

**NORTHERN DEVON  
JOINT  
SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

**Final Draft – May 2009**



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Introduction

- Introduction to the North Devon and Torridge Districts
- Challenges for the communities of northern Devon
- Purpose of the North Devon and Torridge Local Strategic Partnership

### Our Vision

- Vision/Mission
- The Partnership
- Developing Themes and LSP Priorities

### Our Priorities For Action

- A World Class Environment
- Strong and Inclusive Communities.
- A Growing Economy
- Homes and Housing
- Inspiring Young People
- Health and Well Being
- A Safer Devon

### Delivering the Strategy

Shaping northern Devon's future

- Delivery of Key Strategic Objectives
- The Devon Local Area Agreement
- Local Development Framework
- Performance Management (Thematic Action Groups)

### Appendices:

1. Action Plan – 2008 – 2013. This Action Plan has been produced in conjunction with all partners. It is recognised that in some Theme areas further work on the actions is required and these will be development through the Theme groups. This is intended to be a living document and through this further work it is envisaged that some actions will be amended to take account of emerging details and changing priorities.
2. Key Issues/Statistics
3. Membership of LSP Delivery Board and Contact Details

## Foreword

The northern Devon area is a fantastic place to live, to work and to visit and its many communities have a shared history of which they are rightly proud. The partners that have prepared this strategy are determined to address the challenges we face and build on our many successes to ensure that the area has a successful future.

Strong partnerships need to show the commitment and flexibility to step outside of each organisation's view of the world to act together on common problems and to make the most of our skills and resources. This is what the Local Strategic Partnership and this Sustainable Community Strategy are all about. Councils and their public sector partners are charged with delivering high quality services and have large amounts of public money at their disposal. However, they cannot meet the aspirations of the area alone, nor should they expect to do so. Harnessing the skills and experience of the private sector, community and voluntary organisations and residents are crucial to achieve lasting change.

The new Local Strategic Partnership for northern Devon formed a little over a year ago. It has spent that time talking with a wide range of people about the strengths and needs of the area and this strategy sets out the priorities upon which we have agreed to work together. It does not describe every service that is offered or every example of community – led action. Instead it sets out the programme on which we will work together, where joint action is the best way to achieve our aims.

We have agreed our **Vision for the area:**

**We want northern Devon to be:**

***“An economically vibrant place which, combined with an exceptional and diverse environment, offers an excellent quality of life for all its people and communities in a safe, healthy and sustainable manner”.***

A lot of people and partnerships will be involved in delivering the strategy. Some action will be led locally, whilst in other cases we will support countywide or regional partners. The job of the Local Strategic Partnership is to make sure we all pull together to improve the quality of life for everyone.

The strategy covers the next ten years. We will keep you informed of our progress but a lot will change in that time and we will need to be alert and adaptable and to keep our priorities under review. We commend this strategy to you and ask for your support as we strive to achieve our vision for the area.

Cllr Brian Greenslade  
Chair of the LSP and  
Shadow Leader  
Devon County Council

Cllr Des Brailey  
Vice Chair of the LSP and  
Leader North Devon Council

Cllr James Morrish  
Leader  
Torridge District Council

## Introduction to the North Devon and Torridge Districts

The North Devon and Torridge area extends to just over 2,070 square kilometres and has a population of 152,000 people, who live in a network of historic market towns, coastal villages and small rural settlements. About half the population live around the Taw and Torridge estuaries; in Barnstaple, Bideford, Braunton, Fremington, Great Torrington and Northam. During holiday seasons, there is a threefold increase in the population.

Just over half of the population is of working age, and a quarter over sixty-five. The proportion of retired people is projected to continue to increase rapidly due to inward migration.

Barnstaple is the sub-regional centre and strategic location for the provision of further and higher education, District General Hospital and shopping facilities. Bideford has a close relationship and is linked to Barnstaple by the A39. Further afield are the market towns of Holsworthy, Great Torrington, Braunton and South Molton, serving wider rural populations. Along the coast are resorts such as Lynton & Lynmouth, Combe Martin, Ilfracombe, Woolacombe and Westward Ho!

The North Devon Link Road and Atlantic Highway run east/west and connect the area to the M5 and to north Cornwall. The only rail link runs between Barnstaple and Exeter. Other north/south links are of poorer quality.

On the eastern side of the area lies the Exmoor National Park, whilst to the south is Dartmoor. The area is defined by the catchments of the rivers Taw and Torridge and their tributaries and to the west by the headwaters of the Tamar. The rugged northern Devon coast is defined throughout its entire length as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the wider area comprises the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

It is an area of tremendous opportunities – strong communities, strong partnerships, low crime, a world class environment, increasing numbers of people accessing higher education in Barnstaple. We have much to build on in the coming years.

### Challenges facing the communities of Northern Devon

The area has low skills, low wages and low productivity, and we will need to work together to raise aspirations and develop the economy to provide opportunities that will grow, retain and attract talented people.

- High fuel, energy and food prices, particularly in the context of our rural communities and relative isolation requires that everyone lives and works in a more sustainable way.
- The health and quality of life of our communities needs to be improved, especially in our priority communities, and in relation to access to appropriate housing, services, and cultural and leisure activities.
- Managing and mitigating the impact of sudden change, including extreme weather events, farm animal diseases and other major incidents will continue to be a priority.
- The population of the area is ageing and action needs to be taken to address the needs of older people and to retain or attract young people.

## What is a Local Strategic Partnership?

This Sustainable Community Strategy has been published and prepared by the North Devon and Torridge Local Strategic Partnership. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) bring together the agendas, resources and expertise of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors at a local level to promote and improve the social, economic, and environmental well being of their area.

## Our Purpose

The purpose of the North Devon and Torridge Local Strategic Partnership is to be the 'partnership of partnerships' and to bring a strategic overview, added value, and new approaches to improving quality of life in our area by:

- Setting clear priorities for action
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of priorities
- Harnessing the energy and supporting the capacity of the community and voluntary sector
- Being clear about which partnerships are accountable for delivery of programmes
- Preparing and implementing a 'Sustainable Community Strategy', improving quality of life through partnership working.
- Working with partners to deliver the 'Local Area Agreement'. This has been negotiated between the Government and the community of Devon and is expressed through the seven themes that form the structure of our Sustainable Community Strategy.

## Why a Sustainable Community Strategy?

Local authorities are required to produce sustainable community strategies that set out their long-term plans to improve the quality of life for local people. A sustainable community strategy (SCS) is the overarching plan, which guides the priorities of other plans and strategies for the area. It plays a key role in developing coherent service provision between different agencies and partnerships and sets the context for land use planning through the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The strategy is based on evidence of local needs and takes into consideration the aspirations of local people and organisations. It encourages collective responsibility and joint working to improve the delivery of those services that are important to local people.

The SCS sets out a long-term vision for the next ten years, expressed through seven specialist themes, supported by three cross-cutting themes and core values. Each theme includes priorities for action. The LSP will measure progress to monitor what we are doing well and where more work is needed.

The SCS will be reviewed regularly to make sure that it continues to reflect the views of local people in the future.

## Our Vision

We want northern Devon to be:

*“An economically vibrant place which, combined with an exceptional and diverse environment, offers an excellent quality of life for all its people and communities in a safe, healthy and sustainable manner”.*

## Our Mission

\* To define, champion and achieve our vision for the area.

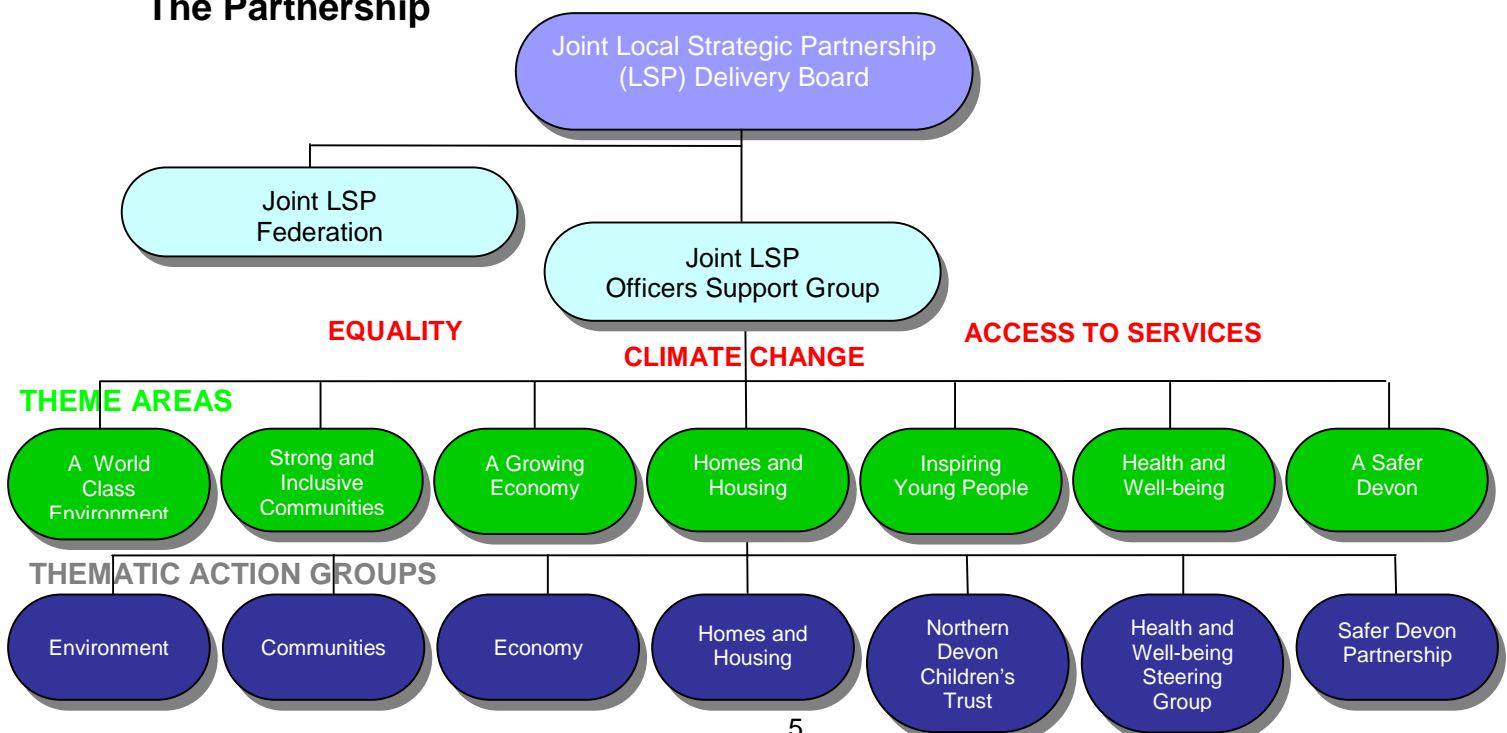
We will do this by bringing together organisations and local communities to work jointly, agree priorities and align resources.

In so doing, we will deliver better services, provide greater opportunities and tackle inequality to achieve the outcomes expressed in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## Our Core Values and cross-cutting themes

- \* Value diversity, using equality of opportunity for everyone as a guiding principle.
- \* Improve accessibility, to the services and opportunities people want and need, taking into account demographic change.
- \* Increase sustainability, work to address the challenges and seize the opportunities of climate change, and reduce our impact on the environment.

## The Partnership



## Developing Themes and LSP Priorities

Extensive consultation has been undertaken to explore these themes and to identify the ‘big issues’ that will have the greatest impact upon the lives of our communities.

The results of the consultations, including those issues that have emerged from the many town and parish plans prepared by local communities, and the objectives and agendas of the partners and stakeholders, are set out in Tables in the Appendix.

From these many issues, a number have been identified as priorities for the Sustainable Community Strategy, where it is clear that the Local Strategic Partnership can bring significant added value.

The following theme areas match the long-term challenges set out in the Devon Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-18 and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011.

### Theme Areas

#### 1. A World Class Environment

Supporting our world-class natural environment, our built environment and cultural heritage to improve the look and feel of the places where we live

#### 2. Strong and Inclusive Communities

Working to ensure strong, prosperous and inclusive communities with a sustainable and vibrant future

#### 3. A Growing Economy

Creating the conditions to enable North Devon and Torridge to have a strong and growing economy, and ensuring maximum opportunities are available for everyone to contribute to and benefit from it

#### 4. Homes and Housing

Ensuring the availability and balance of appropriate housing

#### 5. Inspiring Young People

Inspiring our young people to achieve their best and supporting them in tackling the issues that concern them most

#### 6. Health and Well-being

Promoting health and personal well-being for all so that people are as healthy as possible

#### 7. A Safer Devon

Tackling behaviour that intimidates or hurts people in North Devon and Torridge.

Each of these themes will build into their plans, actions relating to the three “cross-cutting” themes on page 5.

## Our priorities for action

### 1. A WORLD-CLASS ENVIRONMENT

The environment of North Devon and Torridge is one of the most unspoilt and tranquil in the UK. There are extensive Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast, and a world-class UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, sections of National Park, and many impressive geological and wildlife sites.

There are significant numbers of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments within the network of historic towns and villages, and throughout the landscape.

These are the primary assets that drive the economy and tourism, and that sustain traditional rural industries and communities. The area also has significant potential for renewable energy technologies.

These assets are finite, and are vulnerable to changes in climate, to over-production of waste, to pollution, to increased use of road transport, and to over-development.

Our challenge is to protect and enhance these assets, supporting our world-class natural and built environment and cultural heritage and improving the look and feel of the places where we live, whilst meeting the social and economic needs of communities in the 21st. Century. To do so, we will need to live more sustainably in the future than we do at present.

#### Priority Actions – Key (LAA Ref) & (1.1 – Priority Action Outcome Ref from Action Plan)

##### PA 1: Increase recycling and reduce waste and pollution (LAA1)

**Consider the opportunities that a new energy from waste plant can offer as a key aspect of an overall waste management strategy. (1.1)**

##### PA 2: Reverse the decline in Biodiversity (LAA8)

**Establish better baseline data on species and habitats, and on natural resources to preserve them for the future. (2.1)**

##### PA 3: Tackle Climate Change (LAA3)

**Provide practical, cost-effective energy conservation measures as part of private sector housing renewal. (3.3)**

**Manage and reduce the risk and impact of flooding and erosion. (3.6)**

**Promote and deliver sustainable design and construction in new build. (3.8)**

#### **PA 4: Increase participation in activities relating to the culture and heritage of the area (LAA12)**

**Develop one overall cultural policy for northern Devon. (4.3)**

**Develop a policy for the historic environment. (4.1)**

#### **PA 5: Improve the quantity, quality and accessibility of public spaces (including the coast) and green infrastructure (LAA2)**

**Develop and implement a green infrastructure strategy. (5.6)**

## **2. STRONG AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**

The sense of ‘community’ is very strong amongst many local residents, particularly in rural parishes. In larger towns this is often complicated by the close association of people to their particular neighbourhoods. Generally, residents enjoy a good quality of life and over eighty per cent of people who responded to recent Quality of Life surveys report that they like living in the area and get on well with neighbours.

A diverse and vibrant Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) provides a broad range of services and support to individuals and communities, but requires additional support to maximise the scope, impact and sustainability of its activities.

### **Priority Actions**

#### **PA 6: Increase the influence and participation of residents in community decision-making and service delivery. (LAA16)**

**Support towns and parishes to prepare a Community Action Plan and make better use of new and existing plans in policy and service delivery. (6.6)**

**Make better use of the contribution of communities in policy and service development through improved engagement and empowerment. (6.1)**

**Develop a strategy for the actively retired. (6.1)**

#### **PA 7: Improve the quality of life for residents in communities of greatest need (LAA14, 15a)**

**Reduce the gap between those communities that experience greatest disadvantage, (especially Ilfracombe, Bideford East, East and Central Barnstaple, rural Torridge) and the Devon average. (7.1)**

**Improve access to “entitlement take-up”, community banking services and affordable finance, especially for people who are economically excluded. (7.1)**

**PA 8: Create the environment for a sustainable, vibrant third sector. (LAA16)**

**Develop and support the infrastructure of the VCS in North Devon and Torridge to improve reach and sustainability. (8.1)**

**PA 9: Improved access to services and facilities for residents and communities. (LAA16)**

**Enable the development of a community hub in each of the market towns. (9.1)**

**3. A GROWING ECONOMY**

The natural environment of North Devon and Torridge is its primary asset and key economic driver, and generates through tourism alone an income of £350 million a year, supporting over 20,000 jobs.

The area is relatively isolated from the rest of the UK, with weak transport connections. This results in a higher percentage of smaller businesses compared to other parts of the South West and the UK, low levels of high value added and growth sectors, and impacts upon productivity and local wage levels.

Our task is to overcome these constraints to create the conditions that will enable northern Devon to have a strong and growing economy, ensuring maximum opportunities are available for everyone to contribute to and benefit from it.

**Priority Actions****PA 10: Regeneration of key settlements and sites to increase the economic potential of these areas (LAA14)**

**Deliver regeneration programmes for priority communities of Bideford, Holsworthy, Ilfracombe, and Barnstaple, with a Regeneration Partnership in place for each. (10.2)**

**Support the development of the new ND+ and the Joint Delivery Team. (10.1)**

**PA 11: Development of infrastructure necessary to support economic growth (LAA22, 19, 17, 20, 21)**

**Identification and development of suitable employment land and workspace, to support sustainable communities. (11.2)**

**Support the re-location of North Devon College. (12.3)**

**Support and develop the skills infrastructure. (12.3)**

**Pursue opportunities for improved inter-urban transport between Barnstaple and Bideford (improvements to the North Devon Link Road and a Park & Change facility for Barnstaple). (11.1)**

**Develop the ICT infrastructure, with particular focus on rural areas. (11.3)**

**PA 12: Increase of business productivity, with a focus on key sectors, by supporting the key drivers of productivity (LAA14)**

**Prioritise support to key emerging sectors – creative industries, advanced/niche engineering, food and drink, renewable energy technologies. (12.1)**

**Skills development – working with key partners; businesses, education; LSC, ICT skills, links to FE & HE. (12.3)**

**PA 13: Development of the Rural Economy through utilisation of the environment as an economic driver (LAA25)**

**Development of higher value visitor spend, including day visitors. (Green tourism: trails, biosphere. Cultural: festivals, theatres, museums, arts. Sport-based: extreme sports, surfing.) (13.2)**

**Support traditional industries - agriculture/land management and marine sectors with particular assistance on developing livestock market facilities and rural business centres at key sites within northern Devon: Holsworthy and South Molton. (13.1)**

**Development of the Food and Drink Sector through North Devon Food Links. (13.3)**

**Produce a North Devon Renewable Energy strategy and identify the most appropriate sites for renewable energy facilities through the LDF. (13.4)**

## **4. HOMES AND HOUSING**

There is a shortage of quality affordable homes in the area.

Our historic towns, villages, and hamlets include many buildings that are scheduled, or in conservation areas, and significant areas of countryside that are important for their landscape and bio-diversity and are therefore protected. Consequently there are development constraints which may also lead to building land shortfall.

There are also many second homes and holiday lets, and an increasing demand for retirement homes.

The cost of housing is high relative to local wage levels and this is of major significance for local communities.

Housing has a direct impact upon the viability and cohesion of communities, homelessness, families living in temporary accommodation, and the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. It impacts on health, educational attainment and training, sustainability, and economic wellbeing and inclusion.

District Councils have statutory duties regarding housing and are keen to work in partnership with other public and voluntary bodies to avoid duplication and utilise people's skills in a more targeted way working together to create a seamless service for residents.

## Priority Actions

### PA 14: Improve the standards of private sector housing (LAA23)

**Undertake a stock condition survey ,and secure funding. (14.1)**

**Develop schemes to better use existing homes. (14.2)**

**Ensure homes are more energy efficient. (14.3)**

**Address Fuel Poverty. (14.3)**

### PA 15: Increase the supply of affordable homes (LAA23, 26)

**Assist in the identification of suitable land (partner organisation assets). (15.2)**

**Implement the Affordable Housing Delivery Plan1. (15.2)**

**Facilitate the supply of land for affordable housing in protected and sensitive landscapes through landscape character assessment and the development of other methodologies. (15.1)**

### PA 16: Reduce homelessness and the fear of homelessness (LAA27)

**Ensure that partners work together to tackle homelessness. (16.1)**

### PA 17: Ensure that the needs of the travelling community are met (LAA27)

**Provide access to both permanent and transit sites for Gypsies and Travellers (17.1)**

## 5. INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE

The quality of life in North Devon and Torridge is very high, with good schools and many pupils who achieve above UK average grades. An excellent range of leisure and cultural opportunities are available and there are very active youth councils in Barnstaple and Bideford, and Young Advisors in Ilfracombe with numerous other programmes across the area. Young people make a major contribution.

For the majority of children and young people, this is a great place in which to grow up and many families move here for the quality of life on offer. However, there is a marked difference in outcomes for children and young people across the area when compared to the Devon average. Ilfracombe particularly stands out in this respect.

Rural isolation is a particular issue, limiting access to health services, and to leisure, sport and play facilities. Mental health services for young people are improving, but are still not meeting demand, whilst childhood obesity levels (measured at ages 4 and 11) are higher on average than in many UK areas.

Low household incomes, crime and anti-social behaviour and disengagement impact upon young people, especially in the deprived wards of Bideford, Barnstaple and Ilfracombe.

### Priority Actions

**PA18 Be Healthy**

**PA19 Stay Safe**

**PA20 Enjoy and Achieve**

**PA21 Make a Positive Contribution**

**PA22 Achieve Economic Well-Being  
(LAA29)**

We will focus on three particular priorities for children and young people that will help deliver all these outcomes:

**Develop better infrastructure for children and young people (play facilities, youth provision etc). (20.4)**

**Promote youth engagement, building on excellent work already under way. (21.1)**

**Pilot a new approach to “Narrowing The Gap” in outcomes for children and young people and their families in the priority area of Ilfracombe and use the learning to address need in other priority areas. (21.2)**

## 6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Our aspiration is to promote health and personal wellbeing for all so that people are as healthy as possible

*(The overarching priority is to address inequalities in health, with a local focus on rurality and access issues in northern Devon – Promoting health & reducing health inequalities)*

*'In general we have a healthy population in Devon with very good quality health and social care services. But the challenges are largely as a result of our lifestyles – we consume more calories than we burn off with physical activity, leading to overweight and obesity. Lots of us smoke despite knowing the risk to our health and the health of others, and some of us drink too much alcohol. We do not eat enough fresh fruit and vegetables and the level of fat in our food predisposes us to cancer and circulatory disease. Illegal drugs result in acquisitive crime and concerns for safety in our communities. Risky sexual activities results in escalating levels of sexually transmitted disease and unwanted pregnancies. We still do not do enough for those in society who are least able to help themselves.'*

Annual Public Health Report 2008  
Devon Primary Care Trust

The population projections forward to 2021 show the locality as a whole will decrease its 0-17 age group from 21% to 18% and the working age population from 59% to 54%. Whereas the older population aged 65 years and older will increase from 21% to 28%. This presents specific challenges for the locality.

For parts of North Devon and Torridge access to an acute hospital by public transport may prove more difficult when compared to other areas of Devon. Holsworthy is the most geographically distant area from acute hospitals having a drive time of 51 minutes to Barnstaple and 75 minutes to Exeter by car. However access to GP's by public transport is not significantly different to other parts of Devon.

### Priority Actions

**PA23 Promote health and wellbeing with a focus on identified communities of greatest need**

**PA24 Promote lifestyle initiatives and interventions in local communities**

**PA25 Promote independence through support and services for carers and users of services**

**PA26 Improved access to services and facilities for residents and communities.  
(LAA13, 30, 11, 10)**

The priority for this action plan will be on the wider dimensions of 'alcohol' and its impact in the community.

The following actions will provide additional emphasis and support to this priority during the following year and a framework for our future approach to improving health and wellbeing in Northern Devon.

**Adopt a neighbourhood management approach to health improvement in priority communities, to address inequalities e.g., Bideford East, Ilfracombe, East and Central Barnstaple. We will work with our partners to consistently develop this approach and will monitor and evaluate the impact. (23.1)**

**Work with partners to improve the reach and sustainability of the voluntary and community sector in Northern Devon to promote healthy lifestyles in local settings. (23.4)**

**Promote independence through identifying opportunities which increase the advice and support provided especially for carers and users of services. (25.1)**

**Work to improve services and facilities to maximise the opportunities to improve access to health and wellbeing initiatives in local communities. (26.1)**

## **7. A SAFER DEVON**

### **TACKLING BEHAVIOUR THAT INTIMIDATES OR HURTS PEOPLE**

Crime and disorder levels are very low compared to the rest of the UK and the main issue for some local communities, especially those in the more remote rural areas, is the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, committed by a small minority.

As part of the LSP, 'Safer North Devon' (SND), works with communities to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) across the whole area but in particular in priority neighbourhoods. The current delivery plan for SND (2008-2011) is owned by the LSP and is delivered through multi-agency partnership groups.

These groups deliver shared targets in the 6 outcome areas agreed by the Safer Devon Partnership (SDP) through the Safer Communities strand of the Devon LAA. Safer North Devon supports the county - wide delivery plan and has developed its own action plan to complement this and meet local needs. The six action areas are:

- The most harmful offending behaviour.
- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Anti-social Behaviour.
- Domestic Violence and Abuse.
- Prejudice and hate crime.
- Youth crime.

Much of the SND delivery plan is core business for partner agencies and is enhanced by partnership working. The priority outcomes for the LSP are part of this full plan and are those areas where the LSP adds real value, or the project is at risk without its support.

### **Priority Actions**

**PA27 Establish and support a framework for partnership communication and marketing of the SND (LSP) aims and outcomes.**

- PA28 Support Neighbourhood Policing/Neighbourhood Management as a partnership problem-solving framework, ensuring communities are empowered to seek help and be involved in problem resolution**
- PA29 Support a multi-agency response to anti-social behaviour (ASB) across northern Devon**
- PA30 Encourage all strategic groups to utilise the specialist skills of Police Architectural Liaison Officer and Crime Prevention Officers to design out crime**
- PA31 Support action to reduce the impact of drugs and alcohol on our communities.**
- PA32 Sponsor work to reduce first time entrants to the Youth Justice System and improve outcomes for all young people locally.  
(LAA28, 32, 34, 36, 37, 38)**

The primary action for the LSP, when taking account of all these outcomes is to:

**Target support and intervention to the priority communities of Ilfracombe, Bideford East, East and Central Barnstaple and other defined pockets of high need.**

## Delivering the strategy

### Delivery of Key Strategic Objectives

A number of delivery mechanisms have been developed. These are set out below:

#### Joint Delivery Team

The South West of England Regional Development Agency's (RDA) Corporate Plan 2009-11 identifies the "Northern Peninsula" (North Cornwall, North Devon, West Somerset) as a priority. The RDA and its partners in the sub region will appoint a Joint Delivery Team to enhance the delivery capacity of the local authorities and other agencies to secure the improvement of the local economy by focusing on the following priorities:

- Regeneration of greater Bideford
- Regeneration of Ilfracombe
- Investment in Holsworthy as a sustainable rural community

A number of other work areas are considered necessary to enable a step change to be made to improve the northern Devon economy as follows:

- South Molton regeneration, including a relocated Livestock market
- Barnstaple Regeneration - key sites and communities
- Support for the Atlantic Array and other wave and tidal energy projects
- Support for the North Devon Innovation Network
- Support for improving access to broadband in rural communities
- Employment and Skills initiatives linked to infrastructure projects

#### Developing a Priority Neighbourhood Approach

The LSP has reaffirmed its commitment to narrowing the gap between those communities that experience greatest disadvantage and the Devon average. The importance of community - based solutions is recognised and a project team has been established to achieve improved outcomes for residents and greater impact from current investment.

This is a complex and long-term process but the price of failure, both in terms of lost life opportunity for residents and in service costs reinforce the importance of this work.

Priority communities are identified by the LAA as those among the most disadvantaged 25% nationally as defined by the Index of Deprivation. However, small pockets of disadvantage at street level and in some rural settings also need a response. Priority communities require concerted, integrated effort by all partners and a fundamental change to the way we work together and with residents – acting as a community team, focused on agreed improvements, showing leadership and enabling community - led solutions.

Priority communities include areas in Ilfracombe, Barnstaple, Bideford, Westward Ho!, Northam, Appledore and Rural Torridge - more than any other area of Devon.

Historically, the communities that have been the focus of most attention are:

- Ilfracombe (supported by the Transform programme – secure for the next three years)
- Barnstaple (especially Forches, Whiddon Valley, Gorwell, Yeo Valley and Central Town) - supported by a local neighbourhood management team, led through North Devon Homes, following a successful Objective 2 programme.
- Bideford (especially East the Water), where there is no specifically resourced neighbourhood programme but where TDC, DCC and the Town Council have committed resources to prepare a town plan.
- Rural Torridge (work is currently under way to develop an action plan for this area).
- Tarka Homes is currently developing a number of neighbourhood action plans at street level in Bideford and Northam with partners.

## Local Development Framework and Sustainable Community Strategy

The Joint North Devon and Torridge Core Strategy is being prepared to achieve the Government's aim<sup>1</sup> of coherence between the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework (LDF). The required link will ensure the LDF can effectively function as a delivery mechanism for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Whilst the Sustainable Community Strategy provides the strategic vision for northern Devon, the Joint North Devon and Torridge Core Strategy provides the spatial vision and framework for planning policy that will guide and shape land - based development over the next 15-20 years.

The key themes identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy are reflected in the Core Strategy; ensuring alignment of the spatial planning objectives and local priorities.

## CORE STRATEGY – DRAFT SPATIAL PLANNING VISION

### Vision

***Northern Devon supports vibrant low carbon communities where people are able to live well, work productively and enjoy great education and leisure opportunities in harmony with nature and our world-class environment.***

*In order to achieve this vision, our mission is to promote the wellbeing of our communities and offer a high quality of life across our sub-region, from the moors to the sea. We will facilitate activity that promotes economic prosperity and capitalises on the area's entrepreneurial and enterprising culture, whilst taking better care of our environment so we become an exemplar for sustainable development based on the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve<sup>2</sup>.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities (October 2006)

<sup>2</sup> The objective is to encourage the understanding, conservation and enjoyment of the natural, cultural and built environment.

*Barnstaple and the market and coastal towns will expand to provide the full range of new developments, services and community facilities that are needed to harness Northern Devon's full potential to support sustainable communities.*

## **Aims**

- A valued natural and built environment where all assets are safeguarded and enhanced for future generations;
- A vibrant economy where employment and learning opportunities support diverse low carbon growth;
- A balanced housing market where sufficient housing of all types is integral to development schemes;
- Genuine mixed communities where there is an excellent quality of life.

## **Objectives**

### 1. Valued Environmental Assets

- Protected landscapes maintained and enhanced
- Coastlines preserved and enhanced
- Wildlife habitats conserved and enhanced
- Built heritage conserved and enhanced
- Sustainable building and construction that minimises the risks arising from climate change
- New development designed to adapt to the effects of climate change
- Measures that allow for achievement of the highest environmental standards.

### 2. A Vibrant Economy

- A rejuvenated economy that offers opportunities for all
- High quality employment environments
- Excellent learning opportunities
- Low carbon developments
- An enterprising agricultural economy
- Sustainable tourism growth.

### 3. A Balanced Housing Market

- A choice of decent housing for all
- Sufficient affordable housing to meet community needs
- A mix of housing in all communities.

### 4. Genuine Mixed Communities

- A balance between housing, employment and leisure opportunities that meets community needs
- Improved access to the full range of social, recreational and cultural services and facilities
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups fully supported by buoyant community and voluntary sectors
- A reduced gap between the fortunes of neighbourhoods
- Reduced inequalities within the most deprived areas
- More opportunities for residents and visitors to lead healthy lives
- Crime and anti-social behaviour tackled effectively

- Low fear of crime.

## **Devon Local Area Agreement 2008-2011**

The Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 (LAA) is a new settlement between central government, local government and its citizens. The agreement recognises that every place is different and will focus on :

- Improvement priorities and innovation.
- Involving local communities in shaping their own locality.
- Co-ordinated actions tailored to local needs with a strong focus on prevention.

The LAA broadens the remit of local government and its partners and allows us to respond to long-term challenges such as:

- Public Health
- Climate change
- Demographic change
- Creating strong, prosperous and inclusive communities.
- Economic prosperity
- Environmental sustainability

To respond to these challenges a Sustainable Community Strategy for Devon has been developed with key priorities and outcomes planned for the next 10 years.

Delivery plans and targets will be negotiated to clarify how the LAA targets can be best delivered locally.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (PMF)**

### **Introduction**

The LSP needs sound management information to underpin its activities and to monitor the SCS. A robust performance framework is required to achieve this objective.

Within the SCS a number of key areas will be performance managed:

- Priorities and targets owned purely by the LSP to deliver the SCS.
- Achievement of actions contained in the theme areas action plans.
- Priorities and targets agreed via the LAA.

### **Governance and accountability**

Responsibilities are as follows:

#### **Delivery Board:**

- Ownership of the PMF.
- Challenging and resolving barriers to progress.
- Agreeing shared or devolved targets with the LAA.
- Making decisions regarding priorities based on performance information.

#### **Officer Support Group**

- Managing, co-ordinating, and implementing the PMF.
- Preparing reports to the Board, and identifying risk and success.

#### **Theme Leads**

- Overseeing performance against all of the indicators in the theme.
- Signing off improvement plans developed in response to under performance.
- Preparing and reporting on performance to the Officer Support Group.

#### **Monitoring and reporting arrangements**

- Monitoring by theme lead to occur on a quarterly basis.
- Performance reports to be presented to the Delivery Board on a quarterly basis (to include baseline, target, current performance, direction of travel, and commentary).
- Improvement plans, where appropriate, to be reported to the Delivery Board on a quarterly basis.

**Appendix 3 sets out membership of the LSP Delivery Board and contact details**

