A Community Action Plan for
Barnstaple
2006 to 2016

Moving Forward Together

Devon County Council
North Devon District Council
Moving Forward Together
A Community Action Plan for Barnstaple 2006 to 2016

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Photographs courtesy of Faye Webber, North Devon Gazette and North Devon College.
Barnstaple is a great place to live and work – that’s what 88% of local people who responded told us in the “Our Town” survey undertaken in March 2005. People are proud of their town and particularly value its easy access to the coast and countryside, the relative safety, peace and quiet of the area and the friendly people.

Barnstaple has seen major changes over the last 10 -15 years and residents want to see the town continue to grow, but at a rate that keeps pace with improving public services and infrastructure. They want the environment protected by using as much brown field space as possible to support development and by maintaining and improving the town’s green spaces.

To make the town an even better place to live, residents identified four top priorities where they want to see action to:

• improve traffic flows and reduce congestion
• improve support and facilities for children and young people and their families
• address crime and anti-social behaviour to make Barnstaple even safer
• improve access to affordable housing.

The Barnstaple Alliance is a partnership of all interests in the town – led by the Town, District and County Councils. It aims to improve quality of life for residents and visitors and all those who do business or work here. It includes anyone who wants to play their part in building on past successes and equipping the town for the future. It recognises that many people have to deal with ill health, frailty or disability; others may not have had a very good educational experience or might find life hard due to lack of work opportunity or low income.

This Action Plan brings together a range of opinions, facts, projects and aspirations to establish, for the first time, a wide-ranging plan for the future of the town. It will change and develop, it is not fixed or perfect but it offers a focus around which we can work together to promote the identity of the town and support its progress into the future. Together with similar plans from other “Local Community Alliances” across North Devon, it will feed into the Local Strategic Partnership (North Devon Community Alliance) and inform the new North Devon Community Strategy. This will ensure that all public, business and voluntary organisations are informed about Barnstaple’s needs and that the views of residents are heard.

There are many other plans and strategies that have an impact on Barnstaple – prepared by county, regional and national bodies. This action plan will help to ensure that they also take full note of the views of local people and will provide a stronger basis from which we can argue for additional resources and other support.

Plans such as this are never complete, as the world is ever changing. Equally we have not been waiting to complete the plan before taking action. Since the Our Town campaign in March 2005 much has already been achieved in relation to the priority areas:

• work on the Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge, is well under way
• new services for children are being planned through extensions to Children’s Centre provision
• plans are well advanced for a skate park
• new Police Community Support Officers have begun work in the town
• a number of neighbourhood projects have begun to address needs in local areas and to promote regeneration
• begun to address needs in local areas and to promote regeneration.

In addition to which many other smaller actions have been taken to resolve local issues such as hedge trimming and waste removal.

The town faces many challenges as we look to the future but we believe that we are in a strong position to move forward together. We hope that this plan will provide a focus for that work. It is organised into four sections. Section one sets the scene and explains how the plan has been prepared. Section two focuses on each of the neighbourhoods of the town and examines their strengths and needs. However, many issues are not specific to one neighbourhood and section three takes a more thematic approach, considering issues that are relevant across the town. The final section then pulls this together into an action plan – identifying the priorities that will inform our work over the next ten years.

This is a plan for everyone and we hope that the whole town will join with us to ensure the success and prosperity of Barnstaple well into the future.
Section 1

Our vision ................................................................. Page 11
Background ............................................................ Page 12
Images of Barnstaple .................................................. Page 14
Artists Impression ...................................................... Page 15

Section 2

People and communities ................................................ Page 19
Key development sites in Barnstaple ................................ Page 21
Diagram of key development sites ..................................... Page 23
Forches ................................................................. Page 25
Newport ............................................................... Page 29
Pilton ................................................................. Page 33
Longbridge ............................................................. Page 35
Town Centre .......................................................... Page 37
Whiddon Valley ....................................................... Page 39
Yeo Valley ............................................................. Page 41

Section 3

Traffic and travel .......................................................... Page 45
Children and young people ............................................ Page 51
Community safety ........................................................ Page 57
Housing ............................................................... Page 61
Heritage, culture, sport and leisure .................................... Page 65
Economy ............................................................... Page 67
Built and natural environment ......................................... Page 71
Lifelong learning ........................................................ Page 75
Promoting independence and equality of opportunity ............. Page 77

Section 4

Action Plan – A programme for delivery ................................ Page 83
Issues raised by neighbourhoods ....................................... Page 87
Thematic Action Plans .................................................. Page 89
Conclusion and next steps ............................................... Page 100

Appendices

1. Neighbourhood Actions .............................................. Page 103
2. References and Notes .................................................. Page 107
3. Feedback Form ........................................................ Page 109

Strategic documents from other agencies and organisations that work in or impact upon Barnstaple were consulted during the development of the Barnstaple Action Plan. A list of these documents can be found on page 00.
Setting the scene
Our vision

As part of this vision we will work hard to:

• Cherish the town’s heritage and traditions, building on past successes and helping it to adapt and be fit for the future – a learning town that is welcoming, prosperous, healthy, skilled, safe, caring and innovative
• Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the life of the town
• Address disadvantage and reduce health inequalities to give everyone the best chance of a fulfilled life
• Give every child the best start in life and ensure that the town is a wonderful place in which to grow up and have a family
• Recognise the role of the town as the sub-regional centre but emphasise the distinctive needs and qualities of our neighbourhoods
• Nurture the pride of residents in their town and their willingness to help their neighbours
• Cherish the quality and diversity of our cultural life and make the most of the skills and energy of residents and voluntary and community sectors
• Enhance the environment of the town and develop its role as a gateway to our wonderful coast and countryside
• Ensure that all parts of the town are accessible by a network of sustainable transport routes that link its communities to the town centre, meet the needs of frail and disabled people and enhance access to opportunities and service
• Encourage sensitive growth in the town, focusing on brown field sites where possible, supported by adequate services and infrastructure
• Support Fair Trade throughout the town
• Improve access to services and affordable housing
• Improve skills and knowledge and promote a successful economy.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The purpose of the Barnstaple Alliance is to improve quality of life by ensuring that the work of all agencies and groups has the needs of local people at their core, promoting and upholding the human rights of everybody, including asylum seekers, refugees, students and tourists.

The Alliance promotes equality under the law without discrimination based on: ethnic, racial or national background or origins; skin colour; nomadic lifestyle; gender or gender status; age; mental or physical disability or difference; sexual orientation or behaviour; partnership or family status; financial or employment status; political, personal or religious beliefs or opinions (so long as those beliefs or opinions are not in themselves incompatible with the rest of this paragraph); or any other unfair basis of discrimination.

The Alliance values the broad diversity of all the individuals and communities that enrich the town, past, present and into the future. It is committed to meeting the needs of individuals and their communities and celebrates the knowledge, perspective, expertise and enthusiasm they bring. It is working to ensure that all groups, particularly minority groups, are secure, respected, valued and equal members of the whole community of Barnstaple.
Background and context

Barnstaple plays a crucial role in the north of the county, as the area’s sub regional centre. Its wide range of business, cultural and community facilities reflect that role. Many neighbouring communities and parishes, whilst having their own identities, also see Barnstaple as their town.

The Barnstaple Alliance was formed in 2003 to bring together all those interested in the future of the town and to work with neighbouring communities to improve quality of life. It provides an opportunity for people to debate issues, to exercise leadership and to inform the decisions of key service providers and leaders of the town.

It brings together the commitment and expertise of elected councillors, professional bodies and business, community and faith organisations with the hopes, skills and energy of local people. It is one of many such partnerships across northern Devon, all of whom are developing action plans for their parish or town. Taken together, these plans form a key part of the Community Strategy for North Devon and also influence the Devon Community Strategy^{(4)}.

Between March and October 2005 the Our Town campaign was organised by the Barnstaple Alliance to gauge public opinion about priorities for the town. Views were also sought from all sectors of business, public services, voluntary groups and from the three Councils.

This action plan is designed to lead to practical action and change. Many of the actions are already under way and the plan will help partners to review what they are doing and to assess how they need to change. Some actions are easy to implement, others are more complex and will take time. Many improvements can result from the actions of residents themselves, acting on their own initiative. Everyone has a contribution to make to the town’s future success.

Barnstaple has been through a great deal of change and there is more to come. This should be to the benefit of the town but it is vital to ensure that residents are fully involved in shaping that change. The town has many challenges to face but has the experience, commitment and energy to address them. A great deal is already being achieved but the ideas and proposals contained in this document offer the chance of even greater impact and success.

The town is a major driver of economic prosperity in North Devon and is strategically important for employment and other services. It is the major retail centre, the base for key public services such as the District General Hospital and College of Further Education and is also the administrative centre of North Devon. However, the town is also home to approximately 25,000 people who live in local neighbourhoods with which they closely identify, who want and expect us to develop a town that suits their needs as well as those of the wider northern Devon community.

It is the main centre of economic activity in North Devon and has been the focus for a significant amount of development to the south of the town over the past 20 years. However it relies on a narrow base of growth sectors including manufacturing (principally food), distribution and real estate activity. Although Barnstaple’s working population is about 13,600, unemployment is relatively high at 5.1% against the Devon average of 3.9% (source: 2001 Census)^{(5)}. About one third of households have an annual income of less than £15,000 against the National average of £29,374 (source: CACI Wealth of the Nation 2004)^{(6)} and six areas of the town are ranked in the most deprived 25% nationally.^{(7)}

Over recent years communications with the rest of Devon have improved and technological advances offer new opportunities, especially through Broadband and digital technology. Road and rail links have developed but residents still feel they are inadequate. A balance has to continually be struck between making Barnstaple more accessible and promoting growth, whilst at the same time preserving its character and the peace and quiet that is so valued by local people.
The environment is a major driver of the economy in northern Devon. Residents particularly value access to the area’s significant environmental assets, including the coast and estuary, Exmoor, Tarka Trail and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and the wider benefits they bring to the community in terms of employment, leisure and education.

In the coming years, a range of important opportunities present themselves which we must grasp:

- The Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge will relieve traffic congestion across the town, providing opportunities for environmental enhancement and new sustainable transport measures including investment in walk ways, cycle routes and public transport
- The majority of previously developed land is within Barnstaple, offering opportunities for regeneration of the riverfront and extension of the retail base in the town centre
- North Devon’s largest share of new residential, employment and commercial growth will occur here, including a significant level of affordable housing provision
- The attractive built and natural environment should attract research, design and knowledge businesses, with links to the Biosphere Reserve and green technologies and potential for connection to an expanding Higher Education role for North Devon College
- The planned development of North Devon College and improved access to higher education locally will lead to better skills and learning opportunities and employment prospects
- The need to regenerate the most deprived areas of the town has been recognised by the Devon Strategic Partnership and the Local Area Agreement, helping to bring additional support to the town
- A number of redevelopment plans are well advanced, including the Strand and Square, various town centre sites and in the Forches area of the town
- Numerous other plans have been developed to address the needs of children and families, housing, culture, leisure and the arts, community safety and the economy. These strategies will be influenced by the contents of this plan and will help us to deliver on its ambitions.

Together we can continue to build a town that is successful today but looking to the future and continually seeking improvement for all of its residents.
Barnstaple old and new
Panoramic view as existing

Panoramic view showing new Downstream Bridge

Panoramic view showing new Downstream Bridge and possible Anchorwood Bank development
People and Communities
### People and Communities

#### Facts and figures

- Barnstaple’s population has grown by 17% over the last 13 years to just over 25,000 - that’s 5% faster than the rest of North Devon and more than the Devon average.
- Between 2001 and 2011 the population will increase by 20-25% to approximately 30,000. Those aged over 75 will rise by 10-15%, whilst the population of young people aged 0-14 is expected to remain broadly static.
- Nearly a third (2,904) of all households in Barnstaple are people living alone, of which almost a half (1,413) are lone pensioners.
- The black and minority ethnic community makes up just over 1% of the population.
- National statistics highlight, in particular, Forches and Whiddon Valley, Central Town and Yeo Valley as being in particular need of support as they fall within the top quartile of the Index of Deprivation.
- There are almost 800 lone parents with dependent children in the town with particularly high incidence in Forches and Whiddon Valley and Yeo Valley, highlighting the need for high quality family support services.
- Health outcomes vary enormously across the town but are worse in the neighbourhoods that feature in the index of deprivation. This reinforces the need for health promotion, advice and support in these communities.
- Claimant rates for Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance and Disability Living Allowance are well above average in Central Town, Yeo Valley and Forches and Whiddon Valley wards. This reflects poorer health outcomes and indicates the need for a wide range of support services.
- Nearly one in three adults in Barnstaple (4,600) has no formal qualification and many need a great deal of support with literacy and numeracy.

#### Strengths and opportunities

- The Our Town survey emphasised Barnstaple’s proud people and communities with 88% saying that they liked living here.
- There is strong identification with local neighborhoods and this should be supported, with every effort made to retain their individuality and community spirit.
- A vibrant and developing voluntary and community sector contributes much to the town.
- North Devon Voluntary Services (see overleaf) has recently formed, widening opportunities for volunteering and community action by enthusiastic and skilled local residents.
- There is a strong faith community – which wants to help to support our caring community.
- Many organisations, community groups and local businesses want to be involved in their communities to take action to improve quality of life and help to bring in investment.
- There are a wide range of community run sports and other clubs led by volunteers.
- Services such as schools are cherished by their communities and are a hub of community life.

Our Vision:
“An inclusive town where all those who live, work or visit here are valued and respected and where diversity is seen as a strength.”
Issues raised by local people

- Residents want to be more involved and consulted about the town and its future and want to see greater community spirit and better care and support Barnstaple’s citizens, especially those who are frail or disabled.

- A number of community and voluntary sector organisations have asked if it might be possible to look at ways of better integrating and sharing buildings and other facilities.

- People want to maintain the feel of the town as small and intimate whilst also benefiting from its growing range of opportunities – a tricky and delicate balance.

- A majority also want a better balance between economic development and the sense of community and culture, for example improving the evening economy whilst promoting a family friendly town centre.

- A key to the continued strengthening of the voluntary sector is the provision in Barnstaple of accessible, affordable premises, which could be used by a number of organisations.

As Barnstaple moves forward it will be essential that the public sector, businesses and the voluntary and community sector work constructively together to meet local needs, making the most of the initiative and energy of residents. Crucial to this is a strong voluntary and community sector. In the last few months North Devon Voluntary Services (NDVS) has been formed by joining together the North Devon Voluntary Action Forum and North Devon Volunteering Development Agency. NDVS operates from offices in the Castle Centre. Barnstaple residents can use the Volunteer Centre to access volunteering opportunities and support whilst voluntary organisations can get support from the Council for Voluntary Service.

In addition, a wide range of independent, local voluntary organisations operate in Barnstaple alongside National Charitable Organisations such as Age Concern and Addaction. Volunteering is a powerful force for change, both for those who volunteer and for the wider community. Volunteering can make a significant difference by building a sense of shared responsibility and bringing added value through diversity, increased local accountability, and by building strong and cohesive communities.

Development sites

The opening section of this report made reference to a range of development opportunities that will change the face of Barnstaple in the coming years, the most significant of which are briefly outlined overleaf. These are important not just for the individual improvements that they will bring but also because, taken together, they will improve the linkages between various parts of the town. They offer an opportunity for us to connect areas of the town that have, in the past, perhaps developed somewhat in isolation.

Neighbourhoods

These developments are followed by a reflection on the various neighbourhoods that combine to make up the character of Barnstaple, with an examination of their particular characteristics, needs and opportunities. This section is placed at the front of the report as we wish to emphasise the local, to remind the reader that the town is home to many and not just a service centre for the north of the county.
Key development sites in Barnstaple

Queen Street/Bear Street

This site is the next big opportunity to improve town centre shopping. The District Council has already adopted a development brief that sets out some key objectives, including:

- enhancing the town centre by adding a significant number of new retail units
- providing for a mix of housing
- retaining at least the present amount of short stay shoppers car parking, but in a much better facility
- strengthening pedestrian and cycle links
- enhancing the quality of the area.

The Council will shortly appoint a marketing agent and later this year will be interviewing potential developers.

Seven Brethren

This area is currently Barnstaple’s back door and looks like it! Once the Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge, is complete it will become the town’s front door. It therefore needs to be greatly improved. We are looking at developing a significant amount of improved shopping, leisure and health facilities in the area, and investigating a number of other exciting opportunities, which will emerge later this year.

Anchorwood Bank

The Development Strategy for this area sets out our requirements, including:

- about 400 dwellings including a large proportion of affordable housing
- more bulky non food shopping units
- new community facilities and open spaces
- improvements to the river frontage.

These are expected to come to fruition later this year as the new owners of Leaderflush and Shapland reveal their proposals for the site.

Mill Road area

Development of this area is likely to take a little longer to happen, but we have set out what should go there. This includes:

- new housing
- a new park and change facility for this side of the town
- protection of the recreation facilities in the area.
Cultural cluster

The opportunity to enhance what Barnstaple has to offer by way of cultural facilities is currently being looked at. The idea is to make better use of our theatre and museum facilities and to link them more effectively to one another and to the town's historic character. These plans will relate closely to those for The Square and the Queen Street/Bear Street area.

Putting it all together

All this adds up to some very exciting opportunities for the town over the next five years. It should become even more attractive to residents, shoppers and visitors and provide better job opportunities as a result. Barnstaple will then rank strongly as a sub-regional centre in Devon.
The place and its history

Forches estate lies to the east of Barnstaple. It was originally developed in 1948 and has a long and proud history. Many of its older residents have lived there all their lives and have seen a great deal of change. Some feel that the community is not as well looked after as it used to be and think that people should take greater care of their area.

The estate comprises of just over 650 properties, of which over one third are owned by North Devon Homes. The properties are a mixture of houses, flats and bungalows with the majority being rented. Traffic flow and high-density parking are problematic and there is concern that the roundabout provides the only vehicular entrance to and exit from the estate. Local worry that, should a major incident close this roundabout, people would neither be able to enter or leave the estate by vehicle.

A significant number of houses are of Pre-Reinforced Concrete (PRC). A major initiative (The Trinity & St Mary’s Urban Regeneration Project) led by North Devon Homes is now under way to redevelop these units, offering a tremendous opportunity to bring wider gains to the community in terms of regeneration and change. As well as replacing or refurbishing the 128 PRC properties on the estate by 2010, this project aims to remodel the delivery of key services to the estate to overcome issues of social and economic exclusion and support training, enterprise development and community cohesion.

There is a resident population of approximately 2,500 people with a mix of older people and families, including young families. It is a largely settled population, which means that there is a high level of identification with the neighbourhood and often a great deal of care for friends, family and neighbours.

Forches has significantly higher levels of social and economic disadvantage than almost all other wards within North Devon and this is reflected in high levels of family stress, low incomes and financial difficulty, poor health outcomes and low skill levels. Residents of this area are aware that Forches has a poor reputation across Barnstaple and feel that this is due in part to poor maintenance of the area, particularly the entrance to the estate. They feel that many skills are held within their community but that they are not effectively used.

Forches Cross Primary School is a key part of the community and is very committed to serving the local population. It recently had a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) built with the aim of this being used by local people outside school hours throughout the year.

Whilst well used, a lack of floodlighting limits evening and weekend use and a project team is currently trying to resolve this.
Forches Community Office provides a base from which community development workers operate, as well as being used as a drop-in advice centre for residents by organisations such as CAB and Credit Union. There are also plans for Police Community Support Officers and a North Devon Homes worker to use this office as a base.

The Link Centre is a community building on the estate used for youth activities, meetings and private parties. Some work on this centre is currently proposed to enable the space to be used for drop-in and counselling services.

A number of local shops are well used by residents.
### Strengths
- People look out for one another
- Access to wonderful countryside and beaches either along the cycle routes to the Tarka Trail or a short bus ride away
- St Mary’s/Trinity Regeneration Project
- North Devon Homes working with the community to shape its plans
- Community and Voluntary Transport schemes
- A well regarded primary school
- Good local facilities such as public house, family centre and local shops (Hairdressers, Fish and Chip Shop, Convenience Store/Post Office)
- On a bus route
- Play area – new MUGA
- Community Office
- Good access to public services eg: Police, CAB etc
- Good community spirit

### Weaknesses
- Poor and unreliable buses which either don’t turn up or can’t get through because of congestion
- Estate not built to cope with volume of cars owned by people living there and traffic and parking issues are significant
- Extra traffic to access the Post Office since Newport Post Office closure
- A minority of families on the estate perpetuate anti-social behaviour, bullying, vandalism, neighbour disputes etc
- Lack of facilities for 10+ yrs
- Housing in need of repair/replacement
- Allocation of housing is confusing and frustrating
- Economy of the estate dependant on benefits
- Roundabout access to the estate is poor, looks shabby and is in need of enhancement
- Grass verges are damaged by parking cars and can be dangerous and difficult to negotiate by pedestrians
- Fear of crime, especially among older people
- More needs to be done to combat vandalism
- Rubbish and waste disposal problematic
- Significant health issues
- Perceived lack of police presence
- Perceived poor street lighting
- High level of lone parents
- Poor drainage

### Opportunities
- Area might benefit from Police Community Support Officers
- School could become even more of a hub for the community, with access to adult education classes and outdoor space (including the MUGA) available for use by the community outside of school hours
- Outside space at Silver Hill could be utilised in the evenings
- Victoria House Children’s Centre provides a venue with crèche support.
- Money advice workers based at CAB could do more outreach work
- Housing improvement a major opportunity for regeneration
- NDDC Housing Strategy working with Registered Social Landlords
- Availability of skills/training
- Need recognised by main agencies, offering an opportunity for renewed focus on the needs of the community.

### Threats
- Lack of funding for continuation of projects
- If partners do not become sufficiently focused need will continue not to be met
- Lethargy of the community to get involved – important that local people also take control of their own destiny and work with agencies. This could be undermined by fear and suspicion
- Failure to address long-standing issues on the estate will mean that its unfortunate reputation will continue and vulnerable people will not enjoy the same opportunities as many others.
The place and its history

The centre of Newport is situated one mile from Barnstaple Town Centre. There are 3937 residents living in 1642 households of which the majority (76%) are owner-occupiers. Of the rented accommodation, 12% is privately rented, 10% rented from a Registered Social Landlord (11) and 2% rented from the Local Authority.

The area was originally an ancient Borough but is now part of the Barnstaple Town Council Area, having five Town Councillors and two North Devon District Councillors. Topographically, the area is higher above sea level than Barnstaple town centre and all the approach roads have, except from the east, varying gradients.

Housing

There are two distinct areas of housing, divided by the traffic lights at the junction of South Street, Hollowtree Road and Newport Road. To the eastern side of the traffic lights the housing was predominantly built after the 1930s, with a large amount of properties built after the Second World War. There have been large developments of new housing with the recent edition of 202 properties at the Fallowfield estate and 14 premier homes in Woodford Gardens. In general the properties are not built to a very high density and in most places there is adequate off road parking. A further development at the old St Joseph’s Convent site will add a further twenty-two houses and nine flats to the housing stock.

The older part of Newport is to the west of the traffic lights. On the northern side, the vast majority of properties were built in the nineteenth century and comprise long rows of terraced houses with very few having any practical rear entrances or provision of off road parking. On - street parking is a major problem. In recent years some of the larger properties have been converted into flats, exacerbating the problem. At the Rock Park end of Newport Road there is a terrace of Georgian properties of which seven are in multi - occupancy bringing many transient residents. Trafalgar Lawn can boast several examples of early Georgian Terraces.

Roads

The area suffers from congestion, which is severe at the rush hour periods. The major congestion points are the traffic lights and the narrowness of Newport Road. Further pressure points are parking in the area of the Newport Community Primary School and the Doctors Surgery on Landkey Road. Parking on South Street leads to congestion at the Newport Road, South Street lights. It is hoped that the new bypass will relieve some of this congestion.
Schools

There are two schools, Newport Primary and Park Community School. The primary school runs a
pre-school facility but the main school is now full. Park has had extensive improvements and
modernisation in recent years (although there are still some older temporary wooden buildings) and
now caters for some 1500 pupils. It is a high quality community school with a large multi games area
(MUGA) and an indoor sports hall – all of which have major use by the community outside school
hours. Both schools enjoy excellent reputations and are committed to their role in the community.

Churches

There are two well attended and active churches, both with church halls, which are well used but
do not particularly cater for young people.

Shops and services

The area is still served by a large selection of shops, a Spar, green grocer, off licence and a butcher
etc, although two units have closed in the last twelve months. There are two public houses, two
food takeaways, a restaurant and planning permission is being sought for another restaurant and
public house. Unfortunately the local Post Office was closed, which has adversely affected the trade
in the area, leading to the loss of a dry cleaners with the possibility of more closures.

Open space

Rock Park lies within Newport and is an excellent asset. It is in need of a major facelift, phase one will
take place in autumn 2006 with a new under twelve children’s play area and toilet block being
constructed. There is a lack of formal open space in the wider Newport area but there is a well used
children’s play area at Jordon Close. A further open space is at Convent Close, covering an area of
approximately one acre. There is no play equipment of any kind and although the field is well
grassed it is little used.

Industry

There are a number of service units in the area. Three car dealerships on Hollowtree Road, garages
and workshops on Howard Ave and the major retail stores, garden centre and petrol station on Rose
Lane. On Newport Road there is a tyre servicing outlet plus a filling station and a car dealership.

Community

Newport appears to suffer from a lack of a community focus, having no obvious community centre.
This perhaps gives a false impression. The shopping area is well used, contributing to a strong
feeling of community, which is helped by the large Doctors surgery, which fosters a caring society.
The church halls are very well used usually for the over 50’s interests. Many residents, especially
those who have lived there long-term have a strong identity with the area.
### Strengths
- Our wonderful estuarial position
- Community and Voluntary Transport Schemes
- Sense of history
- Good community facilities and open spaces

### Weaknesses
- Litter
- Traffic issues, parking, rat runs
- There is poor access for emergency vehicles throughout Newport especially at the Water Lane Estate
- Rock Park is an underused and under-resourced facility for the whole of Barnstaple
- Fear of youths congregating
- Houses in multiple occupation – issues of quality of accommodation, transient population and typically at higher risk of fire and accidents.

### Opportunities
- Better management of areas of open space - Tarka trail, Coney Gutt and the open ground at the end of Ladies Mile and the land at Poltmarsh Road.
- There is a need for a quiet, safe area for young people to hang out. Rock Park is currently used for this and there could be improvement especially for winter months
- Greater use of ‘brownfield -site’ areas and spaces above shops and other premises for housing
- The area deserves some first class architecture.

### Threats
- Area around Coney Gut and the Lynwoods/ Bensons Beds feeling unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Potential decline of shopping area following loss of post office
- Continuing traffic problems and parking issues reducing quality of life.
- Health analysis shows some significantly lower than average health outcomes.
The place and its history

Pilton & Bradiford are ancient communities within the town of Barnstaple with a distinct identity and considerable history in their own right. This is especially evident around the area surrounding the Church, Pilton St, the Rock, Under Minnow Road and down through Bradiford to the little bridge over Bradiford Water.

This area was subject to many flooding problems until a concerted community campaign led to a flood alleviation scheme being completed within the last couple of years. Rolle Quay was the scene of a busy port in days gone by and the yard for the Barnstaple to Lynton Railway was located on the RGB site where, as one walks along the footpath from Fairview Car Park to Rolle Street, evidence of the railway lines still exist.

A high percentage of households are owner/occupied and either detached or semi-detached. A smaller number are terraced properties and a minority of properties are flats. The average age of residents is 40 years and there is an above North Devon average of children under 16 years which suggests a high level of young families live in Pilton. (12)

In recent years the community has grown considerably, with new housing development on the eastern side (Greenmeadow Drive) and north eastern corner at Littabourne (Youings Drive and Waterboard Works site). More development will now take place on the RGB site off Rolle Street and several small infill schemes have also taken place.

Several major services are located in the neighbourhood, including the North Devon District Hospital, Police HQ and Fire Station. There are four schools and a major business park at Pottington. The new Barnstaple Western Bypass links the A361 road from Barnstaple to Braunton at Pottington to the A39 Barnstaple Bypass south of the River Taw. The influence of Pilton & Bradiford on the town of Barnstaple is significant.

Pilton Street is still a vibrant centre for the community, with a number of valuable and well-supported shops still operating. There was great disappointment when the Post Office was eventually closed by Post Office Ltd and it is still missed.

Pilton Festival is an established and popular event with the Pilton Green Man becoming well known – this is an ancient symbol of nature and fertility, frequently depicted in carvings in old churches as a face, sprouting foliage. A ritual is enacted at the Pilton Festival between the Green Man and the Prior of Benedictine Priory of Pilton (who lived at Bull House until the Reformation); and is believed to represent the initial antagonism of the two characters and the subsequent inclusion of the pagan figure within the Church.

During the Festival, Pilton Street becomes a blaze of colour and, looking down the street from the Church, heaves with people whilst the Church is superbly decorated with flowers. Pilton & Bradiford represents everything about Barnstaple which makes it such a superb place to live - from the ancient tradition and history of Barnstaple through to the £42 million investment by Devon County Council in the new Western Bypass. In answer to the question "where do you live?", people who live in Pilton & Bradiford are often heard to say, "in Pilton or Bradiford". This reflects their strong identity within the wider community of Barnstaple.
Strengths

- History and sense of community
- Many good local facilities
- A relatively healthy and wealthy population
- Green Man Festival
- Community and Voluntary Transport Schemes
- Good group of schools offering excellent education and community facilities.

Weaknesses

- Hospital car parking overflows into residential areas
- Closure of Post Office is having a detrimental effect on other businesses in Pilton St.

Opportunities

- Pilton Park redevelopment
- Need to consider one way traffic on the Rock and through Ladywell
- Development of RGB site
- Development of Pilton park with links across the river to the new housing development
- Potential development of child care and family support facilities through the Extended Schools programme

Threats

- Traffic and Transport concerns, especially when the Downstream bridge is complete.
The place and its history

Longbridge includes Sticklepath to Old Torrington Road and from Woodville through Roundswell and on to Philip Avenue. The ward straddles three parishes – Barnstaple town parish, Tawstock and the large parish of Fremington. The population is a mix of young and old.

Sticklepath terrace and the surrounding houses were built to support the railway toward the end of the 19th century. Other properties followed the line of the hill and spread back as far as the newer developments at Roundswell which were built in the 1990’s. There is a tremendous variation of housing in the Longbridge ward. There are terraced houses on Sticklepath Terrace and Sticklepath Hill, which now form a large number of bed-sits, right through to very large detached houses opposite Woodville estate.

Woodville was built in the post war years to house families that were living in cramped conditions and to respond to the population explosion that was taking place. The houses were initially built by what was then a more modern building technique of bolting prefabricated slabs together. The lifespan of these properties, initially owned by the local council and now by North Devon Homes, was supposed to be 20 years. Now, over 50 years later, North Devon Homes are renovating the properties to bring them up to a better standard.

The Sticklepath Hill area has been a popular place for building properties because of its tremendous views of the Taw. Indeed there is still development taking place today with the building of 24 flats along the end of Cleave Road. The area includes the former Shapland and Petter factory that has stood at the foot of the Long Bridge for more than a hundred years. This has changed hands over the years becoming Leaderflush and Shapland and now belongs to the Sheffield Insulation Group, having changed hands in mid 2005.

One of the main routes into the Town Centre runs through Sticklepath. The main road is well served by public transport but congestion is a major problem at peak traffic times. Great change is currently under way as part of the Western By – Pass, including the Downstream Bridge development and this will fundamentally affect the nature of the community with the opportunity for many improvements.

North Devon College is situated at the top of Sticklepath Hill, taking students from across North Devon and offering a high quality education that is nationally recognised. The College is one of the largest employers in North Devon and is currently planning a major investment programme to develop its estate to meet the current and future needs of the people, business and communities of North Devon.

Sticklepath is currently served by two churches and two pubs. There is a large primary school, which provides a vital resource for the community and is well supported, and a mixture of retail outlets ranging from the larger supermarkets on the retail parks to small local shops, hairdressers and vets. These serve both the local populous, visitors and the wider North Devon community. Sticklepath is the location of the only crematorium in North Devon. The Leisure and Tennis Centres sit close to the river supporting North Devon as a whole. There are playing fields at Ellerslie Road at the rear of Woodville, a small recreation ground behind Tudor Drive and a larger recreation ground behind Elizabeth Drive.

Longbridge is indeed a diverse area. It is steeped in history but also undergoing a great deal of modernisation and change. In many ways this characterises the nature of Barnstaple as a whole.
### SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths
- Strong history and sense of community
- Community spirit
- Includes many important public services and commercial areas
- An important employment area of the town.
- Well served by public transport
- A developing Resident’s Association
- Currently undergoing major change
- Balanced population with generally good health and other outcomes.

#### Weaknesses
- Traffic congestion a historic problem
- The closure of small food and other shops over the past 15 years
- The distance travelled to reach doctors or dentist surgeries
- Lack of open space play area in Roundswell
- College car parking outside residential properties
- Concerns from some sectors of the neighbourhood who feel isolated from the main centre of Town.

#### Opportunities
- Extended Schools Co-ordinator based at Sticklepath Primary School
- New children’s centre development
- New Bridge works alleviating traffic congestion
- Major developments in the area
- Development of North Devon College

#### Threats
- Effect of growth of North Devon College on local community and its proposed redevelopment if not well handled.
The place and its history

The Town Centre occupies level ground and houses a population of just under 5,000 people as well as being the main retail and administrative centre for the Northern Devon area. The area is highlighted as having significant needs and will be a focus for increased support in the coming years.

A high proportion of properties are multi-occupancy, bed-sits and flats, some very poorly maintained. There are a number of sheltered accommodation properties. Privately owned properties are, in the main, terraced with very little garden space. A high proportion of the population are either very young, (just moving into bed-sits or flats and living independently for the first time), vulnerable (living in sheltered accommodation) or quite elderly, having lived in the same property for many years.

A lack of off-road parking for residents is worsened by use of the available on-road parking by those working in, or using the town centre.

The town centre also serves as the main focus for the Northern Devon area’s nightlife. Residents, particularly elderly or vulnerable people are often disturbed by sudden noise late at night as pubs, clubs and entertainment venues close.

Brown field development has gradually reduced open space but the historic Castle Green remains next to the Town’s Library and the Strand draws people to the river’s edge and forms a scenic walkway from Town Centre to Rock Park. The opportunity to re-think the Strand area and better connect the town offers great improvement potential.

Queen Street medical centre, Vicarage Street health centre and a number of dentists are all located within walking distance of the Town Centre. There is a good selection of national chain stores and local independent high street retailers and a number of smaller food stores in the high street, supermarkets and major electrical chains having re-located to out of town sites. However, the Our Town survey revealed that people are still looking for greater diversity and higher quality of retail experience. Major redevelopments planned for the Town Centre offer further opportunities in this regard.

Yeo Valley Primary School serves children in the Town Centre area and is currently working with residents to seek to improve facilities. It is a vibrant and well supported community facility and it is hoped that it can further develop as a hub for wider activities in the coming years.

Community meeting space in the area includes the Old Town Station, the Citizens Advice/Devon & Cornwall Housing rooms as well as a variety of churches, which have small halls attached. A number of community and voluntary sector groups are located at the Castle Centre, providing a hub for community activity and many others have their offices in the central area.

The Civic Centre and Police Station provide a base for public administration, including the courts. The Civic Centre is in need of improvement and could offer a much better public service access point. The whole town centre is very accessible for disabled people.

Collection of waste and street cleaning is especially difficult in the narrow streets with parked cars throughout the area.
## Strengths
- Public support for ASBOs and dispersal orders
- Retail, restaurants and bars are central to the economy and offer wide choice
- Historic element of the town is an important part of the character of the town centre. Important to preserve and enhance this
- Hub of many community and voluntary groups and transport schemes
- CCTV Coverage
- Wide range of community facilities, including public services, retail, theatre and cultural opportunities
- “Licensees against night-time disorder” – helping to address crime and disorder

## Weaknesses
- Traffic congestion and parking problems for residents
- Inadequate Public Transport
- Need for more day-care places
- Lack of affordable housing
- High numbers of people with poor health outcomes, low qualifications
- High benefits dependency and unemployment
- Very high private rented accommodation with varying quality
- The Town Centre doesn’t have a single community identity
- Lack of open space in some areas
- Litter – especially at weekends
- Gum on streets – especially in the alleyway to the Queens Street Car Park
- Possible need for more shopping diversity and quality.

## Opportunities
- Need for better play provision for younger children - more play equipment needed, particularly in residential areas
- Are there empty properties (e.g. above shops) that could be improved and used for housing?
- The river is a dominant feature but we need to improve and make better use of the river environment for leisure
- Developments in the town centre – Queen St, Bear St, Strand and Square etc.
- Bypass should reduce traffic – must take advantage of the opportunity to re-think the way the town works.

## Threats
- Area that attracts the homeless and transient populations – often vulnerable and in need of major support
- Anti-social behaviour, especially at weekends
- Not dealing with issues of poor health outcomes, poor qualifications, poor housing and unemployment will lead to a failure to lift quality of life
- Failure to recognise the needs of residents and see the centre as a resource for the rest of the town or region.
The place and its history

Whiddon Valley is one of the more recently built areas of the town, mainly developed from the 1980s onwards. It is effectively a very large cul de sac with just one entrance at the Tesco roundabout – one of the major gateways into the town.

Access can be problematic at times, mainly when the main road into town is heavily congested. It is hoped that this will be eased with the completion of the new bypass. Residents do, however, benefit from quick access to the A361 link road and to the A39 to Bideford. It is reasonably well served by public transport, although evening services are lacking.

It is often characterised as a community of two halves – one being the more affluent population at the Westacott end of the area and the other being those who live in the more densely populated areas off Barton Road. Whiddon Valley lacks a strong, single community identity – having no clear centre and not benefiting from the historic quality of other parts of the town.

Much of Whiddon Valley suffers from high levels of disadvantage and has poor health and educational outcomes with substantial benefit dependency. It is, however, a relatively peaceful community, although the neighbourhood police team would like to further strengthen neighbourhood watch in the area.

A new and high quality community primary school, Orchard Vale, was built in recent years and is popular with local residents and well used out of school hours. The school makes an important contribution to the life of the community and is committed to serving the area flexibly. A significant number of families also use Forches Cross School.

Whiddon Valley enjoys some excellent open spaces, with a well equipped park, play area and community woodlands. These are popular with local people. There is also easy walking and cycling access from the estate into the lanes behind that lead to Goodleigh and other neighbouring communities.

A small group of shops (hairdresser, off license and general store, newsagent and fish and chip shop) are well used by the local population and a number of factories, leisure outlets and small industrial units provide important employment opportunities. Some of the local businesses have suggested that better connections could be made between them and the wider Barnstaple economy including Town Centre Management. North Devon Homes has also recently moved its offices to the area.

There is a church, a vibrant and high quality neighbourhood nursery and a community centre – all of which provide important services to the area and to the wider Barnstaple community.

Barum Gate offers a public house for local residents as well as hotel accommodation for visitors.

Tesco is a short walk from the estate and a national health dentist is located in the community hall, which is on the site. Several out of town retail stores are also located nearby. Pedestrian access to these facilities is via an underpass, which many local residents dislike – finding it poorly kept and threatening. This reflects a wider view that sometimes the area is not well enough looked after, with verges and trees becoming scruffy – this was an aspect highlighted during community consultation and which the Devon County Council quickly acted upon.

As a newer estate, Whiddon Valley does not enjoy the traditions and history of other parts of Barnstaple but its population is generally happy to be living there and appear broadly satisfied with the quality of life it offers, raising few major issues of concern.
### Strengths
- Accessible for Town Centre
- Good quality housing and RSL
- Small group of shops
- Employment in industrial estate
- Supermarket easily accessible
- Primary school – widely used
- Neighbourhood Nursery
- Community and Voluntary Transport Schemes
- Community Woodland and other open spaces well used.

### Weaknesses
- Not a very strong community identity
- High unemployment
- High lone parents
- Rubbish problems and dog waste, particularly on corner of Barton Road (lack of bins here)
- Traffic issues – volume, speeding, parking
- No “emergency” route out of Whiddon should Tesco’s roundabout be closed
- Public Transport not adequate especially at night.
- Lack of litter and dog bins
- Lack of facilities for young people
- Inadequate affordable housing
- Lack of drop kerbs in some parts of the estate – bad wheelchair access
- Underpass; community safety issues
- Flooding of underpass
- Business may not be well connected to the town and economic strategy process.

### Opportunities
- Taunton retractable bollard model could be used to prevent “rat runs”
- Improve signage to local shops to increase awareness
- Is there the volume of children to sustain a separate school bus, extended schools scheme may impact on all school bus services?
- Barum Gate usually full – reveals business opportunity for similar affordable hotel accommodation.

### Threats
- Lack of funding
- Partners not involved
- Satellite estate with limited community focus
- Poor health and educational outcomes for many residents, benefits dependence etc.
The place and its history

The Yeo Valley area originally comprised a small area of Yeo Vale, with early 20th Century houses formed into terraced streets. Major modern housing developments in the 1960’s and 1970 led to rapid growth to some 1500 residents.

In the 1999 re-organisation of the Parish boundaries the small ward of St Mary’s was added. This addition brought estates such as Chanters Hill and Goodleigh Rise into the area consisting of modern two storey and bungalow style dwellings. With the addition of Silver Leat and Silverwood Heights the community has grown to some 2200 residents.

Properties in Yeo Valley are approximately 50% privately owned, mainly at Goodleigh Rise, Chanters Hill, Sunset Heights, Longmeadow, Yeo Vale, Princess Street and Hill View. The remaining areas of Heppenstall, St Mary’s Road, Frankmarsh and Gorwell Valley consist of predominately social housing.

Parts of the ward’s educational requirements are supplied by Our Ladies Catholic Primary School. The majority is supplied by Yeo Valley Primary School. Both schools offer excellent provision and are popular with parents. The Yeo Valley school is currently developing a project which aims to offer a wider range of community facilities for local people.

There are many young families in the areas of higher density social housing. Yeo Vale and Chanters Hill areas have a higher proportion of older and retired population. It is important that services are developed to meet their needs into the future.

The area has two play parks for under 10 year olds, one on St Georges Road and the other in Gorwell Valley. These are well used by local families. Although it has several areas of open space, there are no facilities for the general community. The area could significantly benefit from investment to create facilities such as a community centre and facilities for the teenage population.

There are two residential housing complexes for older people, Verona Court and Chichester Close, a special needs housing unit in Yeo Vale and a day centre for the elderly at Greenfields.

Much of the area falls into the most disadvantaged 25% of communities nationally (source: ID 2004) and is an area that will need a great deal of support in the coming years to improve this situation.

Frankmarsh and Gorwell are well policed but Yeo Vale lacks in community policing. There is a strong element of anti-social behaviour growing within the area which is a constant concern for the residents, although renewed effort has recently been focused on the area to address this issue, involving all the major agencies.

The collection of waste is fairly satisfactory except in the narrow streets of Yeo Vale.

The issue of commuter parking has recently been addressed in Yeo Vale by the introduction of a residents parking scheme. The area is fairly well served by public transport but, like many other areas, lacks evening services.
Small and Tidmis Textiles has a good number of employees but not many of these live in the ward.

This is a community that has changed and grown over the years and which has a mixture of issues in its smaller neighbourhoods. There is a great deal of community spirit and a determination locally to improve quality of life for residents in the years to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Woodland Area</td>
<td>• Traffic Issues, parking/road crossings/traffic calming, congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School</td>
<td>• Fear of crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Spirit</td>
<td>• Lack of provision for 10-14 year olds</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recently formed Local Residents Group, now working on a community project.</td>
<td>• Lack of affordable housing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• High benefit dependency</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• High number of lone parents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• High unemployment and poor qualifications</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• High youth crime</td>
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<td>• Inadequate community facility.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Schools under resourced – need to use existing facilities more</td>
<td>• Anti-social behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Desire for more visible police officers</td>
<td>• Failure to address issues of deprivation will lead to a continuation of many of the problems that are endemic to the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yeo Valley School/community project offers an opportunity to bring together a number of partners to provide a more integrated set of facilities for the area.</td>
<td>• Failure to deliver improvements will affirm a sense among residents that much is promised and little is delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community oriented small businesses.</td>
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Priority Themes
Traffic and travel

Strengths and opportunities

- The Barnstaple Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge is currently under construction and due to open in spring 2007. The Scheme will relieve congestion on several town routes. The new road capacity will also enable further measures to effectively manage road space and car parking issues within the town, through junction improvements and better traffic information.
- The Bypass has stimulated interest in development in the Town Centre and creates opportunities for housing, business, leisure and public realm improvements.
- Traffic levels have a noticeable impact on the quality of the built environment and in particular the separation of the Town Centre from one of its main assets, the riverside. This can be addressed with the increase in road capacity.
- Opportunities have been taken to introduce bus priority measures within the town, which will enable local bus services to operate more effectively. This is particularly important with the introduction of free local bus travel for senior citizens and the disabled from April 2006.
- Road Casualty trends in Barnstaple illustrate success in reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) over the past five years.
- Improvements to the road system at Barnstaple Railway Station will allow improved and increased bus services to the town’s rail link.
- Ring and Ride provide good community transport and disabled access to the town linking closely to shop mobility which provides facilities to make it easier for disabled people to use town centre shops and services.
- Park and Ride at Park School has grown in usage since its introduction in 2000. The Creation of new or expanded ‘Park and Change’ areas on the edge of town with high quality walking, cycling and bus links are being considered.

Key statistics

- 65% of residents identified the need to resolve congestion and wider traffic problems as among their top priorities in the Our Town survey – the highest priority.
- Car ownership in Barnstaple area has increased by 25% over the last 10 years.
- 2001 Census indicates the percentage of households without a car is higher than the average for North Devon and Devon County Council areas.
- 53% of working population locally travel to work by car, 86% of whom travel alone.
- Infrastructure, such as cycle paths and facilities for green travel have significantly improved (see maps below).
- Casualty figures show an upward trend in slight injuries and there have been no significant reductions in pedestrian or cyclist injuries.

Our Vision:
“To improve choice, accessibility and mobility through the provision of a sustainable, integrated transport system that meets local needs and achieves identifiable standards”.

Community Action Plan for Barnstaple 2006 to 2016 | Page 45
Areas for development raised through public consultation

**Public transport** issues including the need for:

- better reliability and improved frequency of services
- more bus services in the evenings across the town
- better route connections
- improvements to cross town services, especially bus/rail interchange
- availability of real time travel information
- introduction of smart cards to provide discounts and cash free travel
- Improved bus priority systems
- Bus safety – especially in the dark
- Park & Ride – support for extending existing and developing new schemes
- Rail links including:
  - Improvements needed to attract volume passengers
  - Could better links to London be achieved – direct link to Taunton?
  - Reduced journey times to Exeter?
  - Potential risk to train service with proposed changes to the timetable.

**Road Safety** – improvements required to busy junctions and need for lower speeds in residential areas. Some suggested the introduction of the Taunton Retractable Bollard Model to address “rat runs” in several parts of town, especially in Newport, Pilton and the top of Gorwell.

**Walking** – improved priority for pedestrians, safer routes to school and wider access to pedestrian areas.

**Cycling** – better signposting of cycle paths, more cycle paths, more cycle stands and a better alternative to the existing cycle arrangements at Longbridge.

**Parking**, especially:

- residential areas not coping with the volume of cars not owned by residents
- more residents parking schemes
- parking in town felt to be inadequate, parking charges are a concern and overnight charges resented
- parking around schools, hospital and college a problem.

**Congestion** – discourage people from bringing cars into the town centre and relieve traffic congestion around schools & colleges.
Road infrastructure – concern about major routes into and around the town but enormous support for Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge and hopes that it will create quality public spaces around the Strand and Square. Numerous neighbourhood improvements requested. Gateways to the town need improving.

Signposting – better signposting in the town and on the outskirts – to car parks and facilities, to promote business and advertise the attractions and benefits that Barnstaple has to offer to visitors.

Disability – greater sensitivity to the needs of people who are frail or disabled.

Street Lighting – needs improvement in several areas. Suggestions for a street lighting survey to be carried out.

General issues and “Key Action Areas”

Clearly, the completion of the Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge, together with associated projects, will be our primary focus in the next few years. However, a number of other issues merit particular mention:

- As a sub-regional centre, transport issues exist on two levels; Barnstaple - wide and neighbourhood specific. Our approach will balance these two needs
- The Area is heavily reliant on two main network links of the A361 North Devon Link road to the M5 and the Tarka Rail Line to Exeter St David’s
- The aspiration to make the town less dependent on cars may be at odds with the wishes of the retail sector to encourage more shoppers into the centre
- Transport policy is key to environmental quality, health, regeneration and economic growth and access to services and opportunities – our approach is to consider how policy can support wider outcomes
- The effectiveness of links between Barnstaple and surrounding coast and countryside from a leisure perspective is of particular interest to many people and we also need to consider how non-car owners access these opportunities
- The Tarka Trail and South West coast Path are a real asset and will continue to be developed
- Great care is needed in implementing Residents Parking Schemes across the town
• Promoting community and voluntary transport schemes is an integral part of transport options around town for both locals and visitors

• Reducing the impact of traffic on key areas of public realm in the town, creating new high quality public spaces and increasing the attractiveness of walking and cycling routes into the town centre for visitors and local people is a high priority

• It is important to improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services to, from and within Barnstaple – not just to think about movements within the town

• Improving access to the proposed cultural quarter centred around the Queens Theatre.

Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

• Reduce car usage for short trips wherever possible
• Car share
• Encourage Employer Travel Plans
• Use public transport more
• Investigate neighbourhood car
• Support school buses, walking buses^{(a)} and community buses.
Children and young people

Strengths and opportunities

- Barnstaple is already a great place to raise a family – there are many facilities and it is generally a very safe area
- There are a wide range of clubs and sports and leisure opportunities
- The town has excellent schools. The two secondary schools have technology college and language specialist status and North Devon College enjoys a national reputation for excellence and is currently looking to make major investments in its future provision
- There is a strong voluntary sector, offering sports and other clubs
- There is a Neighbourhood Nursery in Whiddon Valley and further children’s centres are planned as part of the extended schools programme, building on provision currently available at Victoria House
- The Town Council has a Youth Council and schools and youth services offer other options for involvement of young people, all of whom are keen to be involved
- The Children’s Trust has developed a Barnstaple Local Forum, which held a multi-agency conference in June 2005 to improve communication and integration between service providers. This identified gaps in provision for post 16, special needs, respite care, day care/centres and sheltered employment
- Opportunity through the Extended Schools Programme to develop childcare and other opportunities at either end of the school day and in holidays
- Devon Youth Service has recently established provision in St George’s Road and the Youth House in the town centre has plans for expansion – opportunities exist for developing a range of youth provision
- Many opportunities for sport and recreation through the Leisure Centre, Youth Clubs, Sports Clubs, Access to the coast and river, the moors, Tarka Trail and Cycle Tracks, Tarka Tennis, the Rock Park improvements (SK8 Pk) and out of hours school facilities.

Key statistics

- 45% of residents identified support to children and young people and their families as among their top priorities in the Our Town survey – the second most important issue raised in the consultation
- The number of children in need is particularly high in Barnstaple - almost twice the number per 000 population compared to the rest of Devon
- The Youth Offending Team has concerns around socially excluded children – family breakdown, drugs and alcohol, barriers to accessing primary care etc
- Youth offending rates are increasing and particularly high in the Central Town, Forches and Whiddon Valley, Newport and Yeo Valley wards of Barnstaple
- Levels of family poverty are high. The percentage of lone parents (7%) is higher than Devon’s average and, in some parts of Barnstaple rises to over 11%. It is recognised that lone parents often need additional support and may suffer economic hardship
- Connexions currently work with 108 young people between the ages of 16-18 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training – Government measurements), in Barnstaple. Total for the whole of Northern Devon is 257, making Barnstaple 42% of the total figure
• Of the 108 young people, 76 are not yet ready for work; many of these will have multiple and complex issues.
• Currently the 257 NEET young people for Northern Devon is 6.4% of the 16-18 cohort (high when compared to the rest of Devon). The 2010 target that children’s trusts are working to is to have a max of 4.5 % NEET.

The areas for development identified through consultation

• **Lack of facilities** - not enough to do, especially at the weekends
• **Costs prohibitive** - so that facilities highlighted above may not be accessible
• Different age groups require different facilities – need for more trained play workers, more facilities for 10-14 year olds, “youth shelters” for teenagers and more places to “hang out” in general
• Wish for better **play and recreation** spaces – suggestions included Skate Park, ice rink, wet weather facilities
• Need to **reduce fragmentation** of service provision through increased networking and improved partnership working. Potential was identified for even closer working between schools and with other agencies to provide support to parents (especially those with children who are involved in anti-social behaviour) and to develop approaches to reduce stress in families
• Some parents want **support in parenting** their adolescents
• **A small number of challenging young people** require disproportionate attention and disrupt lives of other children and the wider community
• Many young people feel that they are **forced to leave the area** to do well in life – they want the choice to stay, supported by good education, skills and job opportunities
• Many young people have said that they are concerned about general issues of **safety**
• Worries about **affordability of housing** are a preoccupation for many young people
• Opportunities for further **development of schools** within the wider communities and the need to address the issues of some poor buildings, especially temporary classrooms. The question was also raised of whether the provision of school places is well balanced and reflects future need
• **Use of ASBOs** – does this just move problems from one part of town to another?

Key Action Areas

The Barnstaple Alliance, together with the Devon Children’s Trust, is focused on improving outcomes specified by government under the following headings:

**Being healthy; enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle by:**

• reducing self-harming and its underlying causes
• improving the variety of activities and play facilities, linking to the obesity LPSA
• accident prevention
• improving mental health services (CAMHS)
• sexual health advice (including sexually transmitted infections)
• improved drug and alcohol awareness
• encouraging Healthy Schools awards.

Staying safe; being protected from harm and neglect by:

• addressing the needs of children and young people who have substance misusing parents
• creating community support and opportunities for young carers
• addressing domestic violence and bullying
• improving safety of young people by dealing with the threatening sub-cultures of some groups of young people.

Enjoying and achieving; getting the most out of life and developing skills for adulthood by:

• increasing aspirations
• raising educational opportunities and attainment
• improved universal sports and leisure opportunities and youth opportunities
• improving play facilities in residential areas – some (such as Yeo Valley) lack quality play space.

Making a positive contribution; being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour by:

• enhancing the role of the Youth Council and other representative bodies
• young volunteer’s awards
• Involving children and young people and parents in key developments.

Economic well-being; not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life by:

• addressing employment opportunities and provision of suitable accommodation
• tackling poverty issues including money and benefits advice to families
• providing accessible and high quality child care and early years facilities.

And, throughout – Implement the Child Concern Pathway (17), a multi-agency process through which support is provided effectively to families through effective and timely co-ordination between schools and other agencies.
Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

Everyone has a role to play in supporting our children and young people but, in particular through:

- Responsible parenting – providing good role models
- Involvement in school life and supporting children throughout education
- Volunteering to support schools, clubs and other opportunities.
Level 1
Early Assessment and Intervention
Children and Young People Needing extra help from professionals who already know them.

Level 2
Locality based Multi Agency Panel Assessment and Intervention
Children and Young People needing co-ordinated help from specialists as well as professionals who already know them.

Level 3
Specialist Assessments and Care Plan
Children and Young People needing Co-ordinated Intervention
Integrated Assessments/Care Plans-SEN, LAC, CP, YOT
Community safety

Strengths and opportunities

- Barnstaple is a very safe place to live, relative to most parts of the country, with the chances of being a victim of a serious crime very low
- North Devon has a strong Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (Safer North Devon)
- Barnstaple has a high detection rate, one of the highest in the South West relative to total crime
- New investment to support victims of domestic violence has significantly increased the number of people willing to come forward and seek help – the highest in Devon
- Road traffic accident fatalities fell by 66% and serious injuries by 20% over last three years
- New “Section 30” powers mean Police can impose on the spot £80 fines for Anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Police Officer manages a referral system for juveniles
- Five new Police Community Support Officers began work in Barnstaple in May 2006
- An Architectural Liaison Officer, employed by Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, helps to help ‘design out crime’
- Safer Shopping Award, awarded to Barnstaple Town Centre - the only one awarded in the South West
- The business sector is keen to promote community safety issues throughout the town, with licensees actively working to prevent disorder
- Our Youth Offending Team is one of the most successful in the country.

Key statistics

- 39% of residents cited crime and anti-social behaviour as among their top priorities - the third highest in the Our Town survey
- In a recent survey, 40% of young people said they felt unsafe or mildly unsafe – crime affects young people as much as any other age group
- Whilst well below the national average, overall crime in Barnstaple itself is almost three times the rate in Devon and six times the rate in its hinterland area
- Rates for violent crime, theft from motor vehicle and drug offences are well above the county average
- 45% of all violent crime in Northern Devon takes place in Barnstaple
- Burglary rates are twice the county average and grew over the last three years by some 5% but remain low compared to national averages
- Most reported crime occurs in the town centre, but some neighbourhoods experience higher crime than others
- Many children experience violence in the home – over half of all domestic violence incidents had children present
- More women now reporting domestic violence, with men also beginning to report.
- Alcohol-related crime remains a problem and has grown significantly among both men and women and young people over the last three years

Our Vision:
“To make Barnstaple a safer, welcoming community where all people and their property are respected and where everyone feels able to enjoy life without fear.”
• Petty acquisitive and opportunistic crime remains a problem
• Barnstaple has a higher number of problematic drug users than any other town in northern Devon (an injecting heroine user needs £400 per week to maintain the habit).

Areas for development raised through consultation

Although crime levels are low, and the chance of being a victim of a serious crime remote, there remains a significant fear of crime in the town – especially fear of violence. A sense of reticence, concern and fear was evident amongst those who highlighted this as a key issue – both for themselves and their families. Many young people also said that safety was a major concern. Worries were frequently expressed about drink and drugs misuse, people in shop doorways, fear of violence in the pubs and clubs and what was seen as a disrespectful and anti-social mind set among many people.

Specific comments included:

• The need for higher visibility and more responsive policing – in the centre and in neighbourhoods
• Improved town centre safety in the evenings
• Better vigilance in neighbourhoods – suggestion of possible re-launch of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes throughout the area
• Action should be taken to deal with the small minority of violent and threatening young people and young adults, and to address gang culture
• More things for young people to do to divert them from crime and ASB
• Improved design of buildings and neighbourhoods to design out crime
• Action to deal with vandalism and anti-social behaviour – both serious and relatively minor incidents – a major disruption to the lives of many residents
• A wider concern about speeding traffic and risk of accidents
• Members of the community have a right to live in a safe environment and not fear abuse by other members of the public.

Top priorities for action by Safer North Devon

• Alcohol and drug-related crime
• Disorder and violent crime, including domestic violence
• Hate Crime (arising from prejudice against people from black and minority ethnic communities and other minority groups) and action associated with regeneration and community cohesion projects
• Road Safety
• Volume crimes such as burglary, shoplifting and vehicle crime
• Anti-social behaviour.
Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

- Take preventive action – keep cars and homes secure, identify possessions etc
- Neighbourhood Watch – more volunteers are needed to enable the police to develop more comprehensive coverage
- Report crime
- Take responsibility as parents for the actions of our children and young people
- Avoid prejudice against minority groups
- Recognise the impact of our behaviour on the lives of others
- Children should report bullies to trusted adults and seek help.
**Housing**

**Strengths and opportunities**

- High quality local registered social landlords, with whom NDDC is working to achieve the Decent Home Standard, and to ensure vulnerable people get the support they need, through Supporting People, a Devon wide partnership

- Regular landlord forums are held with private sector landlords to improve understanding between the Council and landlords

- Foyer Project completed (housing scheme for young people)

- NDDC has transferred stock to North Devon Homes who are now implementing a plan to improve the stock and to achieve the decent home standard by 2010. Investment planned in Forches by North Devon Homes offers major opportunity for wider regeneration of the area

- New housing developments offer prospect of improvements through the provisions of the newly adopted Local Plan, which requires a % of affordable housing on most new developments.

- On developments of over 15 houses an affordable share of 25-35% is now required

- North Devon District Council has published a new Housing Strategy

- Development of a night shelter at the Freedom Trust Family Centre

- ‘Star Rated’ registered social landlords.

**Key statistics**

- 37% of residents identified affordable housing as among their top priorities in the Our Town survey

- New housing since 1991 has mainly been located within the Barnstaple, Fremington and Landkey areas.

- Current building completions are around half that between 1991 and 2001

- The stock of social housing fell slightly between 1991 and 2001 whilst the population increased by 3,000. 49% of all such stock in North Devon District is in Barnstaple

- House price rises over the last 5 years are significantly higher than rises in earnings, increasing the house price/earnings ratio to more than 7 – one of the worst areas in the country - North Devon is sixth worst local authority area for getting on to the housing ladder. These factors combine to create a serious housing need

- Much of future housing need results from an expected significant increase in single person households

- North Devon District Council is committed to a target of 150 new affordable homes annually in the district, of which most are for rent

- The social rented sector is only half of the national average and rents are high

- The overall rate of unfitness in North Devon is above average at 6.3% of the total stock. This would need to decrease by one third to reach the English average of 4.2%. Unfit dwellings are more likely to have chronic problems, especially in pre 1919 stock, converted flats, and the private rented sector

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**Our Vision:**

“To ensure that everyone lives in a decent, secure home that meets their needs and is affordable and sustainable.”

Community Action Plan for Barnstaple 2006 to 2016 | Page 61
• Some housing stock, for example in Forches, is now in need of major refurbishment
• The majority of housing need lies in one and two - bedroomed properties, reflecting the changing nature of household composition
• The Council has up to 70 families in temporary housing who need 2 and 3 bedrooms
• The Population in social housing is relatively stable (73% say that they are unlikely to move in the foreseeable future), with low turnover of tenancies with social landlords
• Homelessness applications went to an all time high in 2003/4 but have since reduced as a result of more robust prevention and continued and improved close working relationships with other housing organisations
• People living in poor quality accommodation are more likely to experience fire, accidents and burglary.

Areas for development raised through consultation

Significant numbers of people are worried about how to get into the housing market – especially first time buyers. There is also a concern about homelessness, linked to a worry about seeing beggars and homeless people and connecting to the fear of crime section.

Specific comments included:

• Residents want to see development but on brown field sites as much as possible and only alongside infrastructure improvements
• Many young people worry about whether they will be able to afford a home
• Some neighbourhoods have very few facilities e.g. decent play spaces and areas for young people to gather safely
• More supported accommodation is needed for vulnerable people
• Could we look at empty properties including those over shops?
• Quality of housing in multiple occupation – need to work better with landlords to improve stock
• Issues arising from higher density housing
• Many tenants have debt and other financial problems and often lack access to financial products and services
• Suggestion for a meeting with landholders to discuss realistic development potential
• Need for a more pro-active approach from planners – important to ensure the Local Development Framework \(^{[20]}\) supports development potential
• Possible changes to planning boundaries offer opportunities
• Promote home energy efficiency amongst all properties and ensure energy efficiency and conservation in all new-build
• Find new ways to support affordability/tenureship and promote shared ownership schemes
• Development needed of a Night Shelter.
Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

Crucial aspects of making a housing scheme affordable are:

1. land value
2. grant aid
3. subsidy in kind

These schemes are developed from various quarters but all are limited and, without significant increases in new schemes and improvements in all aspects, it is unlikely that sufficient affordable housing will be developed to satisfy demand. The community can alleviate this situation by identifying possible land sites or vacant properties and contacting the District Council.

Other issues

- Everyone needs decent, secure housing. Without it, education, jobs and family life will suffer
- This applies in particular to those with very chaotic lifestyles. There is a clear link between criminality, drug and alcohol dependency and poor housing
- Quality of life in an area is substantially driven by the quality of the built environment, including housing – how well an area feels cared for is a vital aspect of feelings of safety in a community
- Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation may cause more people to be made homeless and needs to be handled with care
- Housing issues for older and disabled people will be an important focus in the coming years, especially as a result of the ageing population.
Heritage, culture, sport and leisure

Strengths and opportunities

- Variety of opportunities in the town and further afield
- The arts are a wonderful medium for involvement and communications
- Barnstaple in Bloom has been very successful over the years
- Barnstaple and North Devon Festivals and Barnstaple Fringe are a major draw to the area and much enjoyed by residents
- Tarka Tennis Centre offers high quality provision
- Leisure Centre redevelopment
- School sports and recreational facilities are a major local asset and are well used
- There is a vibrant musical culture in the town
- Theatre and other cultural venues offer a range of experiences
- Open Spaces/Sports facilities, with vibrant football and rugby clubs
- Rock Park redevelopment will enhance this important open space
- Traditions and history; Castle Green, the historic court of town, Pannier Market, Heritage Centre and historic neighbourhoods all contribute to the sense of identity in the town
- Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon short listed for Museum of the Year Award
- Development of the Youth House complex, building the capacity for wider community use and a variety of projects and activities, including music and the performing arts
- Secondary and primary schools contribute substantially to the cultural life of the town, demonstrating the wonderful qualities and contribution of children and young people.

Key statistics

- Total number of performances at both theatres rose from 446 to 467 in 2005
- The first in-house production ‘Just Remember Two’ featured 45 children, adult actors and musicians from the community and provided great opportunity for education projects
- The Pantomime sold nearly 20,000 tickets for 40 performances, a 43% increase since 1999, with gross box office income increased by 79%
- North Devon Museum had over 60,000 visitors in 2005 – a new record
- £65k external funding was achieved for museum projects
- Year end figures of use, 05/06 are:

  Tarka Tennis Centre: 43,963 people
  Leisure Centre: 505,350 people
Areas for development raised through consultation

Whilst not the highest priority many issues were consistently raised, most notably that:

- The town lacks high quality, affordable, accessible and modern facilities – sports and leisure centre and decent swimming pool being the most numerously requested improvements but also cinema and arts facilities
- There is interest in developing open spaces around the town, not just in the centre but through projects such as those in Forches and Yeo Community Centre
- Many want to see a change to a better quality café and restaurant culture – often linked to comments about better open space and town centre developments. The interest in a wider night time experience needs to be set in the context of the fear of going into town expressed by many residents and may conflict with the wishes of those who want more night clubs.

Other less frequently made suggestions included:

- Schools sometimes remain an under - used resource and out of school safe provision and children’s play could be improved through the extended schools programme
- Theatre and some sporting facilities are good, but expensive
- Better use could be made of the estuary
- Importance of high quality informal play and recreation space and need for improvement of what already exists, especially Rock Park
- Many thought better use could be made of what already exists before investing in new facilities
- Excellent festival and other cultural events but could more be made of them – perhaps using open spaces better for art, music, drama etc.
- Idea of a leisure card and ‘What’s On’ schemes
- Informal sports and recreational activities could be better marketed and used
- Schemes could be better developed and targeted for youth
- A significant interest in an ice rink, mainly among young people.

Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

- Use and support what exists and help to develop the potential of the many voluntary groups who bring so much to the community
- Work with schools, communities and community groups in a voluntary capacity.
Economy

Strengths and opportunities

- North Devon’s largest share of residential, employment and commercial growth will occur here, including a significant level of affordable housing provision.
- The attractive built and natural environment will attract research, design and knowledge businesses, with links to the Biosphere Reserve and green technologies. Some new businesses will connect with an enhanced higher education role for North Devon College together with a possible adjacent Environmental Technology Park.
- North West Devon Economic Partnership is very active and currently working on the 20:20 Vision which cites the environment as the main economic driver.
- Recognition in local plans and regional strategies of Barnstaple as the key centre for economic activity in the northern Devon area.
- The College of Further Education is very successful and offers a major learning and skills focus for the town, with extensive plans for further development.
- Some major regeneration initiatives are planned in the town centre and in neighbourhoods such as Forches.
- A vibrant and important retail sector but this needs to compete with other centres such as Cribbs Causeway, Exeter and Taunton.
- Town Centre Management is very active and is promoting Barnstaple Town Centre.
- The Community Transport Association provides assistance to those with mobility problems, offering easy access into the town. Able-bodied people accompany the majority of those using Shop Mobility.
- Ageing population may bring opportunity to make best use of skills and experience.

Key statistics

- Barnstaple is the centre of economic activity in North Devon which has enjoyed a satisfactory growth (about 5.9%) since 1995 (Devon 5.7%, National 5.4%).
- The main economic sectors in north Devon are as follows:- Manufacturing 14.2%, Distribution 20%, Business activities 19.4%, Hotels and Catering 10.2%, Construction 7.4%. The main growth sectors include construction, distribution, hotels and catering, business services, health and social work.
- Gross Value Added (GVA) lags behind the UK, relying on a narrow base of growth sectors, including manufacturing (mainly food), distribution and real estate activity.
Estimates of total gross income received from tourism for North Devon are approx. £270m in 2003. Although the net effect to the north Devon economy was small, tourism spending in retail outlets was estimated to be over £100m.

Unemployment in the area is relatively high compared with the rest of Devon, particularly in Barnstaple town centre and in some neighbourhoods.

15% of the workforce are self employed and 22% work part time.

There are well above average levels of benefit dependency among residents living in Central Town, Yeo Valley and Whiddon Valley wards, highlighting low income levels.

Central Town, Forches and Whiddon Valley and Yeo Valley all fall within the most disadvantaged 25% of wards nationally.

Per capita income in North Devon in 2003 was £13,530 compared to a national average of £16,445; 82.3% of national average.

Almost £5m external funding drawn to the area over the last five years.

Skills shortages in manufacturing, certain employment areas and in further and higher education mean that a major priority is to match education and learning to available jobs.

Areas for development raised through consultation:

- Closure of post offices has had a knock-on effect, reducing economic and social activity in affected neighbourhoods such as Pilton and Newport.
- Youth enterprise needs to be supported e.g. through Princes Trust projects and incubation units such as those offered at the Youth House.
- The importance of the voluntary sector should be recognised – both as an employer and as a vehicle through which many people re-enter employment.
- More benefits, debt and money advice is needed, together with financial literacy – linked to support for Credit Unions and other community-based financial service providers.
- Traffic flows affect casual use of small shops.
- Low wages and seasonal work are a worry to many – job opportunities need improving, shoulder month (the period between high season from October – April) tourism needs to be addressed.
- Improvements needed to brown signs and to accommodation to support tourism.
- Insufficient accommodation for holiday makers – under capacity is reported especially in the affordable hotel/motel sector.
- Need to improve connections between businesses, especially those outside the town centre management area.
- Impact of internet shopping might present a threat to some businesses but offers opportunities to others.
- Range and quality of shops, with many wanting more individual shops.
- Different views about more or less parking, more or fewer fast food outlets etc.
- Employer travel plans, child-centred and family friendly polices would help many parents and particularly women returners to re-enter the job market.
- Affordable childcare support and holiday and wrap-around school provision.
• Neighbourhood renewal needs to be a high priority in several communities
• Increase workplace opportunities for activities that promote health and well-being as a key driver to address health inequalities.

Other issues

• Make full use of the internet and Broadband access
• Support local businesses/farmers markets
• Population increase and development can have a beneficial impact but need to be managed
• Improved communications will bring more visitors and business – good for growth but may challenge the peace and quiet valued by so many – need to manage this tension
• Do the needs of business match other priorities? e.g. need to get more people into the shops may be at odds with reducing car usage in town
• An ageing workforce will present new challenges and opportunities.

Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

• Support local business wherever possible
• Encourage high aspirations among young people
• Support community and voluntary sector organisations, including credit unions.
Built and natural environment

Strengths and opportunities

- Residents recognise the unique beauty that surrounds the town. Access to coast and countryside brings pride to the town as well as business and economic gain.
- The Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge will relieve congestion and provide opportunities for environmental enhancement in the town and easier access to the coast and countryside.
- Barnstaple has a lot of previously developed land, giving important opportunities for regeneration of the riverfront and retail base in the centre.
- Several developments are planned to enhance the centre and neighbourhoods.
- As part of this action plan a biodiversity assessment has been undertaken.
- The attractive built and natural environment will attract research, design and knowledge businesses, with links to the Biosphere Reserve and green technologies. Some new businesses could be connected to the higher education role for North Devon College, together with an Environmental Technology Park.
- Barnstaple lies within the UK’s only UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. This international designation recognises our outstanding natural environment and the importance of its communities. It provides an opportunity for Barnstaple to take a lead in demonstrating innovation and finding sustainable solutions, ensuring a high quality environment and a thriving economy. Other Reserves include Yellowstone National Park in North America and Danube Delta in Romania.
- Barnstaple has a long and unique history as a market town, port and regional centre.
- Barnstaple has excellent sustainable transport links – Tarka Trail provides car-free access to the estuary for walkers, cyclists and wheelchair users. Cycling is important with the Tarka Trail offering links to Braunton, Bideford and beyond.
- Working with communities and partners to bring more wildlife into the town by better management of ‘green corridors’ and public land.
- The South West Coast Path runs through Barnstaple and connects the town to wonderful coast and countryside.
- The Tarka Trail walking route links Barnstaple with Exmoor.

Key statistics

- 58% of people surveyed think that growth should be on existing sites or encouraged only with careful planning.
- Current environmental awareness is much heightened.
- Waste recycling rates are 20-23% against a UK target of 26% but targets will grow to 50% over the coming years.
- 30% of energy demands are for domestic heating.

Our Vision:

“To preserve Barnstaple’s environment and heritage whilst changing to meet the needs of future generations”.

Built and natural environment
Areas for development raised through consultation

Many people see the riverfront as a neglected resource – even more if linked to the number who commented that the Civic Centre is an eyesore. Whilst this section did not appear in the top four priorities numerically it is a high priority in the more qualitative comments in the Our Town survey.

Most comments focused on how to make open space more useable. The biggest priority is for it to be clean, reinforcing the link between a clean and well cared-for environment and a sense of well-being and safety.

There is support for careful development, making improvements to infrastructure as or before we grow further but also strong opinion about improving parks and open spaces and linking this to improvements to community life and cohesion.

Other specific comments included:

- Need for more litter and dog bins
- Better maintenance of parks and open spaces – sense that community will be strengthened by more and better quality open spaces, used by all generations. Numerous comments about Rock Park specifically
- Resolution of flying tipping problem
- Improvements in public toilets wanted
- Better use of natural resources and spaces e.g. riverfront, community woodlands
- Keeping streets clean and improving the look of the town, including better maintenance of hedgerows and grass verges
- Improved waste collection & increased recycling
- Call for reduced use of energy
- Worries over flooding in some areas
- ‘Bulldoze’ the Civic Centre
- Some said they thought that there is a problem of litter along paths, walkways, cycleways and in verges of town gateways (including the railway station)
- Investigate green travel solutions to the town’s travel problems
- Introduction of ‘semi-wild’ habitat, permanent and drought tolerant.

Expert opinion includes need to:

- Reduce, Re-use, Recycle
- Address climate change
- Improve flood defence and reduce domestic energy demands
- Promote renewables and increase energy efficiency
- Develop more sustainable transport, including reduced car use
- Improve recycling rates
- Look after and nurture biodiversity.
Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

- Put maximum effort into saving energy
- Support the use and development of renewable energy
- Use public transport more
- Recycle as much as possible
- Reduce car use
- Respect the environment
- Report fly tipping and tippers
- Don’t pollute the sewerage system
- Use less packaging
- Consume fewer materials
- Influence friends and family to do the same
- Support local green areas and woodlands.
Strengths and opportunities

- Excellent schools and College of Further Education – secondary schools have technology and specialist language status
- Wide range of adult and community learning opportunities
- Some strong networks between employers and education providers
- Breadth of learning opportunity widening
- Proposals for a newly developed North Devon College offer huge opportunity
- Good network for young people regarding information on training
- New Youth House complex with potential for community education, business programmes and training
- Library offers a vital source of information and culture as well as lending facilities.

Key statistics

- Significant variation within the area in Key Stage 2 performance in English and maths, whilst overall performance in science is above the Devon average
- Also variation in the number of pupils achieving 5 A-C GCSE grades with lower levels of attainment in Central Town, Yeo Valley, Forches and Whiddon Valley
- ND College estimates about 5,000 people in Barnstaple need help with functional literacy and numeracy. Literacy levels below Level 1 is 13% in Barnstaple compared to 9.1% for North Devon and 9.2% for Devon. 54% have numeracy skills below Level 1 compared to 47.7% for North Devon and 49.4% for Devon. Forches and Whiddon Valley and Yeo Valley have particularly low rates for both literacy and numeracy
- Level 4 qualifications are also lower at 12.5% for Barnstaple compared to 14.7% (North Devon) and 18.6% Devon
- Higher numbers of people with low or no qualifications than Devon as a whole
- Take up of lifeline learning opportunities at North Devon College among adults is lower in Barnstaple (5.9%) than the rest of northern Devon (7.9%). 9,355 people were defined as active learners by North Devon College in May 2006 of whom 1113 come from Barnstaple.

Areas for development arising from consultation

- Barnstaple is a learning centre for much of the North Devon and Torridge District council areas and even beyond. This means that it is reasonable to aspire to facilities and provision beyond that to a town the size of Barnstaple might normally expect
- Suggestion of improved networks for people aged 20+ seeking advice on work and training
- Library vans could be used more
- Concerns expressed about access to recreational learning (particularly with Learning and Skills Council emphasis on qualifying courses) especially in relation to location, cost and range of courses
• Need to consider long term structure of school places in the light of changing population needs
• Expansion of local higher educational opportunities is welcomed
• Improve links with employers, especially in matching qualifying courses with need for skills
• Target individuals with no qualifications or who only have level 1 or 2 qualifications
• Bring 16-20 year olds into learning who have left the educational system
• Current E2E (the programme designed to equip young people to enter apprenticeships) provision is not meeting the needs of too many young people, including those supported by Youth Offending Teams
• Review curriculum for 16+ with learning difficulties
• There are gaps and opportunities in learning to support people involved in community organisations
• Importance of offering accessible opportunities to people of all ages.

Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

• Continue to support local education providers.
Promoting independence and equality of opportunity

Strengths and opportunities

- Barnstaple is a very caring town
- The town centre is suited to people who are frail as a result of old age or disability
- People are living longer and should be able to enjoy a healthier old age
- Older people have a wealth of experience and are often time rich - two thirds of volunteers are aged between 65 and 74. This should be celebrated
- There is a commitment by service providers to focusing on preventative and community agendas as a means of maintaining fulfilling and active lives for older and disabled people
- Older people have many skills and knowledge that can and should be shared more with other generations
- The Local Area Agreement (LAA) has a primary focus on the needs of older people.

Key statistics

- There will be a continued rise in adults aged over 75yrs (up by 10-15%) and those aged between 65 and 74 (up by 20-25%) over the next 10 years
- 14% of households in the area are lone pensioner households
- There is a well above average reliance on Minimum Income Guarantee amongst claimants aged 60 + in Central Town, Yeo Valley, Forches and Whiddon Valley
- Forches and Whiddon Valley, Central Town and Newport have higher than average emergency admissions to hospital whilst Central Town has a significantly higher rate of age standardised mortality. These areas also have the worst diet.

Areas for development arising from consultation

- Better care & support for older people appeared as the 3rd priority in the ‘further top priority’ question during the Our Town quiz show
- Better support for people is needed in their own homes to maintain independence
- Greater advice on benefits and allowances would enhance chances of maintaining independence and improve quality of life
- Information on what is available should be made more accessible
- Estates strategy needed to better focus provision
- Grant allocations need to support independent living projects
- Links between strategic plans need strengthening
- Many older people would like to re-enter the workforce and this pool of skill should not be overlooked
- Support for carers is essential and should be better publicised
- Community wardens, if developed, could provide a vital means to support vulnerable people to remain independent.
Key Action Areas in the Local Area Agreement

The following will be built into our action plan:

- **Housing & the Home** - use of technology, extra care housing, design of homes etc
- **Health & Healthy Living** - Walking for health and other exercise programmes, healthy diet, falls prevention, mental health strategy, maintaining people independently
- **Social & Educational Activities** - Leisure, learning and volunteering opportunities
- **Neighbourhood** - Being close to friends, shops and other amenities; being safe at home and on the streets removing the barrier to older people’s participation that results from crime and fear of crime
- **Information** - Information will be available from an independent source to help older people to navigate their way around the system and find out about the opportunities and services that are available
- **Income** - The availability of benefits advice and take-up campaigns to older people to pay for new expenses, such as housing maintenance
- **Getting out and About** - Access to services – needs-based transport, develop and optimise community transport, improve pubic transport, training for older drivers
- **Influencing Decision Making** - Engagement of older people, especially hard to reach and isolated, volunteering etc.

Unlocking hidden potential – what can the community do for itself?

- Look out for older and disabled people and provide care and support for neighbours
- The challenge is also for each of us as individuals to take responsibility for our own lifestyles and aim for a healthy, fulfilling old age.\(^7\)

Other issues

- The rising population coupled with the desire to keep older citizens in their own homes for as long as possible requires new methods of service provision
- There is an increasing demand for personal care and in real terms investment at a national level has not kept pace
- Focus on high level need clients could lead to a reduction in service for a larger percentage of the elderly who are "not at risk"
- Preventative services need to be supported or they may be lost.
Future vision

- The next 12 months will be a period of significant modernisation and change in relation to services to older people and people with disabilities. Health and social care services will need to respond to the challenges contained within the recent green paper “Independence, Choice and Wellbeing” and together with Community Health Services, will need to respond to the recent white paper “Choosing Health, Making Healthy Choices Easier”

- A number of services are already jointly provided by the Primary Care Trust and the County Council - for example Intermediate Care and Hospital Discharge services. Over the next year the County Council will work with PCT and District Council partners to jointly provide services for the terminally ill, older people with mental health problems, physical disabilities and those with long term health conditions

- The County Council continues to work jointly with carers, voluntary organisations and the private sector as well as directly providing services to the community of Barnstaple

- Care Direct is now established as the primary point of access for the public for advice not just on social care services but also voluntary services, housing and benefits advice and is being further extended in 2006

- To maintain the links and relationships that have been formed during the consultation and to expand to more fully engage with the hardest to reach of the ageing population throughout the monitoring, review and periodic refreshing of the action plan.
Action Plan –
A programme for delivery
A programme for delivery

Section 4 begins with an introduction to how the Barnstaple Alliance intends to move from a period of consultation and reflection to one that is focused on delivery. It explains the new arrangements for project management and continued involvement of all interested parties.

It then sets out, in summary form, the issues that have been raised in each of the neighbourhoods during the preparation of this plan. More detailed specific action for each community can be found at Appendix 1. Many of these actions have been completed or are already being progressed but a number of new projects are highlighted which will be considered for initiation by the Project Board in the summer or autumn of 2006.

Having considered the neighbourhood-related issues, the thematic priorities and actions are set out before concluding the section with further details of next steps.

Preparing the Action Plan

The issues explored throughout this plan have been drawn from a variety of sources including those who live and work in the town, professional bodies, service providers and elected representatives. Very often their priorities and concerns are the same but numerous issues have been identified by specialists, which have not featured strongly in public opinion. This usually arises where residents do not have the experience to recognise an issue or where it is too personal to discuss – for example in relation to health inequalities, low skills, effects of low income or children in need. The programme for delivery is, therefore, a mixture of public priorities and those, which are identified through a different set of evidence and experience.

Continuing improvement

It has taken eighteen months to prepare this plan from its inception, mainly because of the extensive consultation that has taken place with all interested parties. Thanks are due to all those who have participated and given their advice and commitment. Even so, it is inevitably the case that we will have missed things and we recognise that there are some sections of the community with whom we still need to develop a better dialogue.

However, the search for perfection will not help us to deliver the actions that do have widespread support and this is where our energies will now be focused. As more people continue to get involved and advise us of areas that have not been identified, or propose new ways of doing things, this plan will be adapted – this is intended to be a continually improving process and all suggestions continue to be welcome.

We do not start from a blank sheet of paper - as this plan has been developing we have already been bringing about change. To give but one example in each of the top priority areas - the construction of the Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge is well advanced, Police Community Support Officers have begun work in the town, Children’s Centre developments are under way and a new Housing Strategy has been published.
Moving into delivery stage

There remains a great deal to do and the Barnstaple Alliance will now change the way it operates to reflect the focus on delivery of the action plan. It should be understood, however, that the Alliance does not command resources in its own right. Money needed to deliver this plan will come from either influencing the way existing resources (locally and regionally) are spent or by bringing in external funding. Not everything is expensive – it may just need people to work in a different way and the Alliance will use its influence to lobby for such change.

Communications will be at the core of our approach and the Alliance will also work through the elected members of all three councils to ensure democratic legitimacy to all that it does. It will implement a communications strategy to keep everyone up to date with progress and to encourage their participation.

Working arrangements

A new set of project management arrangements will now be initiated as follows:

**Barnstaple Alliance** - The Alliance will meet twice a year (in February and October) and will focus on setting broad direction and on overseeing the development of the plan. It will engage with a number of wider partnerships and bodies, most notably other community alliances, the Local and Devon Strategic Partnerships and the Local Area Agreement Board. It will support the Project Board to achieve its goals, encourage communication with wider partners and promote public involvement. Membership will be open to anyone who wants to be involved.

**Elected members** - There will be an annual meeting of all councillors who represent Barnstaple in June each year to ensure democratic legitimacy and to promote a united approach from all tiers of local government.

**Project Board** - This new group will support and monitor the delivery of the actions in this plan. It will co-ordinate bids for external funding and will prepare proposals for the full Alliance meeting or identify blockages that need to be resolved. It will meet monthly and will have a small membership of people who are key to delivery.

**Question Time Forum** - The popular Question Time format will continue to be used from time to time when it is timely to focus in depth on key issues with a broad range of interested parties. Two of the four priority areas were subject of such an evening and were a great success. The two remaining priority areas of community safety and children and young people will be the focus of the next two events.

**Champions Group** - It is crucial that the Alliance has the support of those who have greatest impact on the strategic context in which we operate. It is therefore intended to bring together a small group comprising the leaders of the three councils, the RDA, NW Devon Economic Partnership, LAA and GOSW to help to advise on strategic issues and to help to unblock any barriers to implementation that might arise. This group will meet twice a year or as necessary.

This is a major undertaking and it will take time to deliver this plan but we believe that the results of our work are already evident and it is only through a determined and joint effort that we can realise the potential of Our Town.
Public Involvement

Barnstaple Alliance
Meets twice a year in February and October. Sets direction and reviews progress. Issues public updates. Involves and communicates with partners.

Champions Group
Meets every six months or as needed.

Project Board
Meets monthly. Project manages the action plan. Reports to the Alliance.

Annual Members Meeting
All councillors who represent Barnstaple

Task Groups
As necessary
Section 2 of this report set out the issues in relation to each of the principal neighbourhoods of the town. It considered their individual characteristics and strengths but also identified where action is needed to improve quality of life.

Simple things such as tidying an area up and cutting back overhanging trees and bushes were quickly resolved. Other issues have been acted upon but, due to their complexity (such as long-standing community safety or traffic management concerns), will take some time to complete. Yet more issues have still to be started – either because they were not such high priority or because it has not been timely to begin work. Some of these actions are discussed below.

The detailed list of specific neighbourhood actions can be found in Appendix 1 together with a current status report. A summary of the issues raised by local residents is presented overleaf and picks out those actions that had relevance to at least three neighbourhoods. It is reasonable to assume that some of these will be relevant even where they were not raised locally and the Project Board will consider the need for action across the whole town.

The neighbourhood – related issues that are yet to be initiated, and which will be considered during the remainder of 2006 are:

- Community Information – improving access to information about services and what is going on in Barnstaple through better use of local venues and notice boards.
- A review of open spaces and play areas
- Potential to improve signage and interpretation boards
- Connectivity of business in local areas with the wider commercial sector in Barnstaple
- Work with the community and voluntary sector relating to potential for shared premises and other opportunities for collaboration
- A regeneration strategy to respond to the complex issues in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods (will be started in June 2006)
- Potential for addressing local community safety issues and strengthening of neighbourhood watch, linked to the increased emphasis on neighbourhood policing and the arrival of a team of PCSOs.
## Summary of neighbourhood issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>Newport</th>
<th>Longbridge</th>
<th>Whiddon Valley</th>
<th>Yeo</th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
<th>Forches</th>
<th>Pilton</th>
<th>LINK TO MAJOR THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop School Travel Plan</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic and Travel/ Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access at specific sites in neighbourhood</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Traffic and Travel (T&amp;T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve pavement access for wheelchairs</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve signage</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T/Environment/Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking problems</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Bypass/Downstream Bridge related issues</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to and use of Cycle Lanes &amp; Tarka Trail</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with “rat runs”</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Issues</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Children and Young People (CYP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Offending</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>CYP and Community Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to schools outside normal hours</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>CYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve facilities for teenagers</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>CYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve play facilities</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>CYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More visible policing</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-launch Neighbourhood Watch</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve street lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve business waste recycling</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific environment improvements</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revamp Rock Park</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve use of open and green spaces/woodlands</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve cleanliness of area</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to adult and community learning</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance access to recreational, further and higher education</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Lifelong Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve community information</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve community facilities (buildings)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community &amp; Voluntary Sector support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase volunteering</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Community &amp; Voluntary Sector support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop regeneration strategy for neighbourhood</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Section 3 considered the strengths and needs of the town from a more thematic perspective. This part of the action plan reflects on the actions proposed under each of those themes. It can be seen that there is a great deal of action under way, reflecting the determination of partners to act promptly wherever possible and timely.

In some cases, decisions have yet to be reached about how best to move a particular action forward. However, we include a full list of those actions to offer the reader the full picture of what is under consideration.

An early action for the Project Board will be to review this list with project leads to ensure that we either confirm an action for inclusion in this plan, and agree how to implement it, or decide that it will not be progressed and explain clearly why this decision has been reached.

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BTCM</td>
<td>Barnstaple Town Centre Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;CS</td>
<td>Coast and Countryside Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAB</td>
<td>Citizens Advice Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoC</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DACL</td>
<td>Devon Adult and Community Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>Devon County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEAC</td>
<td>Devon Energy Advice Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEBP</td>
<td>Department for Benefits and Pensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSP</td>
<td>Devon Strategic Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DYS</td>
<td>Devon Youth Service (DCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FQP</td>
<td>Freight Quality Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSG</td>
<td>Housing Steering Group (NDDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAA</td>
<td>Local Area Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPSA2</td>
<td>Local Public Service Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC</td>
<td>Learning Skills Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Marketing Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDCTA</td>
<td>North Devon Community Transport Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>North Devon District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDH</td>
<td>North Devon Homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDTT</td>
<td>North Devon Theatres Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obj 2</td>
<td>Objective 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
<td>Primary Care Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg Co</td>
<td>North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSL’s</td>
<td>Registered Social Landlords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SND</td>
<td>Safer North Devon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Traffic and Travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote and encourage bus and train usage by improving route connections, introducing bus priority measures and developing discount schemes</td>
<td>DCC, First Bus, NDDC, Employers, Schools</td>
<td>Medium Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackle congestion by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouraging short stay parking in the town centre and long stay at the edge of town</td>
<td>NDDC, Police, BTC, BTC, BTC</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting car sharing</td>
<td>DCC, Employers, Schools, BTC</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improving walking routes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improving cycle routes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement traffic management measures at the square and strand</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTCM, BTC, BTC, Police</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote and facilitate the development of school and employer travel plans (Nb several are already in progress)</td>
<td>Schools, Employers, NDCTI, BTCM</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review main route traffic signage in the Town</td>
<td>DCC, Police, NDDC, BTC, CoC, FQP, BTC</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support projects to improve the quality of the Town’s urban environment</td>
<td>NDDC, BTC, DCC</td>
<td>Long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor peak journey times and inform commuters of congestion – improving travel information</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, Police</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1 – the first element of the Strand scheme – a turning facility in Castle Street was completed in Jan 06</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic regulation Orders will be advertised in summer 2006 to allow sufficient time for consultation with affected parties, including local businesses</td>
<td>DCC lead in consultation with partners</td>
<td>Short term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic orders and temporary traffic management layouts will be implemented in parallel with the opening of the Western Bypass, expected to be summer 2007</td>
<td>DCC lead in consultation with partners</td>
<td>Short term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 – work is expected to start on the Square with completion in Spring 2008</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC in consultation with partners</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining work on the Strand, Phase 3 is anticipated to start in Spring 2008 and completed by late 2009.</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC in consultation with partners</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alteration of the Strand and the Square will include:

- A major new public space in front of the town museum with possibilities for a variety of uses including public art, festival events, exhibitions and general leisure.
- Significant improvements to crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists that better reflect desire lines and reduce time spent waiting to cross
- Substantial reductions in delays to buses caused by traffic queues into and through the Square. Priority will be achieved through restricting the entrance into the Square from Taw Vale to buses and taxis only with prioritised traffic signals. Buses will also benefit from reduced delays on Belle Meadow Road which will enable them to stop using the narrow Lower Boutport Street; and removal of conflicting traffic movements, This in turn will have the beneficial impacts in Belle Meadow and on the Longbridge
- Additional cycle parking.

This project will continue to be subject of widespread consultation.

**Leadership for delivery**

The co-ordination of most of these projects is through the Highways section of Devon County Council but local accountability is also enhanced through the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee on which NDDC elected members also sit. Major projects such as those affecting the Strand and Square are jointly led by DCC and NDDC.
### 2. Children and Young People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reducing self-harming and its underlying causes</td>
<td>DCC (inc schools), NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community and Voluntary Organisations, Connexions, Drug Action Team, parents</td>
<td>Medium term, Medium term, Long term, Medium term, Medium term, Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improving the variety of activities and play facilities, linking to the obesity LPSA (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- accident prevention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- improving mental health services (CAMHS) (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sexual health advice (inc sexually transmitted infections)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improved drug and alcohol awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- encouraging Healthy Schools awards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying safe; being protected from harm and neglect by:</td>
<td>DCC (inc schools), NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community and Voluntary Organisations, Connexions, parents</td>
<td>Short/medium, Short/medium, Short/medium, Medium/long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- addressing the needs of children and young people who have substance misusing parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- creating community support and opportunities for young carers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- addressing domestic violence and bullying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improving safety of young people - dealing with threatening sub-cultures of some groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing skills for adulthood by:</td>
<td>DCC (inc schools, NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community/ Voluntary organisations, Connexions, parents</td>
<td>Long term, Short/medium, Short/medium, Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- increasing aspirations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- raising educational opportunities and attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improved universal sports and leisure opportunities and youth opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improving play facilities in residential areas – some (such as Yeo Valley) lack quality play space.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti social or offending behaviour by:</td>
<td>Young people, DCC (inc schools, NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community and Voluntary Organisations, Connexions, parents</td>
<td>Short, Short/Medium, On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- enhancing the role of the Youth Council and other representative bodies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- young volunteer’s awards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Involving children and young people and parents in key developments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life by:</td>
<td>Young people, DCC (inc schools), NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community &amp; Voluntary orgs, Connexions, parents, employers</td>
<td>Medium/long, Short/medium, Short/medium, Short/medium, Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- addressing employment opportunities and provision of suitable accommodation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- tackling poverty issues including money and benefits advice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- providing accessible and high quality child care and early years facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- providing particular support to lone parents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Children’s Centre provision</td>
<td>DCC (inc. schools)</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address needs of young people not in education, training or employment</td>
<td>Connexions, DCC (inc schools, NDDC, BTC, PCT, Partnership Trust, Police, Community and Voluntary Organisations, parents</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

Whilst individual actions will be led by a particular partner, the whole of this action plan will be coordinated through the Barnstaple Locality Group of the Children’s Trust Locality Forum for N Devon.
3. Community Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with business to reduce shoplifting (recent safer business award, improving shop-link radio, “designing out” shoplifting)</td>
<td>Town Centre Management</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaigns to raise awareness amongst residents about how to protect their possessions/address volume crime.</td>
<td>Safer North Devon</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted crackdowns on drink related incidents in hotspots – especially night time disorder.</td>
<td>Barnstaple Against Night-time Disorder (BARNs)partnership</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of uniformed staff/development of warden approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revitalise neighbourhood watch</td>
<td>Police, neighbourhood watch, residents</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community action Days – Frankmarsh, Gorwell etc (these are focused initiatives to help residents take action to improve their area and access services)</td>
<td>NDHomes, Police, Fire, DCC, NDCC, BTC, PCT etc</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention – e.g. fire alarms in high risk areas, licensing issues etc</td>
<td>Trading Standards Fire Service</td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted action relating to the most prolific offenders</td>
<td>Police, Probation, DCC, NDDC, Fire, PCT</td>
<td>In progress now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address alcohol and drug-related crime</td>
<td>Police, NDDC, DCC, Drug Action Team, Community/ Voluntary organisations</td>
<td>In progress now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to improve support to victims of domestic violence including children</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Forum, Local Area Agreement, Safer North Devon, Women’s Refuge</td>
<td>In progress now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hate Crime</td>
<td>Safer North Devon, LAA</td>
<td>Short/Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Safety measures</td>
<td>Police, DCC</td>
<td>In progress now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social behaviour</td>
<td>Safer North Devon</td>
<td>In progress now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Lighting survey to be considered</td>
<td></td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

Safer North Devon is the lead partnership for this area of work. It is a legally constituted body that is responsible for crime reduction work in the northern Devon area. It also forms part of the Safer Devon Partnership which co-ordinated the local area agreement across Devon and commissions services strategically to address need.
4. Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collate and review satisfaction surveys on all new housing and use the results to inform future affordable housing development.</td>
<td>NDDC, NDH, HSG</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw up a clear and detailed delivery plan for new affordable housing which clearly identifies all available development sites within the Local Plan</td>
<td>NDDC, RSL’s</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regenerate the Housing Stock in Trinity/St Mary’s Wards.</td>
<td>NDH</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Empty Homes Strategy’ to be written to focus on 2 categories: Empty Homes and Better Use of Existing Stock, via Housing Strategy Group</td>
<td>NDDC, RSL’s, Private Sector</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have £100k ‘Challenge Fund’ to target empty properties</td>
<td>Private Landlords</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targets set on new developments on brown field sites (now within Local Development Plan)</td>
<td>NDDC, private developers, RSL’s</td>
<td>Short, Medium and Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of houses of multiple occupation, new legislative framework in force 2004 – licensing of houses of multiple occupation. Project overseen by Housing Portfolio group and Private Sector Housing Group</td>
<td>NDDC: Housing and Environmental Health, Private landlords, RSL’s.</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy/package to look at a holistic approach to financial education/support. Project undertaken by Homeless Prevention Group and HPG</td>
<td>NDDC, Voluntary Sector, RSL’s</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play areas and areas of open space linked with new development – (within Local Development Plan)</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Corporation – have to achieve ‘good’ in Eco Homes standards</td>
<td>NDDC, RSL, Planning</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership for delivery

This rests with North Devon District Council as the strategic housing authority for the area.
5. Heritage, Culture, Sport & Leisure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phased revitalisation of Rock Park; to include Kiddies play area, new toilet block, skate park, pathways etc</td>
<td>NDDC, DYS, BTC, SND, DCC</td>
<td>Short, Medium and Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Quarter Feasibility Study</td>
<td>NDDC, NDTT, ArtsSW, ACE</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote and encourage Extended Schools programme</td>
<td>Children’s Trust, DCC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Centre Redevelopment</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review opportunities for further development of open spaces for sport and leisure and for development of team sports e.g. green space in Yeo Vale area</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review potential for development of more family evening culture including cafes and restaurants</td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review accessibility of current facilities to low income households</td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champion Barnstaple’s rich and diverse identity, promote cultural tourism, support creative industries and preserve historic environment</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTC, Cultural and heritage organisations</td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore potential for expanding heritage trail around neighbourhoods of Barnstaple – suggestion from Newport</td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to expand access to and use of library facilities</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider how advantage can be taken of the 2012 Olympics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not yet agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

This is such a diverse set of issues that no single delivery body is responsible.
6. Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Directory – business survey</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC Business Link</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Directory of Barnstaple Town</td>
<td>DCC, NDDDC, Economic Ptns, DTLP, ND College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Partnership – 2020 Vision</td>
<td>NDDC, DCC, Economic Partnership, RegCo, Obj 2</td>
<td>Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Barnstaple Town Centre including.</td>
<td>Varied partners</td>
<td>Medium to Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Queens Street/Bear Street Car Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cattle Market/ Mill Road</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seven Brethren</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anchorwood Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cultural cluster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regenerate the Housing Stock in Trinity/St Mary’s Wards</td>
<td>NDH</td>
<td>Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Publication and distribution of a quality comprehensive guide for the town</td>
<td>TCM, DCC, TC, NDDC, CoC, MB</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop regeneration strategy for priority communities that have highest levels of disadvantage</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTC, LAA Job Centre Plus</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address needs of people in receipt of incapacity benefit in light of the pilot projects being initiated in Ilfracombe and Bideford</td>
<td>Job Centre Plus lead with partners</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop financial products and services to address financial exclusion and maximise income</td>
<td>Community Banking Partnership</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures to address unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership for delivery

Once again, there is no single lead body. Town Centre Management, the North West Devon Economic Partnership, Regeneration Company, Local Area Agreement all have a part to play.
## 7. Built and Natural Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review neighbourhoods to identify areas that need improvement to raise pride in the area</td>
<td>APB</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that all developments are built with best design advice</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure development of Rock Park and other open spaces</td>
<td>See Newport and Town Centre actions</td>
<td>Short, medium and long term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-enforce the philosophy of</td>
<td>All Partners</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-think</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-cycle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved waste collection</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved information for residents and business re: climate change and reducing energy consumption</td>
<td>NDDC, DCC, DEAC,C&amp;C’S</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act on biodiversity study – maximise public and green spaces</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve flood defence</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, EA</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive development of development sites</td>
<td>Varied partners</td>
<td>Medium/Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote renewables for home and business energy</td>
<td>NDDC</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Awareness programme for landlords, owners and occupiers on energy efficiency</td>
<td>All Partners</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackle fuel poverty and other affordable warmth issues – in progress but needs greater emphasis</td>
<td>NDDC, DSP, DEAC</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green travel plans</td>
<td>DCC with partners</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encams projects?</td>
<td></td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town design statement for Barnstaple &amp; Greenscape</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of our use of green spaces to assess whether it is effective and sustainable.</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, BTC</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation and implementation of a recycling scheme for the Town</td>
<td>TCM, NDDC, BTC, CoC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

Various
# 8. Lifelong Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand “local” higher education opportunities and pursue the proposal to establish a distinct HE facility in Northern Devon</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>Very high/Medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share and make better use of contacts with local employers. In particular promote apprenticeships and improved co-ordination of work placements</td>
<td>Connexions, Job Centre plus, DEBP, business and 14+ learning providers</td>
<td>High/Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to develop basic skills provision in formats which meet learner needs and start within their “comfort zones”.</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>High Short/Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target individuals with no or level 1 qualifications.</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>High Medium/Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities to bring NEET (16-20 year olds “not in education, employment or training”) young people into learning. Develop more appropriate pre E2E provision for young people in this category, including young offenders.</td>
<td>Connexions &amp; North Devon College</td>
<td>High Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within or arising from the StAR process, review curriculum and management of current arrangements for 16+ young people with learning difficulties.</td>
<td>LLSC</td>
<td>High Short/Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get together key players/providers and rethink recreational learning provision in light of funding constraints.</td>
<td>LLSC &amp; North Devon College</td>
<td>High Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support activities to offer first-steps of learning in non-threatening and non-traditional venues, i.e. expand current “outreach” provision.</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at local sports and leisure clubs and organisations as a route into learning and explore the possibility of sport, multi-media and movement/dance activity as routes into learning.</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to develop family learning to give parents the skills and confidence to support their children’s learning, thereby revitalising their own.</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at progression and learner support arrangements from basic skills and family learning programmes onto further learning.</td>
<td>DACL &amp; North Devon College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer coaching/tutoring/mentoring support for learners not yet sufficiently confident to enter formal learning.</td>
<td>DACL &amp; North Devon College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate the skills and learning needs of voluntary and community organisations including training for volunteers likely to be working with people with basic skills needs and other possibilities such as desktop publishing for people producing newsletters, simple financial management for trustees and treasurers, clerical and legal matters (e.g. disability discrimination law) for secretaries, trustees and chairs</td>
<td>North Devon College</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As resources permit, provide drop-in face-to-face local information and advice sessions.</td>
<td>Go4 &amp; partners</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving access: distribution/location of learning and transport to access learning – if stronger links between the planning of transport and community learning provision can be made.</td>
<td>NDDC &amp; DCC</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

Range of local partners but key role for ND College.
### 9. Promoting independence and equality of opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Priority and Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Centre Management assistance with updating of Barnstaple Access Guide</td>
<td>TCM, Police, NDDC, DCC, Shopmobility</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined up services for Older people with Mental Health Problems</td>
<td>PCT &amp; Devon Partnership Trust</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carers 'Take a break' services (respite/sitting etc)</td>
<td>PCT; Voluntary Sector</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension to out of hours emergency support</td>
<td>PCT/Housing associations</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve use of technology, extra care housing, and design of homes etc to maintain people in their own homes</td>
<td>LAA, NDDC, DCC, PCT</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote health and healthy living through walking for health and other exercise programmes, healthy diet, falls prevention, mental health strategy, maintaining people independently</td>
<td>LAA, NDDC, DCC, PCT, Community &amp; Voluntary Sector</td>
<td>Short/medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to leisure, learning and volunteering opportunities</td>
<td>LAA, NDDC, DCC, PCT, Community &amp; Voluntary Sector, NDC</td>
<td>Short/Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve older people’s participation in the Our Town work and in their neighbourhoods</td>
<td>Barnstaple Alliance</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to information about a range of services</td>
<td>All local partners, Care Direct, LPSA2</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve availability of benefits advice and take-up campaigns to older people to pay for new expenses, such as housing maintenance</td>
<td>DCC, NDDC, CAB, other Community and Voluntary Orgs</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and optimise community transport, improve public transport, training for older drivers</td>
<td>DCC, NDCTA, NDDC</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better engagement of older people, especially hard to reach and isolated in decision-making, volunteering etc</td>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address issues of social isolation for older people living alone with few social networks</td>
<td></td>
<td>To be agreed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Leadership for delivery**

To be agreed but also key area for LAA.
Conclusion and next steps

This report represents a major step forward in developing a unified view of the aspirations and needs of the people who live and work in Barnstaple. It will be refined and developed in the years to follow but is a sound starting point from which we can build.

Delivery of the many actions contained in this plan will require a determined effort and considerable project and programme management. During the period until the end of 2006 the following actions will be taken:

**On 12th June** the Action Plan will be shared with colleagues from the Regional Development Agency, Government Office of the South West and Local Area Agreement at an action planning event. This will aim to secure agreement about those actions that are contained in this plan that can secure support from strategic partners and also to identify gaps in local thinking.

**By the end of August** a summary of the action plan will be delivered to every home in Barnstaple, with a particular emphasis on neighbourhood actions.

**On 21st June** the Action Plan will be shared with elected representatives from all three Councils who will be asked to endorse the Action Plan.

**On Monday 26th June** The Action Plan will be launched at an event outside Barnstaple Library – the site of the launch of the Our Town Campaign in March 2005. All partners will be sent copies and invited to formally adopt the report.

**Terms of Reference** for the Project Board and revised Barnstaple Alliance will be presented at a meeting of the full Alliance and the Project Board will formally begin work during the summer.

**A full alliance meeting** will be held on October 2006 to review initial progress.

**Two Question Time events** will be planned before end of 2006 with a focus on Children and Young People and Community Safety/Anti-social behaviour.

This report and the programme that it contains has been the result of the contributions of far too many people to thank. Their enthusiastic and committed support has been very much appreciated – and will be needed in equal measure in the years to come.

**PLEASE GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK**

Please use the feedback form to send in your thoughts and comments on this plan or to make any other observation about how you think we can make Our Town an even better place to live and work.
## Appendix 1. Neighbourhood Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newport</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend double yellow lines to regulate dangerous parking at Newport School</td>
<td>Part of school travel plan which is now under way. Completion anticipated by end 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address young peoples issues at Park Community School</td>
<td>Actively being managed jointly by School and Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish regular Police &quot;surgeries&quot; and enhance neighbourhood watch</td>
<td>To be resolved as part of neighbourhood policing approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site a community notice board</td>
<td>Will be addressed as part of community information and communications strategy – new project to begin in autumn 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business waste</td>
<td>Newport businesses to introduce a ban on supplying plastic bags.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational learning</td>
<td>Initiate discussions with ND College re future of programme – 2006 onwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop organised walks around Newport to learn about its history</td>
<td>Consideration needed about how to address this – part of a wider Barnstaple heritage trail? Initiate discussion in autumn 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-vamp Rock Park</td>
<td>Discussions advanced between NDDC and BTC – various enhancements planned, at different stages of development. Revamp of Rock Park with leisure facilities is a 3-phased approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play facilities in need of improvement in key locations such as Convent Close</td>
<td>Consider review of play facilities across Barnstaple - 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better management of open spaces – Tarka Trail, Coney Gutt, open ground at end of Ladies Mile, Lynwoods/area behind Bensons Beds and land at Poltmarsh Road</td>
<td>Review of all such spaces needed across Barnstaple – reflect on potential for change in autumn 2006. Possibly initiate project 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Longbridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Removal of metal barriers opposite Cedars as they restrict wheelchair access</td>
<td>Some work has been carried out in this area. This kind of work normally carried out in batches, however the barriers in question will be altered as a priority in the new year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another school crossing patrol at Cedar roundabout</td>
<td>School travel plan is just about to be undertaken. This issue will be taken into consideration alongside any junction changes that may be made post Western bypass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a virtual bus</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sticklepath school more available for young people to use out of school hours</td>
<td>Links to Children's theme. Extended Schools co-ordinator currently working on this. Children's Centre development currently planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every house in the Harricott area to have a sticker detailing map/grid reference.</td>
<td>Community Safety Partnership to be approached re: developing this project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of ND College</td>
<td>This is currently under very active consideration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Whiddon Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Travel Plan for Orchard Vale</td>
<td>Undertaken in 2005/06. New traffic order in place. Walking bus stops have been erected including one in Tesco's car park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better signposts for footpath routes and interpretation boards as appropriate</td>
<td>Could be a County/District/Town joint funded project – project to be initiated during autumn 2006/spring 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase and re-launch of community watch service</td>
<td>To be resolved as part of neighbourhood policing approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway enhancements needed – both in terms of appearance and safety</td>
<td>Tesco working with Safer North Devon and with DCC Highways, looking at landscaping and maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to tidy area up – trim hedges and verges etc</td>
<td>Acted upon immediately and action taken – needs constant vigilance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter/dog mess – especially on corner of Barton Road</td>
<td>Needs to be followed up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern that wheelchair access difficult in some areas due to lack of drop kerbs</td>
<td>Issue to be raised with DCC Highways and possible links to Barnstaple Access Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better connect business with Town Centre Management etc</td>
<td>To be raised as an issue with key partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter/community information</td>
<td>(Cross Barnstaple Issue)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Yeo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint School/Police campaign to raise awareness of safety issues around the school: Children crossing Bicton Street, Inappropriate parking, Cars driving on pavement etc</td>
<td>School Travel Plan completed 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting needed to address anti-social behaviour at Frankmarsh</td>
<td>This matter is being actively worked on, meetings have taken place and action initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop community facilities and information</td>
<td>Discussions being held between Yeo Valley Community Group, NDDC, DCC with regard to Community facilities and notice board in Yeo Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Allotments secure</td>
<td>Falls under the remit of Barnstaple Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widen Bicton St entrance and create car park on one plot</td>
<td>Falls under the remit of Barnstaple Town Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More ramps on pavements for wheelchair access</td>
<td>Travel Plan Needs to be referred to Barnstaple Access Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop people parking on the pavement re above</td>
<td>Police/Highways? Needs to be referred to Barnstaple Access Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Woodland</td>
<td>Continuing discussions between Devon Forrest Commission and NDDC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completion of Western Bypass, including the Downstream Bridge gives rise to new opportunities</td>
<td>Project well under way and on schedule for completion spring 2007. Discussions well advanced and agreements reached re: investment needed and process for improvements for the Strand and the Square.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revamp of Rock Park with leisure facilities</td>
<td>Cross reference to Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish regular Police “surgeries” and enhance neighbourhood watch</td>
<td>To be resolved as part of neighbourhood policing approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration Strategy needed</td>
<td>To be initiated as part of discussions with Local Area Agreement due to be initiated in June 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop community information sites</td>
<td>Project to be initiated autumn 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address issues relating to HIMOs and improve links with landlords</td>
<td>Part of NDDC’s Housing Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve facilities for community and voluntary sector</td>
<td>Discussion to be initiated with CVS to consider potential for more shared use of premises etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development briefs</td>
<td>In various stages of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter issues – especially at weekends</td>
<td>Referred to NDDC for consideration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Forches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need for major refurbishment of many properties.</td>
<td>North Devon Homes has now begun its refurbishment approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration strategy needed</td>
<td>Now being initiated and will also be developed alongside LAA discussions on 12th June.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic issues/access</td>
<td>Under active review but difficult to resolve – regeneration strategy may offer new opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish regular Police “surgeries” and enhance neighbourhood watch – especially to address anti-social behaviour (inc. vandalism)</td>
<td>To be resolved as part of neighbourhood policing approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build Multi-Use Games Area for community and school use</td>
<td>Has now been constructed. Issue remains relating to floodlighting which is subject of active consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More money advice needed</td>
<td>CAB very active, opportunities to be part of wider Devon Community Banking initiative – also involves North Devon Homes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Pilton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need for better access to play facilities evenings and weekends</td>
<td>Community College has made its facilities available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic issues/concerns re impact of new Bypass</td>
<td>Under active consideration as part of wider traffic management issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish regular Police “surgeries” and enhance neighbourhood watch – especially to address anti-social behaviour (inc. vandalism)</td>
<td>To be resolved as part of neighbourhood policing approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for wider access to family support services</td>
<td>Possibility of extended schools/children’s centre development being examined with the group of schools that serves this area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop community information sites</td>
<td>Project to be initiated autumn 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2. References and Notes

1. Local Community Alliances – established to involve more local people in decision-making processes. There are some 11 operating across North Devon, all of which feed into the North Devon Community Alliance (Local Strategic Partnership).

2. Local Strategic Partnership – established as a result of the Local Government Act 2000 and involves a wide range of partners to promote a long term vision for improving the social, environmental and economic needs of the area.

3. Community Strategy – the document produced by the North Devon Community Alliance to describe the priorities for North Devon.

4. A Community Strategy for Devon, published by the Devon Strategic Partnership in 2004 - a full copy can be found at www.devonsp.org


6. CACI Information Solutions produces an annual Wealth of the Nation report.


8. These include the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Tarka Trail, South West Coast Paths, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including Taw/Torridge Estuary), Exmoor National Park, North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Coastal Preservation Areas, and Areas of Great Landscape Value.

9. Local Area Agreement – a wide ranging agreement between the county of Devon and central government to improve quality of life in the county. Details are available at www.devon.gov.uk

10. Index of multiple deprivation ODPM.

11. Registered Social Landlords who provide social housing for rent in partnership with North Devon District Council.


13. Anti-social behaviour orders – enforceable by the courts and S30 Dispersal Orders that empower the police to move groups away from trouble spots.

14. Walking buses – community run schemes that safely guide a group of children to school on foot, using walking bus stops to collect them.

15. Local Public Service Agreement – an agreement between Devon and central government to address key priorities in the county.


17. Child Concern Pathway – an inter-agency approach to identifying the needs of children and families and then co-ordinating services to meet them.
19. Targets set by Government for Registered Social Landlords in relation to the fitness of their properties.
20. Local Development Framework – prepared by NDDC, in consultation with residents, to set out the land use context for the local area – drawing from reports such as Moving Forward Together for its evidence base.
21. Reflected in ND Shop Mobility Spend Survey.
25. Care Direct – a free telephone helpline service provided as part of Devon County Council’s customer contact centre.
26. LAA – Similar to the LPSA but with a wider remit.
27. White Paper – Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a new direction for community services para 24

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Much of the data used in this report was put together by the Devon County Council’s Corporate Information team. The profile will shortly be made available on the Barnstaple website and can be provided upon request.
Feedback Form

Your feedback on this plan and suggestions for how it can be further improved will be most welcome and seriously considered. In particular we would like to hear your thoughts on:

Section 2 - Your neighbourhood
Does the description match your experience? Are there issues that you think need to be addressed that are missing?

Section 3 - Thematic issues
Do you agree with the analysis? Are there issues that you think need to be addressed that are missing?

Section 4 – Action Plan
What is missing? Would you like to be involved in the delivery of any actions?

Your details
This is optional but if you want to receive feedback on your comments or would like to be involved in any way please fill in below:

Name

Address

Contact telephone number, email etc

My particular interests are:

Please return this form to Jo Ash at North Devon District Council, Civic Centre, Barnstaple or email your comments to Jo at jo.ash@northdevon.gov.uk