Woodland Grant Scheme. It aims to deliver multiple benefits for landscape, heritage, biodiversity, flood risk, soil and water quality, carbon storage and on-farm education.

BLH4	Support protection of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW), sensitive restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), Creation of new woodland (especially to buffer and extend existing ancient woodland and other semi-natural habitats) and planting of young hedgerow trees.	NE, FC , WT , DNPA landowners/land managers, developers	Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes, Woodland Trust MOREwoods scheme and free Community and School planting packs, developer contributions	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH5	Support biodiversity enhancements and biodiversity offsetting in relation to development ¹⁷ within Strategic Nature Areas	NE , DWT, DBRC, TVAONB, WDBC , ND Biosphere Reserve, developers, landowners/land managers	Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes, grants, developer contributions	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH6	Support work to bring Special Site of Scientific Interest units in unfavourable condition ¹⁶ into favourable condition.	NE , landowners/land managers	Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH7	Support work to conserve and enhance marine life within the Tamar Estuary Sites Marine Conservation Zone.	NE , DWT, TVAONB, TECF, WRT	Existing organisational budgets	SDFAWQ
BLH8	Ensure development proposals consider biodiversity at an early stage and achieve net biodiversity gain by following the mitigation hierarchy of avoid, mitigate, compensate, enhance and using biodiversity offsetting to deliver compensation and enhancement where appropriate ¹⁷ . Ensure all built development provides enhancements for wildlife via soft landscaping which prioritises native species and provides food, shelter and nest sites for a range of	WDBC , DCC , DNPA , NE, RSPB, developers , management companies	Existing organisational budgets, planning conditions	SDFAWQ LFF

¹⁶ Of the 31 SSSIs which fall wholly or partly within West Devon, nine have units which are recorded as 'unfavourable recovering', four have units recorded as 'unfavourable declining' and one has a unit which is recorded as 'partially destroyed'.

¹⁷ More information on biodiversity offsetting can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/biodiversity-offsetting>. Biodiversity offsetting in relation to development will not be appropriate in all cases and is not supported for designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European sites. Early discussions with Council officers and Natural England will be necessary to agree any offsetting proposals.

	species and integral nests sites for swifts (which are also suitable for house sparrows, starlings and roosting bats) at a minimum of one per residential unit (or suitable business unit). Ensure green spaces provided on development sites, and managed by management companies, are managed for biodiversity e.g. wildflower meadows, trees/hedges, ponds, hibernacula etc.			
BLH9	Develop a programme for re-surveying CWSs across West Devon and encourage landowners to follow recommendations made to conserve and enhance these sites.	WDBC, DNPA, DCC, DBRC, DWT, TVAONB, landowners/land managers	Grants	SDFAWQ LFF
BLH10	Manage roadside verges for biodiversity ¹⁸	DCC	Existing organisational budgets, grants	SDFAWQ
BLH11	Manage council-owned/managed green spaces for biodiversity e.g. wildflower meadows, trees/hedges, ponds, hibernacula etc.	WDBC, town and parish Councils	Existing organisational budgets, grants, developer contributions	AHR SDFAWQ LFF
BLH12	Ensure that biodiversity benefits when planning, creating and managing new multifunctional green spaces. The aim will be to provide enhancement for wildlife.	Developers, WDBC	Developer contributions	AHR SDFAWQ LFF
BLH13	Enable local people to gain greater information and understanding about how they can contribute to local biodiversity improvements through use of the Devon Community Toolkit for the Natural Environment ¹⁹ .	WDBC, DCC , DNPA, town and parish councils	Existing organisational budgets	SDFAWQ LFF

¹⁸ Guidance has been provide by Plantlife at www.plantlife.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/guidelines

¹⁹ www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/biodiversity/communitywildlifetoolkit.htm

Aim				
Conserve, enhance and restore existing landscape and heritage assets and acknowledge the important role which landscape and heritage has to play in green infrastructure networks				
Action		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ¹⁴
BLH14	Support the conservation, enhancement and restoration of landscape and historic environment features as part of multifunctional green infrastructure networks, with a priority on those features most at risk.	WDBC, DCC, NE, EH , TVAONB, WHS Partnership, landowners/land managers, developers	Existing organisational budgets, grants, developer contributions	AHR SDFAWQ LFF
BLH15	Ensure landscape and heritage is considered when planning, creating and managing new multifunctional green spaces using the Landscape Character Assessments as an evidence base.	WDBC, developers	Developer contributions	AHR SDFAWQ LFF

2.3 Access, Health and Recreation Theme

2.3.1 Vision

Healthy people enjoying better quality of life and improved wellbeing through sustainable access to, and enjoyment of, their natural environment and heritage.

2.3.2 Background

Recreational Paths and Sustainable Transport Links

The network of cycling, walking and riding trails is an important component of West Devon's green infrastructure providing access to green and blue spaces, commuter and recreational routes and potential wildlife corridors.

There are several National Cycle Network (NCN) routes which run through West Devon. Despite its name these routes are not just for cyclists and are available to other users including walkers and people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and buggies. Some sections are also open for horse-riders.

- NCN 27 runs south-north from Plymouth, through West Devon and on to Ilfracombe; this route is also known as the Devon Coast to Coast route. The section from Plymouth to Tavistock is known locally as Drake's Trail and the section from Lydford to Okehampton is known locally as the Granite Way. The promoted Velodyssy²⁰ and Tour de Manche²¹ cycling routes linking Devon with France both use this route. There are proposals to extend the off-road sections of NCN27 from Meeth to Hatherleigh.
- NCN 272 runs from Ivybridge in the South Hams to the south of Yelverton where it joins with NCN 274.
- NCN 274 runs through Dartmoor, starting south of Yelverton and finishing at Peter Tavy, where it links with NCN 27.
- NCN 270 forms an alternative loop off NCN 27 through Tavistock.
- NCN 327 runs from Tavistock in West Devon to Launceston in Cornwall (via Chillaton and Lifton) and beyond; it links to NCN27 to the north-east of Tavistock.
- NCN 279 – runs from Okehampton in West Devon to Exeter. The Tour de Manche uses this route.

²⁰ The Veoldyssy cycle route runs through Devon from Plymouth to Ilfracombe. In France it runs from Brittany down the Atlantic coast to the border of Spain.

²¹ The Tour de Manche cycle route links up Brittany and Normandy to Dorset and Devon. In Devon the route runs from Plymouth to Okehampton and on to Dorset via Exeter.

There are plans for NCN 28 which will run from Okehampton to Plymouth via Moretonhampstead, Newton Abbot, Totnes and Salcombe. NCN 28 is currently open and signed between Totnes and Yealmpton via Salcombe.

There are also numerous regionally promoted walking and/or multi-use routes either wholly within, or which pass through, the Borough including:

- Devonshire Heartland Way which runs from Okehampton to the village of Stoke Canon, just north of Exeter and links with the Tarka Trail at North Tawton and the Two Moors Way at Down St Mary.
- Tamar Valley Discovery Trail which runs from Plymouth to Launceston/Lifton and links with the Two Castles Trail at Launceston.
- Part of the Tarka Trail in the north of the Borough. This joins to the Taw-Teign Link at Sticklepath, the Ruby Way at Hatherleigh and coincides with the Dartmoor Way south-east of Okehampton. Between Okehampton and Hatherleigh the Tarka Trail coincides, or follows a very similar route to, NCN 27.
- Taw-Teign Link which links the Tarka Trail at Sticklepath and the Two Moors Way at Chagford and coincides with the Dartmoor Way.
- Two Castles Trail which runs from Okehampton to Launceston in Cornwall, it coincides with the West Devon Way and Dartmoor Way at the eastern end and links with the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail at Launceston.
- Two Moors Way long distance walking route from Ivybridge on the southern edge of Dartmoor to Lynmouth on the north coast of Exmoor. It passes through West Devon close to the eastern boundary, linking to the Taw-Teign Link at Chagford and coinciding with the Dartmoor Way.
- West Devon Way which runs between Okehampton and Plymouth, passing through Tavistock . It coincides with the Two Castles Trail at the northern end and with the Dartmoor Way between Okehampton and Tavistock.
- Pegasus Way which runs from Thorndon Cross, west of Okehampton to Venndown with plans to extend the route to Cookworthy Forest in Cornwall along the route of the old railway line; the section from Halwill Junction to Cookworthy Forest is open.
- Ruby Way which runs from Hatherleigh in West Devon to Holsworthy. It links to the Tarka Trail at Hatherleigh.
- The western part of the Dartmoor Way a circular route around Dartmoor. This route coincides with many of the other regionally promoted routes.

The Tamar Trails, near Gulworthy celebrate the Tamar Valley's mining heritage through a 25km network of trails and paths.

Devon County Council has assessed the density of paths within Devon (including Public Rights of Way, Permissive Paths and Unsurfaced Unclassified County Roads) in order

to identify parishes with the lowest density of paths²². The following parishes within West Devon fall into the category of having the 20% lowest density of paths in Devon: Dartmoor Forest, Dunterton, Gidleigh, Gulworthy, Inwardleigh, Jacobstowe, Lands common to the parishes of Bridstowe and Sourton, Lifton, Meeth, Milton Abbot, Monkokehampton, Sampford Courtenay and Thrushelton.

There are opportunities to improve connectivity, particularly linking towns/villages and new development sites to significant recreational areas and green and blue spaces. Provision of a good network of paths can help to reduce the need to travel by car and also encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

Access to Green Space, including Woodland

Natural England has developed the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). The standard suggests that people should have an accessible natural green space of:

- at least 500 ha in size no more than 10km from home;
- at least 100 ha in size no more than 5km from home;
- at least 20 ha in size no more than 2km from home;
- at least 2ha in size no more than 300m from home; and
- one hectare of statutory LNR per thousand people.

Most of the accessible land in West Devon is within Dartmoor National Park which covers a large part of the Borough and includes sites such as Burrator, Fernworthy and Meldon reservoirs. Other accessible land includes:

- Other 'open access' land²³ mapped under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Devon Wildlife Trust Reserve at Meeth Quarry;
- Accessible woodland²⁴ including Lydford Forest and Lydford Gorge, Abbeyford Wood at Okehampton and the Tavistock Woodland Estate;
- Tamar Valley Trails within the Tamar Valley AONB; and
- South West Lakes Trust sites at Lopwell Dam (also a LNR and SSSI) and the easternmost part of Roadford Lake.

Devon County Council undertook analysis of accessibility to 500ha, 100ha and 20ha sites as part of the work for their Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy. For West Devon this showed that there are some areas of deficiency in access to 500ha sites within 10km, 100ha sites within 5km and 20ha sites within 2km, particularly in the west and north of the Borough. However the main towns of Okehampton and Tavistock do not show any deficiency in natural accessible greenspace areas of these sizes.

²² It should be noted that the assessment did not consider the quality or accessibility of the paths.

²³ Most of the open access land in West Devon is within Dartmoor National Park.

²⁴ Further details of accessible woodland can be found at <http://visitwoods.org.uk/>

Time constraints have meant that it has not been able to assess the provision of 2ha sites within 300m.

West Devon has 0.90ha of LNR per thousand people²⁵ and thus falls just below the recommended Natural England standard.

In addition to areas of natural green space there are also a number of more formal parks in West Devon, including Simmons Park in Okehampton and The Meadows in Tavistock.

The Woodland Trust has developed the Woodland Access Standard (WAS^t). The standard recommends:

- that no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size; and
- there should be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km round trip) of people's homes.

Table 2 shows the results of applying this standard to West Devon, with comparisons to Devon and the South West region. It shows that in West Devon residents have below average access to the smaller 'neighbourhood' woodland areas compared to the South West as a whole. This presents an opportunity to improve accessibility to woodland through new tree planting and opening up existing woodlands that are not accessible to the general public.

Table 2: Application of WAS^t to West Devon area

Accessible Woodland	West Devon	Devon	All South West
% population with access to 2 ha+ woodland within 500m	11.6 %	8.7 %	14.5 %
% population with access to 20 ha+ woodland within 4km	77.3 %	64.2 %	66.4 %

In order to address deficiencies in accessible natural green space, including accessible woodland, West Devon Borough Council will promote the provision of new green space as part of new development. Where possible, efforts will be focussed in areas with poor access to natural green space and woodland. Research shows that green space and woodland can provide benefits for air quality, urban heat island cooling, physical exercise provision and relief from mental illness.

²⁵ Based on 48.17 ha of LNR and the 2011 census population for West Devon of 53,553.

Sports and Play

A variety of sports and play facilities are available across the borough, with a wider range within the Area Centres and larger settlements. Sports facilities include pitches for football, rugby, hockey and cricket, tennis courts and bowling greens. Play facilities include Local Areas for Play (LAPs), Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs), Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs).

Detail regarding the setting of public space standards for West Devon, including justification, is provided in the West Devon Borough Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study. For those areas within Dartmoor National Park, standards are set in the Dartmoor National Park Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

2.3.3 *Existing Designations and Green Infrastructure Assets*

- NCN routes.
- Numerous regionally promoted trails and other access routes.
- Large areas of accessible land, including open access land mapped under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Existing network of greenspace, parks, gardens and allotments.
- Existing sports and play facilities.

The following baseline maps can be found in Appendix 1:

- Access routes: NCN and Regionally Promoted Trails.
- Areas deficient in Accessible Natural Greenspace.

2.3.4 *Key Issues*

Key issues in relation to access, health and recreation have been identified as follows:

- Thirteen parishes have been identified as having very low density of paths and there is an opportunity to improve sustainable transport and recreational access routes across the borough, including through the enhancement of existing access routes.
- A number of permissive path agreements have lapsed.
- A number of open access opportunities provided for through former countryside stewardship schemes and latterly environmental stewardship will disappear as agreements expire.
- Access is not an element supported by Countryside Stewardship, Defra's New Environmental Land Management Scheme.
- Some of the borough does not meet the Natural England standards relating to Accessible Natural Greenspace (see maps in Appendix 1).

2.3.5 *Related Projects*

Examples of existing projects related to health, access and recreation provided below.

Granite and Gears

The Granite and Gears project is working to improve access to Dartmoor, encouraging people to visit for longer and make repeat visits in the future.

In West Devon the projects, some of which are already complete, include:

- Providing a multi-use route linking Princetown to Drake's Trail and on to Plymouth.
- Developing Postbridge Visitor Centre as a cycling hub.
- Developing a cycling hub at Princetown.
- Linking of new development to the east of Okehampton to the Granite Way.
- Completion of the Granite Way linking Okehampton with Lydford and the National Trust site at Lydford Gorge (provision of section between Southerly to Bridestowe).
- Improvements to the Pegasus Way providing a link between the Granite Way and Cookworthy Forest.
- Signage and interpretation to link Granite Way to the Rattlebrook Railway trail onto the Moor.
- Providing a route from Tavistock to the Tamar Trails Centre.
- Improvements to Clearbrook Ramp to make Drake's Trail between Plymouth and Tavistock fully accessible to all cyclists and less able users.
- Signing a route between Okehampton in West Devon and Moretonhampstead in Teignbridge.
- Provision of an off-road route from Dousland through to the Drake's Trail, opening access to the local communities and the wider cycle network.
- Provision of Grenofen link to Drake's Trail.

For more information see www.devon.gov.uk/cycling-national-parks-application.htm

Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project

The Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project was set up to celebrate and tell the story of the Tamar Valley's rich mining heritage through a new network of trails and paths. The project has undertaken conservation work to a large area that contains mining remains and important wildlife habitats.

The new Tamar Trails take a journey along old transport systems such as canals, old mineral tramways and railways, and explore the mining history as well as stunning natural landscapes. Over 25km of trails for walkers, cyclists and horse riders have been provided.

The project is located in the heart of the World Heritage Site within the Devon side of the Tamar Valley AONB.

The Project was a partnership funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Objective 2, South West Regional Development Agency, Devon County Council, West Devon

Borough Council, Devon Rural Renaissance, South West Water, Tavistock Woodlands Estate and the Tamar Valley AONB. The £7 million project finished in 2013 with the opening of the Tamar Trails Centre.

For more information see <http://www.tamartrails.co.uk/>

The 'Moor than Meets the Eye' project (see details at section 2.2.5) also aims to enhance access to the heritage landscape of Dartmoor and there are other initiatives across the borough such as the walking for health project (see www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/).

2.3.6 Strategic Aims and Actions

Strategic aims and actions have been developed to help address the key issues identified in the section above. It should be noted that all proposals must take into account the character of the location (having regard to any existing management plan) and any existing biodiversity assets.

Aim				
Ensure there is a network of integrated recreational paths and connected sustainable transport links				
Actions		Key Partner(s)²⁶	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits²⁷
AHR1	Create new recreational and sustainable travel links between key settlements and destinations (including local green and blue spaces) to form a comprehensive network. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	DCC, DNPA , WDBC, Sustrans, town and parish councils, community groups, developers, landowners/land managers	Developer contributions, Grants	BLH
AHR2	Ensure creation of new recreational and sustainable travel links within and through new development sites. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC, DCC, DNPA, developers , landowners/land managers, management companies	Existing organisational budgets, planning conditions	BLH
AHR3	Carry out enhancements to, and improve promotion of, existing recreational and travel links.	DCC, DNPA , WDBC, Sustrans , TVAONB, town and parish councils, community and business groups, developers, landowners/land managers	Developer contributions, Grants	BLH
AHR4	Review status of permissive paths and try to negotiate continued access where agreements have lapsed and continued access is desirable e.g. the path is well used.	DCC, DNPA , WDBC, town and parish councils, landowners/land managers, community groups	Existing organisational budgets	-

²⁶ The lead partner(s) is highlighted in bold.

²⁷ BLH = Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage theme, SDFAWQ = Sustainable Drainage, Flood Alleviation and Water Quality theme, LFF = Local Food and Fuel theme

AHR5	Promote increased use of quiet lanes and roads through 'shared-use' signage where appropriate.	DCC	Existing organisational budgets, grants	-
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Aim				
Encourage greater responsible use of existing publically accessible green and blue spaces where appropriate				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ²⁷
AHR6	Improve promotion of green and blue spaces through a variety of means e.g. online and social media promotion, improved directional signage etc	DCC, DNPA, WDBC, TVAONB, landowning/land managing organisations	Existing organisational budgets, developer contributions, grants	-
AHR7	Provide new and/or improve existing interpretation within green and blue spaces.	DCC, DNPA, WDBC, TVAONB, town and parish councils, community groups, landowning/land managing organisations	Existing organisational budgets, developer contributions, grants	-
AHR8	Carry out physical improvements within green and blue spaces.	Landowning/land managing organisations , community groups	Existing organisational budgets, developer contributions, grants	BLH SDFAWQ LFF
AHR9	Carry out access improvements within green and blue spaces to make more spaces accessible to all.	Landowning/land managing organisations , community groups	Existing organisational budgets, developer contributions, grants	-
AHR10	Provide a WDBC webpage providing community groups with support and advice about managing green spaces	WDBC , TVAONB	Existing organisational budgets	BLH SDFAWQ LFF

Aim				
Promote the health value of green infrastructure				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits²⁷
AHR11	Support projects promoting the mental and physical health value of green infrastructure such as the Walking for Health ²⁸ and Helping Hands for Heritage ²⁹ projects and conservation volunteer groups	DCC (Public Health) , WDBC, OCRA, TVAONB, community groups and organisations	Existing organisational budgets	-

Aim				
Create more accessible natural greenspace and accessible woodland using Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) and the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard (WASSt) as aspirational targets				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits²⁷
AHR12	Ensure new accessible greenspace / accessible woodland provision as part of new development. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, seek off-site provision or a financial contribution towards new/enhanced local accessible greenspace / accessible woodland provision. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC, developers	Developer contributions	BLH SDFAWQ LFF
AHR13	Increase provision of accessible natural greenspace and accessible woodland through means other than development, focussing on areas with existing poor access. Ensure on-going	WDBC, WT, FC, ND Biosphere Reserve, landowners/land managers,	Grants	BLH SDFAWQ LFF

²⁸ Walking for Health is England's largest network of health walk schemes, helping people across the country lead a more active lifestyle. Local health walks run from Tavistock, Horrabridge and Okehampton.

²⁹ The Helping Hands for Heritage project, led by the Tamar Valley AONB, aims to expand the potential of volunteering in the Tamar Valley, and to work towards helping to protect and care for its remarkable natural and cultural heritage. See www.tamarvalley.org.uk/projects/hh4h/ for more details.

	management/maintenance taken into account.	town and parish councils, community groups		
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Aim				
Create new play spaces in accordance with the West Devon Borough Council standards and carry out enhancements to existing play spaces				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ²⁷
AHR14	Ensure new play provision (including natural play) as part of new development. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, seek off-site provision or a financial contribution towards new/enhanced local play provision. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC , town and parish councils, developers	Developer contributions	-
AHR15	Create new/enhance existing play provision (including natural play) through means other than development, focussing on areas with existing poor provision. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC, town and parish councils , landowning/land managing organisations, community groups	Grants	-

Aim				
Create new outdoor sports facilities in accordance with the West Devon Borough Council standards and carry out enhancements to existing facilities				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ²⁷
AHR16	Ensure new outdoor sports provision as part of new development. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, seek off-site provision or a financial contribution towards new/enhanced outdoor sports provision. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC , town and parish councils, developers	Developer contributions	-

AHR17	Create new/enhance existing outdoor sports provision through means other than development, focussing on areas with existing poor provision. Ensure on-going management/maintenance taken into account.	WDBC, town and parish councils , community groups	Grants	-
AHR18	Increase the provision of sports opportunities and sports events in green and blue spaces respecting their biodiversity, geodiversity, ecosystems and character.	WDBC, landowning/land managing organisations , developers	Grants, developer contributions	-

2.4 Sustainable Drainage, Flood Alleviation and Water Quality Theme

2.4.1 *Vision*

Healthy watercourses meeting their Water Framework Directive targets and sustainable drainage and flood alleviation schemes providing multiple benefits for flood alleviation, recreation and biodiversity.

2.4.2 *Background*

The terrain of West Devon is generally very hilly, and includes many small rivers originating on the granite plateau of Dartmoor. The Borough is characterised by a number of main rivers including:

- the Tamar (the western boundary of West Devon Borough) and its tributaries, the Thrushel, the Lyd and the Lew;
- the Tavy, and its tributary the Walkham;
- the West and East Dart, meeting at Dartmeet;
- the West and East Okement Rivers meeting in Okehampton;
- the River Taw; and
- the River Lew, a tributary of the Torridge.

Some areas of the borough are at risk of flooding from these fluvial flood sources and because many of the rivers in West Devon have very steep catchments they have a very fast response to rainfall, particularly at their upstream ends. In addition to the fluvial flood sources, there is a tidal flood risk on the tidal reaches of the Rivers Tamar and the Tavy. This affects the settlements of Bere Ferrers, Weir Quay and Morwellam Quay. Due to general increases in hard surfaces there are also risks of pluvial flooding where high intensity rainfall in urban areas runs quickly off roofs and paved areas resulting in road and other local drainage systems becoming overwhelmed. Further detail regarding specific areas at risk of flooding can be found within the North Devon, Tamar and South Devon Catchment Flood Management Plans³⁰.

Flooding is expected to worsen in the future with climate modelling undertaken by the UK Climate Impacts Programme suggesting that by 2080 the UK could experience more frequent winter flooding and storms and a rise in average sea levels.

Green infrastructure has an important role to play in climate change adaptation related to flooding. It can help to reduce the impact of flood events by creating natural sea defences and reducing surface-water run-off. In addition, well designed

³⁰ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/catchment-flood-management-plans#south-west-river-basin-district>

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) can provide multiple benefits for flood alleviation, biodiversity and recreation³¹.

Watercourses within West Devon are at risk of pollution, including run-off from roads and farmland. Green infrastructure can help to deliver water quality improvements which in turn will help us meet the Water Framework Directive targets which require all water bodies to achieve Good Ecological status by 2027. In particular creation of hedgerows, native broadleaved woodland and wetland in appropriate places³² has a key role to play in achieving water management, flood risk and water quality objectives. See details of the 'Working Wetlands' project in section 2.4.5 for an example of the benefits of wetland creation and restoration.

2.4.3 *Existing Designations and Green Infrastructure Assets*

- Existing waterbodies.
- Flood risk areas.
- Existing areas of woodland and wetland.
- West Devon Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Catchment Flood Management Plans.

The following baseline map can be found in Appendix 1:

- Flood risk areas.

2.4.4 *Key Issues*

Key issues in relation to sustainable drainage, flood alleviation and water quality have been identified as follows:

- Potential multiple benefits of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) often missed.
- Many areas at risk of fluvial and pluvial flooding.
- A number of water bodies not yet meeting an overall 'good' status under the Water Framework Directive.
- Diffuse pollution and excessive levels of sediment inputs to waterbodies.

2.4.5 *Related Projects*

Examples of existing projects related to sustainable drainage, flood alleviation and water quality are provided below.

³¹ A useful guide on SUDS is Graham *et al* in association with the RSPB and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (2012) Sustainable drainage systems - maximising the potential for people and wildlife – a guide for local authorities and developers, available at http://www.rspb.org.uk/images/SuDS_report_final_tcm9-338064.pdf.

³² Taking account of existing biodiversity, landscape and heritage constraints.

Catchment Based Approach

The Catchment Based Approach establishes catchment partnerships to work collaboratively with local stakeholders across all of England's 83 catchments. The aim is to deliver improved water quality and more ambitious River Basin Management Plans that contribute to meeting targets under the European Water Framework Directive.

The Tamar, North Devon and South Devon Catchment Partnerships all cover parts of the West Devon borough area.

The work of the catchment partnerships will build on previous work such as the:

- Taw River Improvement Project - which aimed to improve the health of the river ecosystem through targeted habitat management work, reducing the issues associated with diffuse pollution entering rivers and removing obstacles to fish migration such as weirs. For further information see www.devonwildlifetrust.org/the-taw-river-improvement-project/. This projects ends in March 2015 and in West Devon covered the corridor between, and to the east of, South Zeal – Bondleigh. Actions will be taken on by the North Devon Catchment Partnership.
- Tamar Catchment Plan - the Westcountry Rivers Trust led a pilot stakeholder-led 'ecosystem services' approach to river catchment planning. This identified areas within the Tamar catchment which play, or have the potential to play, a particularly important role in the delivery of clean water and a range of other benefits (services) to society. Information regarding the Tamar Catchment Plan can be found at <http://river-gateway.org.uk/catchments/tamar.html> Actions will be taken on by the Tamar Catchment Partnership.

Tamar Invasive Plant Project

The Tamar Invasive Plant Project was created specifically to control invasive plants in the Tamar river corridor. The partnership of four organisations, Tamar Valley AONB, Environment Agency, Natural England and Cornwall Council, uses contractors to identify the locations of invasive plants and then treat the worst infestations.

All giant hogweed sites and knotweed sites that are likely to have the most impact are treated. The main focus of the control work is on Giant hogweed which is vital to stop it spreading into Cornwall where it is virtually absent. Japanese knotweed is also treated where funds allow.

Further information can be found at www.tamarvalley.org.uk/projects/tamar-invasive-project/

Working Wetlands Project

Through the Working Wetlands project, Devon Wildlife Trust is helping to reverse the decline of Culm grassland by encouraging and supporting landowners to carry out targeted habitat management, creation and restoration projects.

In addition to its wildlife value, Culm grassland also serves a number of other very important functions in the landscape. One of these is the storage of water, and its gradual release back into the headwater streams over a longer period of time. A landscape rich in Culm has healthier, cleaner rivers, with less frequent floods and more constant flows during droughts. In a similar way, the water running off a Culm-rich landscape is generally cleaner, with fewer pollutants like phosphates and pesticides that come from more intensively farmed land. Devon Wildlife Trust is working with the University of Exeter and the Environment Agency on a detailed hydrology and water quality study on these impacts.

In West Devon, this project covers an area of land to the north-west of Okehampton.

Further information can be found at www.devonwildlifetrust.org/working-wetlands

The 'Dartmoor Mires' and 'Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area' projects in section 2.2.5 also both include water management objectives.

2.4.6 Strategic Aims and Actions

Strategic aims and actions have been developed to help address the key issues identified in the section above.

Aim				
Promote the use of green infrastructure to contribute to sustainable drainage, flood alleviation and improved water quality				
Actions		Key Partner(s) ³³	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ³⁴
SDFAWQ1	Promote the use of SUDS within development and ensure SUDS design provides biodiversity and recreational functions where possible.	WDBC, DCC, DNPA , EA, developers	Developer contributions, planning conditions	AHR BLH
SDFAWQ2	Promote the use of buffers between new developments and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity	WDBC, DCC, DNPA , EA, developers	Developer contributions, planning conditions	AHR BLH
SDFAWQ3	Encourage restoration of heavily modified watercourses (de-culverting, removing flow restrictions, channel restoration and bank side habitat enhancement and buffer zones) where consistent with other environmental objectives ³⁵ .	EA , SWW, WRT, WDBC , TVAONB, developers, landowners/land managers	Grants, developer contributions	BLH
SDFAWQ4	Improve water quality through the catchment management approach.	EA, SWW, WRT, TECF , TVAONB, landowning/land managing organisations, Catchment Partnerships	Existing organisational budgets, grants	BLH
SDFAWQ5	Ensure watercourses meet their Water Framework Directive targets.	EA, SWW, Catchment Partnerships	Grants, developer contributions, existing organisational budgets,	BLH

³³ The lead partner(s) is highlighted in bold.

³⁴ BLH = Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage theme, AHR = Access, Health and Recreation theme, LFF = Local Food and Fuel theme

³⁵ It should be noted that some designated heritage assets are modified watercourses and any restoration needs to take this into account.

			partnership work	
SDFAWQ6	Promote the creation of hedgerows, native broadleaved woodland and wetland in appropriate places to help address diffuse pollution (from fertiliser, pesticides and sediment), protect river morphology, moderate stream temperatures and alleviate downstream flooding.	EA , WRT, NE, FC, WT, ND Biosphere Reserve	Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes	BLH LFF
SDFAWQ7	Promote use of green infrastructure in flood defence solutions/flood risk management schemes ³⁶	EA , TECF, WDBC	Grants	AHR BLH LFF

³⁶ There is the possibility for future flood risk management schemes along the Tiddy Brook and River Tavy.

2.5 Local Food and Fuel Theme

2.5.1 *Vision*

A landscape providing opportunities for local food growing and sustainably managed hedgerows and woodlands providing local fuel sources and biodiversity enhancements.

2.5.2 *Background*

Farming is important in West Devon and the borough has a good local food resource with numerous local food producers and regular farmers markets in Tavistock and Okehampton.

Providing space for local food production such as orchards, allotments and community growing areas encourages people to lead more active and healthy lifestyles, helps to reduce carbon dioxide emissions associated with transporting food and supports the local economy.

The 1997 English Allotments Survey identifies a target allotment plot figure for Devon as a whole of 12 plots³⁷ per 1000 households, which equates to 0.36 ha/1000 households or 0.15 ha/1000 people. New allotments will be sought in relation to new development and in areas of high demand e.g. where there is a long waiting list for allotments.

A distinctive feature of the Devon landscape is the traditional orchard and virtually every farm used to have an area set aside for apple trees. Sadly 60% of England's orchards have disappeared since the 1950s and in Devon the figure is even higher at 90%. Orchards not only provide valuable community growing space but can also provide important wildlife habitat.

Use of local fuel sources, particularly woodfuel, can help to reduce our demand on non-renewable fuel sources providing a sustainable low-carbon alternative. It can also help to support the local economy by responding to increased market demand and sustaining skills and jobs in the forestry sector. In addition, sustainable harvesting of woodlands and hedgerows through practices such as coppicing can help improve their biodiversity value³⁸.

A study in 2008³⁹ identified that if 50% of all available woodland resources in West Devon were harvested for woodfuels, 18,119 tonnes of timber year on year would produce 75,000 MWh of energy. This figure does not include the hedgerow resource, and the report recognises that the figure is somewhat speculative, but it demonstrates that there is significant woodfuel potential in West Devon.

³⁷ Plot size of 30m x 10m.

³⁸ Retaining and enhancing biodiversity value must be a requirement of management for woodfuel in relation to aspects such as areas to be managed (and to be left uncut), cutting cycle frequency and timing.

³⁹ Devon Association for Renewable Energy (2008). West Devon Renewable Energy Potential Study.

Tavistock has become a focus for local food and fuel initiatives through its Transition Town status. The Tamar Valley is also a focus through Tamar Grow Local and the Tamar Valley Food Hub project (see section 2.5.5)

2.5.3 *Existing Designations and Green Infrastructure Assets*

- Allotment sites in Bere Alston, Bere Ferrers, Chagford, Drewsteignton, Hatherleigh, Horrabridge, Lamerton, Milton Abbot, Okehampton (3), Sticklepath and Tavistock (2).
- Traditional orchards.
- Farm shops, farmers markets and local food producers.
- Existing food and fuel initiatives e.g. Dartmoor Farmers Association, Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative, Transition Tavistock, Tamar Grow Local, Tamar Valley Food Hub etc.
- Hedgerows and Woodland.
- Forest Fuel head office at Okehampton and depots at Shebbear, Mid Devon and Newton Poppleford, Exeter.

The following baseline maps can be found in Appendix 1.

- Existing allotments and traditional orchards.

2.5.4 *Key Issues*

Key issues in relation to local food and fuel have been identified as follows:

- Long waiting lists for allotments in some areas.
- Loss and degradation of orchard areas.
- Distance food travels from producer to resale point.
- Limited use of woodfuel as an alternative to non-renewable fuel sources.
- Limited development and poor connectivity of the woodfuel supply chain.

2.5.5 *Related Projects*

Local food and fuel networks are already being developed in West Devon. Some examples of existing projects are provided below.

Cordiale project

Led by the Tamar Valley AONB team the Cordiale project, which ended in September 2013, included aims to:

- restore orchards and market gardens to the Tamar Valley landscape by re-establishing local supply chains; and
- secure the characteristic landscape of hedges and woods by creating a viable new market for wood fuel.

Outcomes of the project included:

- development of a woodfuel audit toolkit for farmers and other landowners to assess the amount of woodfuel that could be harvested from their woodlands and hedges.
- development of a toolkit for setting up a Community Supported Woodlands group.
- Support in setting up the Tamar Valley Food Hub project (see below)

For more information see www.tamarvalley.org.uk/projects/project-archive/cordiale/

Tamar Grow Local and Tamar Valley Food Hub

Tamar Grow Local is a 'not for profit' Community Interest Company (CIC) set up on co-operative principles for the benefit of the community promoting sustainable local produce in the Tamar Valley.

Tamar Grow Local has established food hubs in the Tamar Valley, designed to make buying local food easier for consumers and complementing the range of produce on offer at farmers markets in the area.

The Food Hubs are similar to a vegetable box scheme and online supermarket, based on a collection and home delivery system. The best seasonal Tamar Valley produce is provided and there are opportunities for customers to visit producers and take part in food related activities such as bee-keeping and orchard management

For more information see www.tamargrowlocal.org and www.tamarvalleyfoodhubs.org.uk

Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative

Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative was set up to unlock the potential of the small woodland resource available locally, reducing the transportation of bio-energy within the region and improving the biodiversity of the woods.

The key aims are to:

- Encourage local boiler installations and woodland owners to collaborate which will enable us to take the co-operative forward in promoting bio-mass and the environmental benefit.
- Reduce carbon emissions by using sustainably managed woodlands and improving their biodiversity.
- Develop public awareness of renewable energy and encourage eco-tourism around Dartmoor.

www.dartmoorwoodfuel.co.uk

2.5.6 Strategic Aims and Actions

Strategic aims and actions have been developed to help address the key issues identified in the section above.

Aim				
Create areas for local food production.				
Actions		Key Partner(s)⁴⁰	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits⁴¹
LFF1	Ensure allotment provision as part of new development in accordance with the West Devon Borough Council standards. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, seek off-site provision or a financial contribution towards new/enhanced allotment provision.	WDBC , town and parish councils, developers	Developer contributions	AHR
LFF2	Create new/enhance existing allotments and/or community planting areas through means other than development, focussing on areas with existing poor provision and demand for new areas.	WDBC, town and parish councils	Grants	AHR
LFF3	Protect existing orchards and encourage the restoration of old orchards and the planting of new orchard areas.	WDBC, DCC, DNPA, NE, developers, TVAONB, OrchardLink , landowners/land managers, Tavy and Tamar Apple Group, community groups	Existing organisational budgets, Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes, grants	BLH AHR SDFAWQ

⁴⁰ The lead partner(s) is highlighted in bold.

⁴¹ BLH = Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage scheme, AHR = Access, Health and Recreation scheme, SDFAWQ = Sustainable Drainage, Flood Alleviation and Water Quality theme

LFF4	Support projects promoting local food production such as Dartmoor Farmers Association ⁴² , Tamar Grow Local ⁴³ , Tamar Food Valley Hub ⁴⁴ , Okehampton Growing our Future ⁴⁵ and 'Home Grown Community Owned' projects listed at www.hogco-devonrcc.org.uk/index.asp?pageid=263845	Landowning/land managing organisations , Transition Tavistock, HogCO, TVAONB, community groups	Existing organisational budgets, grants	-
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Aim				
Support the development of a local woodfuel network.				
Actions		Key Partner(s)	Likely Delivery Mechanism(s)	Potential Cross Theme Benefits ⁴¹
LFF5	Work with local hedgerow and woodland owners to encourage sustainable harvesting ⁴⁶ for woodfuel and promote the development of Hedgerow/Woodland Management Plans which recognise both biodiversity and wood fuel potential	FC, WT, TVAONB, ND Biosphere Reserve , Transition Tavistock, WDBC, private woodfuel providers, woodland owners	Existing organisational budgets, Countryside Stewardship and previous schemes, grants	BLH

⁴² Dartmoor Farmers Association was set up in 2007 to promote sustainable farming practices and develop a holistic approach to finding a market for Dartmoor produce. Further information can be found at www.dartmoorfarmers.co.uk

⁴³ See information in section 2.5.5

⁴⁴ See information in section 2.5.5

⁴⁵ Growing our Future is an artist-led community garden project based primarily at Okehampton College in West Devon. It aims to involve people of all ages in finding solutions to the environmental challenges we are faced with – climate change, pollution, waste, food security and peak oil.

⁴⁶ Harvesting must be undertaken sensitively. It is vital that management of ancient woodland, long established plantations and coppice woodland for the production of wood fuel should be grounded in high standards of management for protection and enhancement of biodiversity. In ancient woodland it is important that plenty of dead wood remains, that veteran trees are protected and that coppicing is only undertaken after expert advice. Adherence to certification standards under the Forest Stewardship Scheme or UK Woodland Assurance Scheme helps to prevent inappropriate harvesting operations.

3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Green infrastructure opportunities in relation to the key development areas identified in Our Plan, based around the Main Towns of Tavistock and Okehampton and Local Centres of Bere Alston, Lifton, Hatherleigh and North Tawton, are set out below.

For each of the areas the key green infrastructure assets and deficiencies are identified before opportunities are presented. The opportunities identified provide a starting point for green infrastructure initiatives but it is envisaged that further opportunities may be brought forward through pre-application discussions and community consultation events. The general principles identified will also apply to development in other areas and a green infrastructure checklist for developers, to help ensure they have met the Council's green infrastructure requirements, can be found in Appendix 2.

It is important that green infrastructure provision for new development is sufficiently attractive (including in terms of location and size) to cater for the daily recreational needs of new residents.

3.1 Tavistock

3.1.1 *Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies*

Tavistock is the largest town in West Devon with a population of around 12,450 people (Patient and Practitioner Services Agency, 2012).

The town is largely contained within the valley of the River Tavy and is surrounded on all sides by a distinct and valued countryside. Dartmoor National Park to the east of the town and the Tamar Valley AONB to the south are both part of this landscape and form a dramatic backdrop to the town.

The local architectural and historic interest adds to the town's appeal as a popular tourist destination. The built environment is characteristic of its mining past and is celebrated as a key part of the West Devon and Cornwall Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.

Both the river Tavy and Tavistock canal run through the town. The West Devon Way, Dartmoor Way and NCN routes provide links from the town to the wider countryside.

Tavistock is defined as a Main Town in 'Our Plan' due to its important role in providing services and facilities for the surrounding area.

- **Main parks:** The Meadows (providing play facilities, teenage recreational areas, a fitness trail, bowling green, tennis courts and a large area of open space including attractive walks).
- **Allotments:** 2 allotment sites.
- **Sports:** Tavistock has a variety of outdoor sports facilities including rugby, football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens and a golf course.
- **Play:** Tavistock has a variety of equipped play facilities including a BMX and skate park at the Meadows.

- **Biodiversity:** Dartmoor National Park to the east and the Tamar Valley AONB to the south are both important areas for biodiversity, with many designated nature conservation sites. Within Tavistock, the Tavistock Viaduct Walk is designated as a Local Nature Reserve, Brook Mill Marsh, to the south of Tavistock College, is a County Wildlife Site and Whitchurch Down, to the east of the town, is an Other Site of Wildlife Interest. There are a number of European and nationally important sites in the wider area including: Whitchurch Down SSSI (c. 1km east), Grenofen Wood and West Down SSSI (c. 2km south), Merrivale SSSI (c.3km east) and Tamar-Tavy Estuary SSSI/Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC (c. 4km south-west) . There are many other locally designated wildlife sites (County Wildlife Sites, Other Sites of Wildlife Interest and Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites) particularly running close to the River Tavy and dismantled railway to the south of the town, the River Tamar to the east of the town and River Lumburn to the north-west of the town.
- **Geodiversity:** There are two Regionally Important Geological Sites within the town, Tavistock Railway Cutting, which covers some of the same area as the Tailstock Viaduct Walk Local Nature Reserve, and St John's Avenue Car Park. Pitts Cleave geological SSSI lies approximately 1km to the north-east.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** Dartmoor National Park to the east and the Tamar Valley AONB to the south are important protected landscapes with numerous heritage designations. The West Devon and Cornwall Mining Landscape World Heritage Site designation covers part of the town, as well as the Tavistock Canal, and the town also has a conservation area and over 150 listed buildings. Tavistock Abbey is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** No deficiencies for 500ha sites within 10km, 100ha sites within 5km or 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** NCN 27 passes through the town; this route runs from Plymouth to Ilfracombe and is known as the Devon Coast to Coast route with the section from Plymouth to Lydford locally known as Drake's Trail. NCN 270 also provides an alternative route avoiding the town centre and linking to NCN 27. The West Devon Way passes through Tavistock on its route from Plymouth to Okehampton and the Dartmoor Way coincides with the West Devon Way north of Tavistock and also continues to the east, forming a circular route. There other Public Rights of Way in the surrounding countryside, particularly around Whitchurch Down.

3.1.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

The West Devon Borough Council Core Strategy (2011) identified areas of land to the south and south-west of Tavistock to be developed for a mixture of 750 new homes, employment units, open space and other facilities that are needed by the community. The proposal included plans to re-open the railway line between Tavistock and Bere Alston.

A South and South-West of Tavistock Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in April 2013 to provide guidance for the development of this area. This

includes guidance on the provision of green infrastructure (in particular sections 5.26 – 5.30, 6b, 6c, 6h, 6p and 6r).

Outline planning permission was granted in September 2014 (subject to the signing of the section 106 agreement) for 'a mixed use development comprising up to 750 dwellings, a primary school site, a local convenience store, railway station related development and associated infrastructure; including detailed drawings for a new vehicular and pedestrian access from the A390' on the south-west allocation area.

Further 'reserved matters' applications providing more detail will be considered in due course; the development is expected to be delivered in four phases over the next fifteen years.

Devon County Council has an aspiration to re-open the railway line between Tavistock and Bere Alston and provide associated multi-use trails in the surrounding area. The opportunity to provide multi-use trails in this area is welcomed to promote access to the surrounding countryside, which is part of the Tamar Valley AONB and Cornwall and West Devon Mining WHS, and provide associated health and wellbeing benefits. In developing the proposals it will be important to protect biodiversity and geodiversity interests from increased recreational impacts.

With regard to the reinstatement of the railway line from Tavistock to Bere Alston, it has been noted previously that there are a number of locally designated biodiversity sites along this route. Whilst suitable mitigation and/or compensation will be sought, it should be recognised that the nature of this corridor will be significantly altered by the provision of the railway.

In addition to the allocations to the south and south-west of Tavistock, Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 200 homes within the town.

It is suggested that any development proposed in Tavistock should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷. Provision of green infrastructure for development in Tavistock must be sufficiently effective to avoid increases in existing recreational pressure on the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC⁴⁸:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to key strategic walking, cycling and multi-use routes, such as West Devon Way, Dartmoor Way, NCN 27 and NCN 270 to enable access to the wider countryside. New linkages should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.

⁴⁷ Major development proposals are minerals/waste developments; schemes for dwellings where 10 or more dwellings are proposed or the site size is 0.5ha or more; schemes with 1000m² floorspace or more; sites of 1ha or more.

⁴⁸ Public access/disturbance is listed as a pressure/threat on the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuary Site Improvement Plan available at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6283453993582592>

- Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in the town such as the Meadows and Whitchurch Down. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Enhancement of access to, and understanding of the West Devon and Cornwall Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.
- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland and linear features such as the River Tavy, the Tavistock Canal, the dismantled railway etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.
- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.
- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and orchards.

3.2 Okehampton

3.2.1 Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies

Okehampton is the second largest market town in West Devon with a population of around 7,600 people (Patient and Practitioner Services Agency 2012). It is well located for easy access to the A30 strategic road network, connecting the town with the city of Exeter and the M5.

Okehampton lies on the northern boundary of Dartmoor National Park, and as such is an important gateway to the moor. The town's setting is heavily influenced by this green and expansive landscape and there are many walking and cycling routes linking the town to the surrounding moors and countryside.

The West and East Okement rivers run through the town, merging to form the River Okement to the north of the town centre.

Okehampton is defined as a Main Town in 'Our Plan' due to its important role in providing services and facilities for the surrounding area.

- **Parks:** Simmons Park (a Grade II Registered Park and Garden) providing toddler and youth play areas, recreational space and attractive walks, sports pitches, putting green and gardens.
- **Allotments:** 3 allotment sites.
- **Sports Facilities:** Okehampton has a variety of outdoor sports facilities including rugby, football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens, a golf course and a centrally located Sports Pavilion in Simmons Park.
- **Play:** Okehampton has a variety of equipped play facilities including a BMX track and skate park.
- **Biodiversity:** Dartmoor National Park to the south is an important area for biodiversity, with many designated nature conservation sites including North Dartmoor SSSI, part of the Dartmoor SAC. Old Town Park Local Nature Reserve and Okehampton Park Flush SSSI close to Okehampton Castle are the most significant designated sites close to the town centre. There are also areas of ancient woodland in close proximity to the town with Abbeyford Woods to the north the largest site. There are many other locally designated wildlife sites close to the town; in particular there is a cluster of designated sites in the area around the Granite Way and Okehampton Castle.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** Okehampton lies on the northern boundary of Dartmoor National Park, a protected landscape with numerous heritage designations. The town itself has a number of listed buildings, a registered park and garden (Simmons Park) and a conservation area. A Roman Fort to the north-east of the town and Okehampton Castle to the south-west of the town are both Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** No deficiencies for 500ha sites within 10km, 100ha sites within 5km or 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** NCN 27 passes through the town; this route runs from Plymouth to Ilfracombe and is known as the Devon Coast to Coast route with the section from Lydford to Okehampton locally known as the Granite Way. The West Devon Way ends in Okehampton and both the Dartmoor Way and the Two Castles Trail coincide with this route to the south west of Okehampton. The Dartmoor Way continues to the south-east of Okehampton to form a circular route and the West Devon Way joins the Tarka Trail which runs through the town. The Devonshire Heartland Way starts in Okehampton, linking with the Tarka Trail to the south-east of the town and again at North Tawton. There are other Public Rights of Way in the town and surrounding countryside.

3.2.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

The West Devon Borough Council Core Strategy (2011) identified two areas of land to the east of Okehampton for development. These two allocations sit either side of another allocation for employment around the Okehampton Business Centre.

The allocations include housing (900 dwellings), employment, community facilities, a road linking Exeter and Crediton Roads, a primary school, some small neighbourhood retailing and public open space. The development is also linked to the provision of a town centre access road.

An East of Okehampton Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in January 2014 to provide guidance for the development of this area. This includes guidance on the provision of green infrastructure (in particular sections 4.46 – 4.50, 4.67 – 4.70, 4.83 – 4.85, 4.99 – 4.102, 5a (footpaths and cycle ways), 5b, 5g and 5o).

An outline planning application is currently under consideration for 375 of the 900 homes, a primary school and a retail unit. The application proposes multi-functional green infrastructure through the middle of the development site, incorporating SUDS and natural play features, with an aspiration to create a strategic green infrastructure asset, Stockley Valley Park, throughout the allocation sites.

Jointly funded through the Granite and Gears project and section 106 funding from localised development, a new pedestrian access is being created across Fartherford Bridge completing an important safe pedestrian route from the new housing and industrial development into the town.

In addition to the allocations in the east of Okehampton, Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 100 homes within the town.

It is suggested that any development proposed in Okehampton should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to key strategic walking, cycling and multi-use routes such as West Devon Way, Dartmoor Way, Tarka Trail, Devonshire Heartland Way and NCN 27 to enable access to the wider countryside.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in and around the town such as Simmons Park and Abbeyford Woods (via NCN27 or the Tarka Trail). Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland and linear features such as the River Okement and its

tributaries, the A30, the dismantled railway etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.

- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.
- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and orchards.

3.3 Bere Alston

3.3.1 *Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies*

The village of Bere Alston lies in the Bere Peninsula, between the rivers Tamar and Tavy. The village's origins lie in the once thriving local mining industry and market gardening sector and the mining legacy has a strong influence on the area.

The village is situated within the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site lies to the west of the village.

There is a train service to Plymouth and plans to re-open the line to Tavistock.

Bere Alston is defined as a Local Centre in 'Our Plan'.

- **Parks, Sports and Play Facilities:** Bere Alston has a recreation ground, dog exercising field, bowling green (to the east of the village), and three play areas.
- **Allotments:** 1 allotment site.
- **Biodiversity:** The village lies within the Tamar Valley AONB which is an important area for biodiversity with many designated nature conservation sites. In the vicinity of Bere Alston, designated sites tend to be focussed around the Tamar and Tavy rivers which form important wildlife corridors. The River Tamar to the west and north of the village is designated as a SSSI

(Tamar-Tavy Estuary) and SAC (Plymouth Sound and Estuaries) and to the south-west is also designated as an SPA (Tamar Estuaries Complex). These designations also apply to the River Tavy downstream of Lopwell Dam.

- **Geodiversity:** Lockridge Mine, a geological SSSI, lies to the south-west of the village and there are a number of Regionally Important Geological Sites close to the River Tamar to the west of the village.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** Bere Alston lies within the Tamar Valley AONB, a protected landscape with numerous heritage features. There are two listed buildings and a conservation area covers part of the village. The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site lies to the west of the village.
- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** No deficiencies for 500ha sites within 10km or 100ha sites within 5km. Deficient in 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** The Tamar Valley Discovery Trail runs through the village; this trail runs from Tamerton Foliot to Launceston and includes a circular route around the Bere peninsula. There are other Public Rights of Way in the village and surrounding countryside.

3.3.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 50 homes within the village.

It is suggested that any development proposed in Bere Alston should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷. Provision of green infrastructure for development in Bere Alston must be sufficiently effective to avoid increases in existing recreational pressure on the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC and Tamar Estuaries Complex SPA⁴⁹:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail to enable access to the wider countryside. New linkages should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in and around the village such as the Recreation Ground. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.

⁴⁹ Public access/disturbance is listed as a pressure/threat on the Plymouth Sound and Tamar Estuary Site Improvement Plan available at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6283453993582592>

- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland, streams etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.
- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.
- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and/or orchards.

3.4 Lifton

3.4.1 *Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies*

Lifton is a village in the west of the Borough about four miles east of Launceston. The River Thrushel and River Lyd run to the east and south of the village respectively, prior to the confluence of the River Lyd with the River Tamar.

The village is close to the A30 providing good access to the national trunk road network.

Lifton is defined as a Local Centre in 'Our Plan'.

- **Parks, Sports and Play Facilities:** Lifton has a large recreation ground to the south-east of the village and two play areas.
- **Allotments:** None.
- **Biodiversity:** There are a number of ancient woodland sites in the countryside surrounding the site, including Lifton Wood immediately to the south of the village. There is an 'Other Site of Wildlife Interest', Tinhay New Bridge, on the eastern edge of the village between Lifton and Tinhay. Tinhay Pond and Lifton Wood are also designated as OSWISs. There is a cluster of Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites around the River Lyd to the south of the village and this area also contains a variety of priority habitats.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** There are a number of listed buildings and a conservation area covers part of the village.

- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** Deficient in 500ha sites within 10km, 100ha sites within 5km and 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** The Two Castles Way runs through the village; this trail runs from Launceston to Okehampton. There are other Public Rights of Way in the village and surrounding countryside.

3.4.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 100 homes within the village.

It is suggested that development proposed in Lifton should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to the Two Castles Way to enable access to the wider countryside. New linkages should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in and around the village such as the Recreation Ground. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland, the Rivers Thrushel and Lyd etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.
- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.

- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and/or orchards.

3.5 Hatherleigh

3.5.1 *Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies*

Hatherleigh is a small market town in the north of the Borough. The market is an iconic part of the town's identity and makes a valuable contribution to the town's character and local community life, as well as attracting a wide range of visitors. It should be noted that the cattle market is expected to cease operation in the near future. However, outline planning permission has been granted for the mixed use redevelopment of the site to include a new pannier market facility.

Hatherleigh has a variety of open spaces, including the valuable recreational space of Hatherleigh Moor to the east of the town. Both the Tarka Trail and NCN27 run through the town and the River Lew is also an important feature.

Hatherleigh is defined as a Local Centre in 'Our Plan'.

- **Parks, Sports and Play Facilities:** Hatherleigh has a playing field with football pitches and tennis courts, a bowling green, a cricket ground and a variety of equipped play areas. The main park is Island Park which has a play park, skate ramp, picnic area and riverside walk.
- **Allotments:** 1 allotment site approximately 1 mile from the town centre.
- **Biodiversity:** The majority of Hatherleigh Moor is designated as an 'Unconfirmed Wildlife Site' with areas in the south-west and north-east designated as County Wildlife Sites due to the presence of culm grassland. There are a number of locally designated sites in the wider area.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** There are over 60 listed buildings and a conservation area covers part of the town.
- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** Majority of town deficient in 500ha sites within 10km. Not deficient in 100ha sites within 5km or 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** Both the Tarka Trail and NCN 27 run through the town. There are other Public Rights of Way in the town and surrounding countryside.

3.5.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

Outline approval has been granted at the market site for 'mixed use development including 106 residential units, retail and employment together with new public realm including a Market Square with associated pavilion, play space, hard and soft landscaping, community allotments, means of access, public and private car parking, and associated Infrastructure'. A 'reserved matters' application providing further detail will be considered in due course.

Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 50 homes within the town.

The Hatherleigh Community Plan was adopted in April 2013. The aspirations within the plan have been taken into account when considering the green infrastructure opportunities in relation to development listed below.

It is suggested that development proposed in Hatherleigh should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to key strategic walking, cycling and multi-use routes such as the Tarka Trail and NCN27 to enable access to the wider countryside. The Community Plan identifies the need for more active promotion of the Tarka Trail and off road cycle paths. New linkages should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible. Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in and around the town such as Island Park, the playing fields to the south of the town and Hatherleigh Moor. Improved access to the River Lew, linking the town centre and market area, is also desirable noting that this will need to balance the benefits for public enjoyment with the need to protect the river corridor for wildlife. The Community Plan identifies an opportunity to work with landowners to increase accessibility of riverside walks, including alongside the market area. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland and linear features such as the River Lew etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.
- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries. The Community Plan identifies that wildflower planting using native species of local provenance is desirable.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.

- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and/or orchards (the creation of more allotments to enhance community spirit and encourage local food production and composting is listed as an aim in the Community Plan).

3.6 North Tawton

3.6.1 *Description of the Area – Key Green Infrastructure Assets and Deficiencies*

North Tawton is a small market town in the north-east of the Borough. The town takes its name from the River Taw which runs to the west of the town.

North Tawton is defined as a Local Centre in 'Our Plan'.

- **Parks, Sports and Play Facilities:** North Tawton has two playing fields, a cricket pitch and the North Tawton Memorial Park which includes play equipment and picnic tables.
- **Allotments:** None.
- **Biodiversity:** There are few designated nature conservation sites in the immediate vicinity of the town.
- **Landscape and Heritage:** There are a number of listed buildings and a conservation area covers part of the town. There are three scheduled ancient monuments within the town and another, a roman fort, lies to the south of the town
- **Accessible Natural Greenspace:** Not deficient in 500ha sites within 10km. Deficient in 100ha sites within 5km and 20ha sites within 2km. 2ha sites within 300m not assessed.
- **Access:** The Devonshire Heartland Way runs through the town; this route runs from Okehampton to Stoke Canon. The Tarka Trail runs to the west of the town close to the River Taw and coincides with the Devonshire Heartland Way to the north-west of the town. There are other Public Rights of Way in the town and surrounding countryside.

3.6.2 *Opportunities in relation to development*

A hybrid planning application, part full, part outline has been approved for '61 residential dwellings with associated roads, footways, parking, landscaping, drainage and open space and allotments (Full); and 0.876 ha of land for employment use and medical centre (Outline).

A 'reserved matters' application providing further detail for the employment use and medical centre will be considered in due course.

Our Plan identifies a requirement for an additional 60 homes within the town.

It is suggested that development proposed in North Tawton should consider the following green infrastructure opportunities, taking into account the character of the local area and existing green infrastructure assets. It is acknowledged that some of the opportunities listed below may be more relevant for major development proposals⁴⁷:

- Provision of linkages to the local Public Rights of Way and cycle network as well as linkages to key strategic routes such as the Devonshire Heartland Way and Tarka Trail to enable access to the wider countryside. New linkages should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of routes within the development to allow access to play areas and greenspaces. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Provision of open spaces, sports and recreation facilities in line with the West Devon Borough Council standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.
- Provision of routes linking the development to key existing greenspaces and recreational facilities in and around the town such as the Memorial Park and playing fields. Routes should provide access for as many users as possible.
- Retention and enhancement of wildlife habitat and corridors provided by hedgerows, woodland and linear features such as the River Taw etc with a focus of habitats of principal importance.
- Planting of native and locally occurring species (of native provenance), including trees, and pollinator friendly amenity habitat to provide local ecological benefits and air quality improvements.
- Maximising biodiversity value of new greenspaces, footpaths and cycleways to provide linked greenspaces e.g. through the planting of new native hedgerows alongside new footpaths, cycleways and new development boundaries.
- Incorporating provision for bats and birds within built structures or retained trees.
- Provision of sustainable urban drainage systems which provide multiple benefits for amenity, wildlife and drainage.
- Provision of buffers between development and watercourses to manage flood risk, geomorphology, water quality and biodiversity.
- Provision of local food growing opportunities through allotments, community growing areas and/or orchards.

4 DELIVERING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1 Delivery

The successful delivery of green infrastructure across the borough will be dependent on coordinated, targeted activity and strong working relationships with many partners including the local community. It will require cross-boundary working and multi-agency co-operation.

Successful delivery also requires the key objectives and strategic aims to be embedded into a wide variety of Council agendas and strategies as well as partner initiatives and existing work programmes.

Delivery can be achieved in a wide variety of ways and it is expected that different bodies will take the lead on different actions. Any individual, group or organisation that is responsible for, or benefits from, green infrastructure assets has a role to play in its protection, management, enhancement, and creation. This includes the Council; neighbouring local authorities; parish or town Councils; charitable trusts and the voluntary sector; local community groups, organisations and agencies responsible for green infrastructure assets; and individuals businesses and organisations that own, manage or develop land. A list of key delivery partners is provided in Appendix 3.

The Council has an important role to play in green infrastructure planning and delivery with its broad environmental, social and economic responsibilities. The Council will lead on securing green infrastructure delivery in relation to development in conjunction with other planning consultees such as Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The Council also recognises the increasing importance of community involvement in greenspace management, particularly in light of cuts to council budgets. The Council will provide support to community groups wishing to manage and enhance their local greenspaces.

4.2 Funding

The green infrastructure approach provides opportunities to add value to existing programmes, making optimum use of existing budgets and resources to achieve multifunctional outcomes. Much can be achieved with existing resources including invaluable support from volunteers.

Additional resources will be sought through a number of key mechanisms, including developer contributions, external funding and grant schemes, and community resources.

A key issue for green infrastructure relates to funding for ongoing management and maintenance. The capital costs of creating or enhancing green infrastructure is often relatively inexpensive, especially compared to other forms of infrastructure. However, on-going management and maintenance is required to ensure that green infrastructure continues to provide the intended benefits in perpetuity, and there can be a substantial cost associated with this. It is therefore important that on-going management and maintenance of green infrastructure is considered from the outset. On-going management and maintenance of green infrastructure provision in relation

to new development will be secured through planning obligations (s106 agreements) and/or Community infrastructure Levy (CIL).

4.2.1 *Development management*

There will be significant opportunities to deliver green infrastructure through developer contributions (s106 agreements and/or CIL). Green infrastructure can help to create truly sustainable developments and the creation of multi-functional green infrastructure assets through development will be encouraged e.g. sustainable drainage systems which deliver solutions for drainage, biodiversity, landscape and recreation.

Specific policies for Open Space, Sport and Recreation and Green Infrastructure are included in 'Our Plan' and the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study sets out standards for the provision of playing pitches and outdoor sport; children's play; allotments; and accessible natural greenspace in relation to new development. Where possible facilities should be provided on-site but where on-site provision is not appropriate off-site provision or a financial contribution will be sought.

Through the local validation list and pre-application discussions, applicants are required to consider green infrastructure opportunities and constraints at the very start of project design. A green infrastructure checklist for developers, to help make sure they meet the Council's green infrastructure requirements, is provided in Appendix 2.

4.2.2 *Neighbourhood planning*

This framework will help to inform neighbourhood plans across the borough, helping them to identify existing green infrastructure assets within their plan area as well as opportunities to strengthen the green infrastructure network.

4.2.3 *External funding and grant schemes*

This framework provides a supporting framework to access external funding sources. Embedding the key green infrastructure objectives and strategic aims into other relevant plans and strategies will give confidence to funding bodies. The strategy also provides an agreed framework to influence the targeting of existing funding streams.