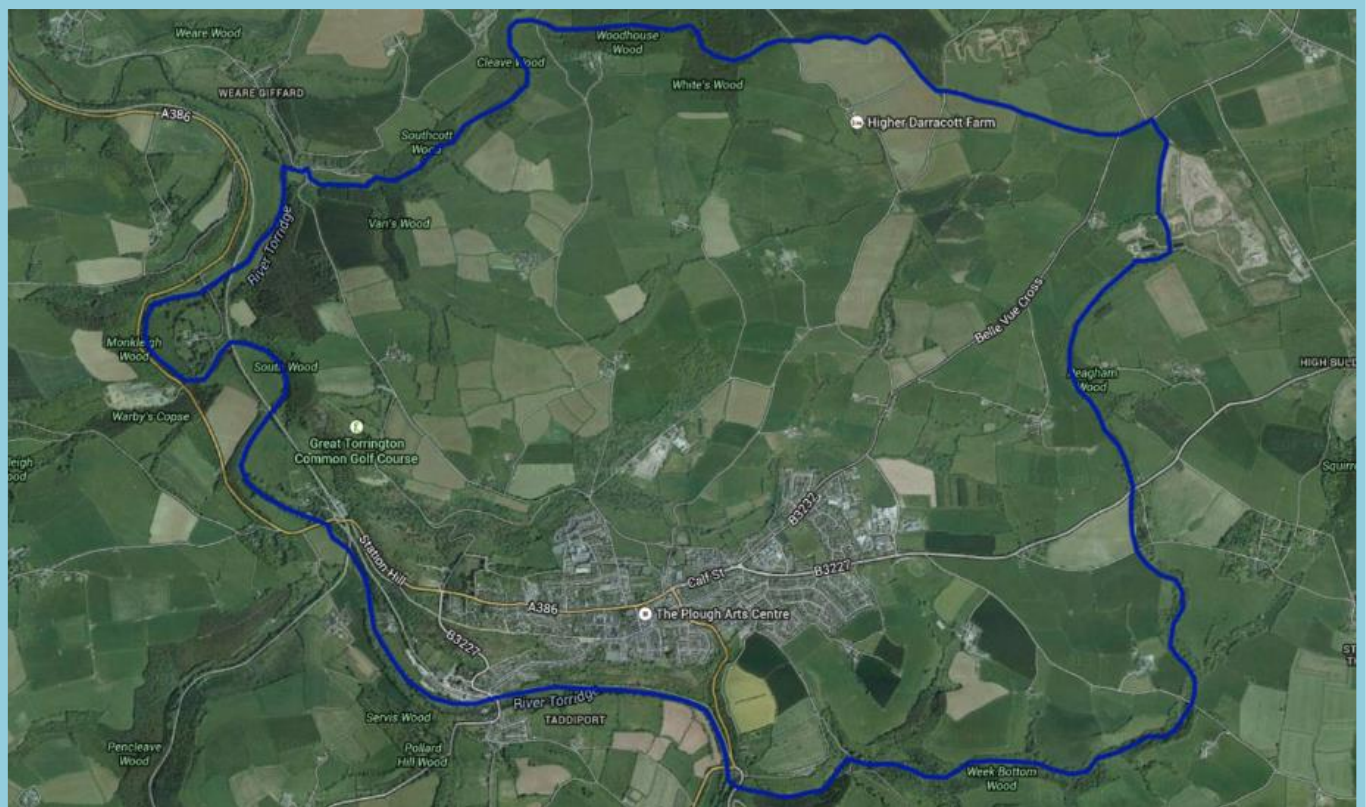


GREAT TORRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



KEEPING THE GREAT IN GREAT TORRINGTON



ADDENDUM: NON-LAND USE MATTERS



Great Torrington
Town Council

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As a consequence of the numerous local consultations undertaken on the neighbourhood plan, there were a number of issues raised that cannot be included in the final document for submission. It is however recognised that these comments are important to the town council and, to this end, this document has been produced which lists these issues.
- 1.2 The intention of the town council is that this document will be used in setting the priorities for action. A working group is to be established to look at these issues in more detail.

ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE: Land use practices improve the ecological status of our watercourses.

WATERCOURSES

More water-friendly practices will be encouraged in farming and forestry land management, in urban development and the maintenance of urban infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE: The community is more aware of and better equipped to include environmental considerations in decision making at a household and community-level.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Activities that support environmental education and the application of environmental knowledge in decision making will be encouraged wherever possible.

- 2.1 Environmental quality – including landscape quality and tranquility as well as wildlife value – delivers significant ecosystem services (Provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural) that benefit the community. Retaining and enhancing ecosystem service function is important for the community’s economic and social well-being.
- 2.2 The semi natural habitats in the area covered by this Plan are fragmented throughout the landscape, which leads to low ecological resilience, a reduction in the viability of populations and a vulnerability to climate change.
- 2.3 The 360 hectares of Torrington Commons are a significant area or habitat for wildlife and much is designated as County Wildlife Site. The Tarka Trail provides linear habitats and connectivity through the landscape. They are both wonderful areas of accessible green space for the community.
- 2.4 The morphology and water quality in the River Torridge and its tributaries reflect the land use and farming practices in the area and the impacts of built development through run off effecting flooding and pollution. None of the waterbodies within the area covered by this Plan meet the EU Water Framework Directive target of ‘good ecological condition’ by 2020.
- 2.5 There is strong evidence that the climate is changing. Scientific evidence suggests that this is a consequence of past and ongoing greenhouse gas emissions. The outcome is predicted to be hotter summers and warmer wetter winters. 2012 was the wettest

year on record. The extended periods of rainfall in November and December showed the flooding problems in the village are likely to become more serious and frequent if no action is taken. The effects of climate change can be mitigated at a local level by ensuring that new development is designed in such a way that it is carbon neutral and does not increase the risks of flooding; and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by providing greener transport options.

TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

OBJECTIVE: Support will be given to improve and extend existing bus services and facilities and alternative forms of passenger transport.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION

Proposals to improve and extend existing commercial and community-operated public transport services will be supported. In particular:

- **The provision of a dedicated bus service serving Great Torrington**
- **Bus stops located close to where people live and in view of surrounding properties**
- **Proposals to provide new bus shelters and better service information**
- **The delivery of car sharing schemes and/or a hail and ride**

Timely connections to rail and National Express services from adjacent towns to the rest of the country will be supported in order to provide a comprehensive and integrated public transport service for the area.

3.1 As a result of Great Torrington being located on a hill and surrounded by the Common's, the town's major expansion will be at its east and west extremities (Burwood, Dartington Fields, the old Creamery site). Access to the centres, to the schools and other services will thus become more problematic without a car. The traditional use of services provided by a private bus operator (often subsidized by the County) have proven in some circumstance to be unsuccessful. The bus route up Mill Street, an area most in need of public transport, was withdrawn because of the narrow street and parked cars. Furthermore, there are no Sunday bus services to/from Torrington, leaving the town with no public transport provision for access to the rest of the country on that day.

3.2 It could be viable to provide a charity/volunteer-based minibus service to meet the needs of the town and surrounding district at some time in the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. A further benefit would be the availability of a minibus outside of timetabled service being available for community hire.

OBJECTIVE: Signage in the town will be appropriate for the circumstances.

SIGNAGE

Current signage should be improved where necessary, especially to show safer walking and cycling routes and to indicate the optimum routing for traffic depending on destination.

New signage should be proportionate in size, congruent with their surroundings and located where they will not be a danger to pedestrians and road users.

In order to maintain the character of the town and reduce clutter, large and/or multiple signage and advertising hoardings in or around the town will be resisted.

3.3 This will reduce clutter in the street scene, maintaining the town as an attractive place to live, shop and work in.

OBJECTIVE: The right to use established footpaths that have not been officially recorded will be legally recognised where necessary.

RIGHTS OF WAY

Footpaths, desire lines and urban shortcuts will be identified and submitted for the definitive map modification order process, where necessary, in order to establish their use as established public rights of way.

3.4 As of January 2016, communities have 10 years to apply to save any rights of way that existed before 1949 but do not appear on official maps. Any pre-1949 paths must be recorded by 2026 to continue to carry public rights. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act contained a provision that will extinguish those rights if the paths have not been properly recorded. As an example, the path between 84-86 and 101-103 Mill Street lead onto Torrington Commons, but are not identified on Devon County right of way maps. They may be affected by this legislation.

TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

A traffic regulation order to monitor traffic in the town centre is to be sort.

BROADBAND

It is expected that all new properties should be served by a superfast broadband (fibre optic) connection. The only exception will be where it can be demonstrated, through consultation Network providers, that this would not be either possible, practical or economically viable. In such circumstances sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

An asset of community value (ACV) is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011. Voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on their local authority's register of assets of community value.

These ACVs provide an opportunity for local people to come together, celebrate and volunteer in their local community. Proposals that will result in either the loss of an ACV or in significant harm to an ACV will be strongly resisted.

OBJECTIVE: A change of use of an existing community amenity will be strongly resisted

- 4.1 The following plans will add very valuable larger spaces for community use. The Town Hall and the Museum are both in the process of raising funds to develop major new spaces in the town:
- a) **The Town Hall** will eventually provide a building of historical significance with space for major functions in the centre of town, to the benefit of local businesses and as a draw to both residents and people from outside the town
 - b) **The Museum** plans to adapt the upstairs section of its premises as an education centre to teach about the history of Great Torrington together with an exhibition space. This would also be a major attraction bringing people to the town to the benefit of local traders
 - c) **Castle Hill 1646 space:** The Community Development Trust plans to develop the space at Castle Hill that was used by 1646 as a large meeting room with storage facilities and a small kitchen for use by before and after school clubs and holiday clubs for children. There would be potential to rent this space in the evenings and the daytime during school terms to other organisations
 - d) **The tennis courts** have fallen into disuse but are retrievable as a community asset if the money can be found to refurbish them
 - e) **Play area next to Skateboard Park:** This could do with a refurbishment when finance allows to make the area more interesting to children.

EMPLOYMENT

OBJECTIVE: Support is given for the provision of new educational and skill-based facilities.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

There will be support for the establishment of local education centres that prepare young people for employment as well as re-skilling older people for new employment opportunities.

SKILL BASED FACILITIES

New employers relocating in the area will be encouraged to provide for the development of school-leavers, employees and prospective employees via work experience, paid internships, temporary employment, apprenticeships, in-house training and graduate training schemes.

Existing employers will be invited to provide mentoring to support new businesses.

TEMPORARY SERVICES

Temporary and imaginative services which enhance the ambience of the Town Centre will be encouraged. Examples of these are pop-up food stalls, street musicians, performance artists and heritage tours.

5.1 Extract from document: *Almost 40% of the working age population of South Hams is qualified to degree level or above; this compares to 20% in Torrridge. The profile is the mirror image in relation to no/ low qualifications. These differences are significant and there is also a striking correlation with resident-based earnings. In Torrridge, there appears to be something of a "low wage, low skills equilibrium": most people find jobs, and they do so locally, but these are not well paid, relative to elsewhere. Businesses therefore appear to be relying on staff with low qualification levels; they are paying them poorly; and productivity performance is poor. These different factors start to create a vicious circle and businesses will ultimately struggle to invest and to compete, creating vulnerabilities.* [A Strategy for Growth 2013-20. Devon County Council. May 2013, p.8.]

5.2 There is a tendency for young people to leave North Devon for further and higher education and not return; and the loss of local industries means that there is a pool of older ex-employees without relevant skills and experience. Consultation suggests that the anticipated growth in the IT, personal care and tourism sectors in Devon means that

these will require a proportionate investment in education and skills training related to local needs. As there is a shortage of trades such as plumbers and electricians, local schools could encourage more school leavers to consider apprenticeships amongst other further education options.

5.3 Consultation suggests that there is a lack of commercial management experience in the area, including business development skills. Employers and education providers need to engage with school-leavers and young people for them to consider staying in the area. Consultation suggests that there is a supply of local labour, that most young people have a good work ethic but will seek to fulfil career aspirations outside the area if necessary.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

OBJECTIVE: Health services and facilities are restored and further strain is not put on the local medical practice.

MEDICAL SERVICES

The Plan will support proposals for the creation of additional health and medical facilities within the built up area boundary, provided the proposals can demonstrate the site is suited to this purpose in terms of access, car parking and design, and will not lead to a loss of amenity for local residents.

- 6.1 Great Torrington's Health and Wellbeing Vision is that by 2030 our community will be able to live longer healthier lives at home, or in a homely setting and that we have a co-ordinated NHS Health and County Social Care service which is patient centered and is responsive to local needs whatever the setting, ensuring that the provision of care is adequately funded for the needs of all members of our community, ensuring that the care will be provided to the highest standards of quality and safety which is both achievable and deliverable.
- 6.2 There should be a focus on prevention, anticipation and supported self-management which is supported by both the NHS and County Social services. Focus should be made on ensuring that people get back to their home or community environment as soon as appropriate, with minimal risk of re-admission. Furthermore there is a vital need to focus and encourage open, honest communication and explanation between clinicians, clients, patients and others, in order to enable and strengthen safe outcomes.
- 6.3 The Plan supports and encourages the recognition of the value and need of an inpatient bedded community hospital with a 24/7 Minor Injury Unit in a rural area such as Great Torrington which has poor transport links, high percentage of aged population and an area of significant deprivation.

OBJECTIVE: Development will be expected to maintain or enhance the quality of life and the wellbeing of the local community.

PROMOTING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

All major development proposals will be assessed for the contribution they make to making Great Torrington a healthier community. This assessment will include the following:

- Suitable measures to ensure the safety of residents, workers and visitors and other users
- Support and encouragement to be given to the Great Torrington NHS Healthcare provision
- Opportunities for different sections of the community to meet
- Improvement of tourism, recreation and leisure facilities in the town
- Priority for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists
- Impact on amenity of adjoining occupiers

OBJECTIVE: Developer contributions will be sought towards the care of the elderly population.

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR HEALTHCARE

Funding for new/improved facilities will be sought through developer contributions and other sources, to ensure that medical facilities remain accessible and convenient with adequate transport and pedestrian access to meet the needs of local people.