Totnes Town Neighbourhood Plan
2019 to 2034

IN CONSULTATION WITH the residents and community representatives of Totnes
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6. Economy
   6.1. The Local Economy
   6.2. The Town Centre
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7. Environment
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Photograph Acknowledgements:
Foreword

Welcome to the plan for the future of Totnes. This is the plan that is inspired and made by the local community and covers both Totnes Town and Bridgetown (subsequently referred to as Totnes). It's your plan.

Totnes is steeped in history going back to at least Roman times and this needs to be respected in any future development in respect of environment, housing, economy, transport, sustainability and resident’s well-being. It will be important to aspire to retaining the heritage whilst adapting to the needs of a changing world, particularly in relation to the recognition of the ‘climate emergency’ and the way we act to protect Totnes for future generations.

The authors of this Neighbourhood Plan (NP), consisting of Town Councillors and a wide variety of public working groups and public consultation events, has created this document that encompasses the aspirations and hopes of the community for the next 15 years.

Have your say – the Final Vote is yours in a referendum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
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</table>

The community has the final say on the adoption of this NP, following an independent examination and through a public referendum. How you vote will determine if this NP is adopted.

Colin S. Luker
Chair, Totnes NP Steering Group – Totnes Town Council - 2019
1. Introduction

1.1 What is a NP and why is it important to the Totnes community?

Neighbourhood Planning (NP) gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like, what infrastructure should be provided and grant planning permission. A NP provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community’s needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

(source www.gov.uk)

1.1.1 A NP enables Totnes as a community to have a much greater say in shaping the areas in which we live and work and in supporting new development proposals in the future. This NP forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Joint Local Plan (JLP) which has been prepared by the local planning authority*.

1.1.2 Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the JLP and the NP, and any other material considerations. The NP means that planning decisions will be based on better informed and more detailed policies than if Totnes were only covered by the JLP.

1.1.3 The NP reflects local ideas and opinions, aiming to ensure that the town’s identity is protected and that it will have a sustainable, healthy and prosperous future.

*Plymouth & S.W Devon Joint Local Plan 2014 – 2034
1.2 What area does the plan cover?

1.2.1 The NP covers the administrative area of Totnes as detailed in the Notice of Designation 2/2013. The NP’s policies can apply only within that area, but in order to ensure that the plan looks at the whole community regard has also been paid to those parts of the built-up area of Totnes or existing development proposals which lie inside adjacent parishes.

1.2.2 In the future there will be further growth outside the administrative boundary of Totnes which will result in impacting the residents of Totnes in all the areas covered by this NP. The NP makes reference to this but cannot make proposals for change or development outside its area. The consultation with adjacent parishes** in the NP process has therefore been both welcome and essential. It is an aspiration that plans for those parishes will therefore contain proposals to complement and mirror this NP.

** Berry Pomeroy; Dartington; Harberton & Ashprington

1.3 What period does the plan cover?

1.3.1 The NP formally covers the period to 2034, the same as that covered by the JLP. Specific development proposals in the NP relate to that period but its general policies, so long as they remain fit-for-purpose, will continue to apply beyond that date.

The NP will be tested against these conditions by an independent examiner.
1.4 How has the plan be prepared?

1.4.1 The NP process has been led by a number of steering groups comprising representatives of the town council and volunteers from the local community and a variety of local organisations and the diagram above outlines the process. Widespread public consultation has been carried out, summarised in the table below and the Statement of Consultation in Appendix A describes in more detail how the community has been involved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Steering Group meetings open to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2015</td>
<td>Housing Needs Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June - August 2015</td>
<td>Static display in Totnes Library (on display for 8 weeks approximately)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2015</td>
<td>Public launch event</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 October 2015</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Planning Networking Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 October 2015</td>
<td>Public drop in event (to get a steer from the community on the findings so far)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>Business survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 October 2015</td>
<td>KEVICC workshop (year 10 students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 November 2015</td>
<td>Public consultation event focussing on visioning, priorities and next steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Steering Group meetings open to the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 February 2016</td>
<td>The Grove School workshop (year 5 students)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 March 2016</td>
<td>Energy drop-in consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>Industrial Estate Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd October 2016</td>
<td>Full Town Council Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>13th October 2016</td>
<td>Static display in Totnes Library (for approximately two weeks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14th October 2016</td>
<td>Climate Change event- Women’s Institute –Vision and Objectives Consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th October 2016</td>
<td>Vision and Objectives – Stall display and consultation- Forking Food Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td>22nd October 2016</td>
<td>Presentation to Public Meeting Civic Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>26th October 2016</td>
<td>Community drop-in – St.Johns Bridgetown- V&amp; O consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>29th October 2016</td>
<td>Eco Homes Festival – Stall display and public drop in – V&amp;O consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th November 2016</td>
<td>Caring Town Totnes Festival – Stall display and V&amp; O consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Steering Group meetings open to the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Housing paper, Theme papers and Market page published</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Consultation on Joint Local Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>23rd July 2017</td>
<td>Informal Draft Neighbourhood Plan published requesting comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>August/Sept 2017</td>
<td>Static Display in Totnes Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th September 2017</td>
<td>Informal Draft Plan - Open Drop in Event in the Mansion School Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>9th September 2017</td>
<td>Informal Draft Plan - Open Drop in Event in the Mansion School Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28th November 2017</td>
<td>Public Meeting held at Totnes Rowing Club to address concerns raised during the informal draft plan consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Task and Finish Group meetings open to the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>From July 2019 monthly Working Group meetings open to the public.</td>
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[Details of 2019 public consultation]
1.5  Are there any limits on the NP?

1.5.1  The NP must meet several basic conditions which are:

a. Be appropriate - having regard to national policy;
b. Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
c. Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the JLP; and
d. Be compatible with human rights requirements and EU obligations.

1.6  How will the plan be used and who is it for?

1.6.1  The NP will be used by South Hams District Council (SHDC) to help guide its planning decisions for Totnes. It will be used by planning inspectors (or the Secretary of State) in relation to planning appeals in Totnes. It will be referred to by decision makers of all kinds – planners, investors, developers, funding bodies, community groups and existing and future residents.
2. **What Makes Totnes Special?**

2.1 Totnes is a highly desirable place to live and work and has a well-deserved reputation as a special place attracting many visitors. It is proud of its distinctiveness and is well known for its commitment to sustainable development, although there is much concern that some past planning decisions have not supported this.

2.2 The historic core of the town is probably its most valued feature with its medieval street pattern, castle, numerous listed buildings and other heritage features. The location of Totnes at the lowest bridging point on the River Dart has long been a significant part of its success over the centuries. However, this now brings people to and through the town and causes serious traffic congestion, which impacts the quality of the local environment for its residents.

2.3 The River Dart is a huge asset to the town, although it is currently undervalued and underused. It contributes greatly to the environmental quality, social, energy and water-based leisure facilities. There are great opportunities to make much more of this resource, as well as securing continuous riverside access in any future development of land.

2.4 The landscape setting of Totnes is also a critical dimension of its character. Totnes is surrounded by hills, creating an intimate setting. If development were to overrun these hills a central aspect of its identity would be lost. This emphasises the point that there are obvious environmental limits to the expansion of Totnes, so the limited development opportunities that exist must be used wisely, to the greatest benefit of the residents.

2.5 Totnes occupies a focal point on both road and rail networks, a synergy which adds to the town’s many attractions as a place to live and work but poses a growing challenge to the local environment, economy and quality of life. Developments both in Totnes and beyond is putting an ever-increasing strain on an already constrained road/rail/public transport network.

2.6 Totnes is a local employment centre, but this results in attracting many more people in to work than the number of workers living here that are available for those jobs. This is both a strength and a weakness as many residents have to commute to find suitable employment. The same is true for the Retail which offers a varied choice of independent shops, cafés and restaurants which gives Totnes a unique edge.

2.7 Totnes has a well-deserved reputation as a cultural, education and environmental centre. Over the decades it has become a centre for arts and ‘alternative’ lifestyle activities, greatly helped by its proximity to Dartington Estate, Schumacher College, Steiner School and the Totnes Transition Town movement. These characteristics are fostered by a high level of engagement of residents in a wide spectrum of local activities and issues. All of this creates many opportunities for furthering these important aspects of local identity and is an important aspect of life in Totnes which it must not lose.
2.8 The attraction of Totnes creates challenges. House prices are high*, shortage of affordable and social housing means that young people, families and older people can all struggle to meet their housing needs. The loss of retail sites to other types of development is a concern leading to problems accessing ‘everyday’ goods, services and facilities. Educational facilities need proper funding and improvement. Despite the strength of the local economy there are a high percentage of low wage and part time work. This adds to the housing issues already mentioned.

2.9 Overall this means that Totnes is seen as a different sort of place – unique not only in Devon but more widely, with a national and international reputation which residents, businesses and visitors cherish.

2.10 The central task for the NP is to make sure that future development does not diminish the reasons that people choose to come and make their lives in Totnes.

* UK House Price Index from HM Land Registry 7/2018 shows average house price UK is £248,611 and South Hams £285,343
3. **Vision of the Future for Totnes**

As Totnes changes and develops over the coming decades its identity should not be lost.

The town will continue to be a model of sustainability, innovation and creativity, becoming an even better place for residents of all ages, visitors and businesses.

3.1 The NP covers key areas, critical to the future of Totnes over the next decades. The NP sets out what we are and also what we want to become. **Future planning decisions need to respect this.**

3.2 Totnes has seen a continuous change over its long history covering many centuries. From an early Saxon settlement, through being a fortified town, to a wealthy trading centre, to an industrial complex based on timber, boat building, cider production, meat and milk processing, up to the current day when tourism and small/medium businesses dominate the local economy.

3.3 Many of the heritage buildings have changed use over the centuries and are now being used for a variety of different uses. Merchants houses are now shops and accommodation; the racecourse is now an industrial estate and the old manufacturing and commercial buildings and sites have been converted to apartments, a supermarket and housing. The landscape has also changed with housing being built on what was open farmland. Churches are transforming into hubs offering numerous local organisations the opportunity and facilities to involve the community in activities. So, what will happen in the future as the needs of the community change and lifestyle moves on from where we are today?

3.4 This NP addresses the community’s view and aspirations for the future of Totnes. The hopes and wishes are for a sustainable future where:

- Relevant housing and local employment are available to all
- Air quality does not have the health risks presently encountered
- Leisure and open spaces are available to all
- The local green economy can provide food, goods and services in a sustainable way whilst mitigating climate issues
- Totnes retains its role as a hub for local transport in the South Hams
3.5 Consultation has shown that the distinct identity of Totnes is something that is highly valued, and that there is a strong desire to ensure that development both recognises and enhances that identity. The NP attempts to fully capture the town's distinctive nature, and the proposed policies must ensure that all of Totnes's special qualities are maintained and enhanced.

3.6 Achieving sustainable development is a central objective for the planning system and for Totnes. This means that economic, social and environmental considerations must be well balanced. The planning system should deliver development that meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, achieving economic, social and environmental gains jointly and simultaneously. This approach is at the heart of the NP. Totnes already accepts the need for sustainable development and the NP aspires to expand this philosophy by the many concrete ideas in the plan.

The Vision is summarised in the diagram below.
4. **Key Objectives**

4.1 The NP must support the vitality and diversity of the Totnes community, making sure that its needs are met and creating new opportunities to build on the strengths of the community. NP policies aim to maintain and enhance the well-being of all and to deliver the following objectives:

a. Protect the distinctive historic character of the town and its many architecturally significant buildings, streets and squares.

b. Protect the formal and informal open spaces and the wider public realm for their vital importance to the identity and heritage of the town and the wellbeing of residents.

c. Seek to ensure that all new housing developments, small or large, ensures priority to the needs of local people, with particular emphasis on social and affordable homes.

d. Support community-led development and community asset ownership as ways of achieving sustainable development.

e. Support and enhance the Totnes retail and service roles and the way they combine to create a place which is much more than just the sum of its physical attributes.

f. Support and enhance the Totnes economic capability and its role as a visitor destination via the associated hospitality sector.

g. To extend the strength, variety and distinctiveness which characterise the thriving local economy.

h. Encourage and support 'green' and 'ethical' businesses and their local networks and clusters based on the existing strengths in this area of the town.

i. Support the improvement of existing business space and expansion of new space to meet the needs of the local economy.

j. Support and extend the Totnes pioneering approach to sustainable development and local resilience, seeking to reduce the environmental impacts of the town, and mitigate and adapt for climate change.

k. Seek to create a more sustainable transport network for the town and its hinterland via transport development which reduces the need for travel by independent vehicle and to make the best use of more sustainable modes of travel which directly reduces the impact of vehicular traffic on the environment and health.

l. Enhance opportunities for open space and recreation facilities to be developed and contribute more to the community's active health and well-being.

m. Totnes will always strive to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, advance good relations between those sharing protected characteristics and those who do not. Decisions by the Totnes Town Council will be informed by transparent and appropriately rigorous equality impact assessments and the Council will always investigate how negative impacts may be mitigated (reference Equality Act 2010)
Totnes Town Neighbourhood Plan 2019

COMMUNITY
5. Community

5.1 Local Identity

5.1.1 Totnes is home to a strong, diverse and vibrant community. In 2017 the population was estimated to be more than 8,400. Parts of the built-up extent lie beyond its administrative boundary in the adjoining parishes of Berry Pomeroy and Dartington, further increasing its functional population. It is estimated that the wider catchment population exceeds 23,000 and, in addition, tourists and visitors further swell these numbers especially in summer.

5.1.2 The historic character of Totnes, still so very evident today, combined with the unusually wide spectrum of local interests and activities, give the town a highly distinctive local identity and an 'edge' which it must not lose. The NP aims to support and strengthen this, with policies designed to enable local people, business and culture to flourish.

5.1.3 The community faces a variety of challenges. There is a lot of demand to live in Totnes. House prices are high, pressure for development is strong, and there is a large unmet need for affordable housing. This creates particular problems for younger people, families and older households, who can struggle to meet their housing needs either for affordable or open market housing. This, in turn, means that there is difficulty attracting and retaining young people and families to and in the town. It is vital therefore that any of the limited opportunities for new housing and business development in Totnes make the greatest possible contribution to meeting local needs.

5.1.4 Many local services and facilities are, without doubt, worth the protection that the NP provides. The town's educational facilities, however, need improvement, and the NP seeks to facilitate this.
POLICY C1 – Local Identity

Growth and change in Totnes should enhance its distinct local identity:

a. Supporting its precious historic character, richly diverse culture and reputation as a centre for environmental sustainability
b. Delivering sustainable development to meet local needs
c. Enhancing local services and facilities

Development that meets these criteria will be supported.

JLP Policies SPT1, SPT2, SPT11, SPT12, SPT13, TTV2

5.2 Health and Wellbeing

5.2.1 The state of our built and natural environment is a key determinant of health and wellbeing. The design and social cohesion of neighbourhoods can influence physical activity levels, travel patterns, social connectivity and mental and physical wellbeing. Totnes has long recognised this and has built strong community infrastructure such as the “Caring Town Totnes” initiative. Measures to address health and wellbeing can be found throughout the NP, which will:

a. Enhance the wellbeing of all, recognising that this is a distinctive positive feature of Totnes;
b. Ensure equality of access, removing or minimising disadvantages and promoting equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion for all; and
c. Support measures to increase walking and cycling and reduce the adverse impacts of vehicular traffic.

Fig 3.1 Determinants of Health
POLICY C2 – Health and Wellbeing

Development in Totnes should enhance the health and wellbeing of all:

a. Increasing opportunities to access open green spaces and the River Dart
b. Creating opportunities to grow and consume local food
c. Meeting local needs for services and facilities, education, sport and recreation
d. Enhancing the quality and security of local jobs
e. Increasing walking and cycling
f. Reducing vehicular traffic
g. Enhancing equality of access for all

Development that meets these criteria will be supported.

JLP Policies DEV1,2,3,4,5,8,9,10,15,16,17,18,19,20,21

5.3 Development and Design

5.3.1 The NP seeks to ensure that development in Totnes meets local needs without damaging local character, heritage or the environment. To assist in this, it defines a settlement boundary within which development will be acceptable in principle providing it satisfies the policies of the NP.

5.3.2 The NP can only deal with matters inside Totnes’ administrative boundary. Parts of the built-up area of Totnes have extended into adjacent parishes and it is hoped that the settlement boundary established in this NP will be complemented by those shown in adjacent neighbourhood plans in order to guide and control the extent of the town’s growth.

5.3.3 The design of new development is of great significance, both to ensure that development is sustainably delivered and to preserve the town’s distinctive character. The NP aims to ensure good design in all new developments.
POLICY C3 – Development and Design

Development will be permitted inside the settlement boundary shown in the NP and provided it is in scale and character with the site and surroundings; and all reasonable measures have been taken to reduce its adverse impacts and deliver environmental benefits.

Outside the settlement boundary development will be strictly controlled and only permitted where it will meet a proven local need which cannot be met inside the settlement boundary and can be sustainably delivered.

In all cases development should be of a high design quality, respecting and complementing the site and its setting, being of sustainable construction, promoting sustainable lifestyles and incorporating the latest energy efficiency measures.

5.4 Heritage and Built Character

5.4.1 Totnes is justifiably well known for its historic character, which forms an essential part of the identity of the town. Much of the centre of the town is a Conservation Area and the town as a whole contains over 300 listed buildings and five Scheduled Ancient Monuments (including Totnes Castle and Totnes Priory).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Heritage Assets of Totnes</th>
<th>Source: <a href="http://www.historicengland.org.uk">www.historicengland.org.uk</a></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>321 Listed Buildings</td>
<td>5 Conservation Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Grade 1 St Mary’s Church</td>
<td>Heritage at Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Grade 2*</td>
<td>5 Scheduled Monuments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282 Grade 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5.4.2 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are national designations, protected by national and local policy. The NP reinforces this protection, addressing the locally distinctive historic character of the town as a whole, its buildings, streets and squares and the wider public realm.

5.4.3 New development is expected to maintain or enhance the historic and built character of the town. This does not mean that the NP is not open to change. Improvement and alteration of buildings can support wider heritage and cultural benefits, and new buildings and spaces can make positive contributions to the character and heritage of the town. New development should not, however, harm or dilute that character and heritage.
POLICY C4 - Historic and Built Character

New development should respect the historic and built character of the town as a whole and be sympathetic to its immediate setting. Heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, should be protected and new development should aim to compliment them. Innovative design offering a fresh interpretation of local distinctiveness will be welcomed.

JLP Policies SPT1, SPT2, DEV20, DEV21

5.5 Public Realm

5.5.1 The quality of Totnes' historic environment deserves a similar quality of public realm to match. Enhancements include the creation of new spaces at Leechwell, Heath’s Gardens and improvements to the Rotherfold and Shady Garden, but much more needs to be done to reflect the quality of the Town’s heritage. Within the historic core motor vehicles continue to have a dominating influence both in the narrow streets and in the car parks where there is limited landscaping and the concept of shared space is supported to improve the atmosphere for pedestrians. The wide range of street furniture and signs, coupled with poor maintenance, further detract from the Town's appearance.

5.5.2 The opportunity exists to create a series of linked public spaces along the historic spine of the town running from the Town Bridge to Cistern Street including The Plains, the Mansion and Library, the Shady Garden, St Mary’s Churchyard, the Market Square including Butterwalk and the Rotherfold. Progress has already been made in enhancing some of these spaces through hard and soft landscaping, and the provision of bespoke street furniture to create spaces where people can meet, linger and perform, creating social and cultural activity and making a more attractive town centre.

5.5.3 Beyond the Town’s core, the public realm includes major roads, such as the A385 corridor and the Western Bypass for through traffic, and access roads to residential and industrial areas. The major roads have been designed to meet the standards required by the highways authority resulting in places which prioritise car use over people. This is reflected in the use of signalised rather than pedestrian crossings along Station Road and Coronation Road which tend to be positioned to accommodate car users rather than walkers. While these roads act as barriers to movement between the parts of the town, they generally have good pavements although the quality of the pedestrian experience is reduced by exposure to traffic.

5.5.4 Within the residential and industrial areas of the town the quality of the public realm is significantly impacted by street layout, density of development and car parking, with many parts of the town dominated by the car. This need not be the case, and the new Baltic Wharf development demonstrates the sort of standard for public realm in new residential developments to which the town should aspire, requiring careful consideration of parking arrangements.

5.5.6 Outside spaces in residential areas also function as potential social spaces and should be attractive, safe and offer amenity green and play space.

5.5.7 Public parks and gardens are an important element of the public realm and the NP protects and provides for the improvement of all of these.
POLICY C5 – The Public Realm

New development is expected to make a positive contribution to the public realm, particularly within the historic core of the town, supporting Totnes’ reputation as a cultural and tourist destination. Appropriate materials should be used to enhance the public realm; visual clutter and obstruction to pedestrian movement should be avoided.

5.6 Open Spaces

5.6.1 Open spaces make important contributions to local character and environmental quality. In Totnes these include:

- a. Formal and informal spaces for sport, recreation and play;
- b. Amenity green spaces, spaces for nature conservation and greenways;
- c. Growing spaces; and
- d. Civic spaces (including town squares), cemeteries and graveyards.

5.6.2 The NP will maintain and enhance the provision, quality and diversity of public open spaces and recreational provision in and around the town. A full inventory of all current open spaces can be found in Appendix B and they are also shown on the Proposals Map in Appendix C.
POLICY C6 – Open Spaces

The open spaces, amenity spaces, growing spaces and civic spaces shown on the Proposals Map (and listed in Appendix C) are protected and should be retained in their current use or enhanced to raise their usefulness as such. Only development associated with and which will enhance the value of their current use will be permitted. Any loss of open space should be replaced by alternative provision which is of equal or greater value to the community and local environment.

New developments should include open space at least in accordance with adopted standards and provide for its long-term management and maintenance. Where the need for open space cannot be met on site a commensurate contribution towards provision of such open space elsewhere in the town should be made. Open space provision should include:

a. Formal and informal spaces for sport, recreation and play;
b. Amenity green spaces, spaces for nature conservation and greenways; and
c. Growing spaces.

JLP Policies SPT2, DEV3, DEV4, DEV5

5.7 Landscape Setting

5.7.1 The high quality, undeveloped landscape around Totnes frames the town as it nestles in the surrounding hills. The town’s place in the wider landscape and the views of important buildings within Totnes are both essential parts of local landscape character. This is particularly important at key ‘gateway’ sites to the town, for example: views descending Kingsbridge Hill and Bridgetown Hill; from boats approaching Totnes up the river; on the road approaches from Dartington and Newton Abbot; and from the railway lines. The NP therefore aims to protect both the landscape setting of the town and the town’s contribution to the wider local landscape.

5.7.2 There is shared commitment between Totnes and the adjacent parishes of Dartington and Berry Pomeroy to prevent coalescence of the two settlements. Totnes will seek to work with Dartington and Berry Pomeroy to promote an effective green wedge between the settlements in which agriculture, landscape and nature conservation and public access is secured and the adverse impacts of traffic are minimised. The settlement boundaries established in this NP, the Dartington and Berry Pomeroy Neighbourhood Plans will assist in ensuring this.
POLICY C7 – Landscape Setting of Totnes

New development should have no adverse impact on the landscape setting of Totnes. New building should not be of a height or mass to obscure views and glimpses of the surrounding hills, nor of a height to break the skyline.

New development should not damage the contribution the town makes to the landscape character of the wider area.

A Landscape Character Assessment for South Hams and West Devon, June 2018 - see landscape character types 3A, 3B, 3C, 3G, 4A and 5A.

5.8 The River Dart

5.8.1 The River Dart is a key feature in the local landscape and the prime reason for the town’s location. The Dart valley is Totnes’ essential landscape feature, has been a mainstay of its economy and is an important resource for leisure and recreation.

5.8.2 Making more of the river is a priority for the NP, building on its existing roles and uses. Any development adjacent to the River Dart should be in accordance with Totnes’ inclusion in the Dart Estuary Maritime Conservation Zone which was designated in May 2019.

POLICY C8 - The River Dart

Development on or adjacent to the river should improve the riverside environment in its appearance, biodiversity and opportunities for improved public access, leisure and community use.

JLP Policies TTV3, TTV20, TTV21, TTV22, TTV26
5.9 Community Led and Owned Development

5.9.1 Totnes has achieved some remarkable successes in community led and owned projects through the Atmos and Transition Homes\(^1\) projects. Both these schemes bring greater benefits for the community as alternatives to developer led projects. Other community-led projects include Leechwell Gardens and the Lamb, the transfer of the Elmhurst site at KEVICC, the Mansion, Library and nursery into community hands. The NP aims to build on and spread this success by giving specific support to community led and owned projects.

5.9.2 That proposals can be shown to be community led and that they will be community owned in perpetuity is regarded by this NP as a strong material consideration in their favour, and such proposals may be supported in circumstances where proposals which were not community led and owned would not be.

**POLICY C9 - Community Led and Owned Development**

Community led and owned development will be supported in order to bring greater benefits for the community.

5.10 Housing

5.10.1 The JLP proposes a total of 528 new homes for Totnes over the plan period 2014-2034. Some of the sites allocated lie wholly or partly outside the administrative boundary of the town (and outside the area covered by this plan). The JLP aims to help meet local housing need through mixed use developments which protect the town’s integrity, character and environment and provide appropriate infrastructure. It also includes a target that 30% on-site affordable housing will be sought for all schemes of 11 or more dwellings.

\(^1\) Atmos through a Community Right to Build Order for the community voted for on 23rd November 2016, and Transition Homes through a normal planning consent.
5.10.2 Much of the housing proposed in the JLP has already been built, is under construction or has planning consent. During the life of this NP other housing sites may come forward and the plan’s policies aim to guide such developments and any changes to existing ones.

5.10.3 A central concern of this NP is meeting local housing need rather than satisfying demand for housing. This includes meeting known needs for housing in terms of size, tenure and affordability, and specifically increasing the number of smaller homes to meet the needs of local young and older people.

5.10.4 The South Hams Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other work included in the Housing Evidence Base also suggest that the mix of dwelling sizes required is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Bed</th>
<th>2 Bed</th>
<th>3 Bed</th>
<th>4+ Bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.10.5 A 75% target is therefore included in the NP for sites of 11 dwellings or more. It is recognised, however, that in Totnes most unallocated development sites will be small. For development sites of fewer than 11 dwellings the NP seeks a target of at least 50%, which is considered to be reasonable. The target cannot, of course, apply to single dwelling developments.

5.10.6 The design of new homes should promote and enable sustainable lifestyles, incorporate the latest energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures, reduce waste, and be in keeping with and enhance their immediate surroundings.

5.10.7 The NP promotes community led and owned approaches to housing, which can bring strong advantages:

a. They can allow, over time, the returns from the housing development and provision of rented or shared ownership housing to be reinvested in the community.
b. They do not require a profit element and therefore can provide greater benefits.
c. As they are not registered providers of affordable housing, the affordable housing that they provide is not subject to the Right to Buy scheme and so can remain affordable in perpetuity.

5.10.8 As an exception to regular policies for housing provision, innovative, smaller and individual alternative housing may be considered for sites within the settlement boundary that would not otherwise be permitted.
POLICY C10 - Housing

New housing development should address local housing needs, particularly in terms of tenure and size.
Affordable homes should be included at least in line with adopted targets and arrangements should be made to ensure that they remain affordable in perpetuity.
Developments of 11 dwellings or more should include 75% one- and two-bedroom homes, for smaller developments (apart from single dwellings) the target is at least 50%.
New homes should be designed for sustainable living, incorporate the latest carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures, minimise waste, complement their setting and enhance the locality.
Innovative housing solutions, particularly for small affordable homes, including community led and community owned housing schemes, may be supported in circumstances where other housing developments would not be.

JLP Policies STP2, STP3, SP6, TTV2, TTV20, TTV21, TTV22, DEV8, DEV9

5.10 Services and Facilities

5.11.1 Totnes is generally well provided with services and facilities and this is a clear ingredient of its strong community. They are important for residents, businesses and visitors alike, and are key to the town’s distinctive cultural and service roles. They combine with retail premises to create a place which is much more than just the sum of its physical attributes.

5.11.2 Educational facilities are mixed in quality. The post primary facilities, in particular, are currently in need of improvement having had little investment
for over 50 years. Some buildings are in a critical state of repair. The NP supports the provision of high-quality education facilities fit for the purposes of 21st century learning and teaching.

5.11.3 The NP will ensure that new development does not diminish the services and facilities of the town and will encourage their enhancement and the provision of new services and facilities.

**POLICY C11 - Services and Facilities**

New development is expected to maintain or enhance community services and facilities as a whole within the town. Proposals involving the loss of community services or facilities will not be permitted unless:

| a. | They are to be replaced with services or facilities of an equal or higher quality and value to the community on the same site, or another equally or better suited site within the town; or |
| b. | The services or facilities can be demonstrated to be no longer needed or viable, and the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits to the local economy and community, including through contributions to development on other sites. |

**POLICY C12 - New Services and Facilities**

The provision of new services and facilities which will improve the breadth, depth and distinctiveness of the overall provision of services and facilities in the town will be welcomed. Provision of new ‘everyday’ services and facilities in areas of the town where these are lacking will be particularly welcomed.

JLP policies: SPT1, SPT2, DEV18, DEV21
6. Economy

6.1 The Local Economy

6.1.1 Totnes is a thriving market town, drawing on a significant rural hinterland. It is economically much stronger than might be expected for a town of its size. It is a gateway for the surrounding area, particularly through its railway station, attracts many visitors and tourists, contains a wide range of businesses of all kinds and supports a strong service sector. The high-quality environment and strong community attract investors, businesses, the self-employed and home workers, supported by a wide variety of independent and shared working spaces and good rail links.

6.1.2 According to the 2011 Census 3,565 people living in Totnes were employed or self-employed, almost 50% of whom worked in Totnes (including working from home). Overall 5,093 people were employed in Totnes, 1,528 more than the town’s resident working population, giving a strong net employment balance of +43%. This is a powerful indicator of the town’s economic health, showing a robust local economy, and the NP aims to maintain and develop that strength of character.

6.1.3 The Census also shows that over 60% of the town population are of working age (16-65) with 17% younger and 22% aged 65 and above. This is a healthy economic age structure and shows the potential for the community to make a strong contribution to the robustness of the local economy and community, including through volunteering.

6.1.4 Totnes still functions as a true employment centre, providing employment for people from a wide hinterland as well as a significant proportion of its own population. It is also highly attractive as a place to live for those working in larger centres such as Exeter, Plymouth and elsewhere. None of the other main towns in South Hams provide both of these things.

6.1.5 The good connections Totnes enjoys, by both road and rail, reinforce its economic strength. On the other hand, local prosperity is to some extent constrained by the congestion the town suffers, lying as it does at a nodal point for road and rail, with several key routes converging on the town at the lowest bridging point on the River Dart. Proposals for development which will create new employment likely to generate significant traffic movements must be supported by a travel plan and transport assessment to demonstrate how movements will be handled and why the development will be acceptable.
6.1.6 The availability of new office and employment space in Totnes is also somewhat constrained, with only 7,700 square metres of employment space allocated for the town in the JLP. This is a relatively small provision for a town with such economic strength and although not the smallest allocation to a main town in the JLP it is less than 10% of the largest such JLP allocation. New development which will strengthen the local economy without harming the town’s social or environmental qualities will therefore be supported.

6.1.7 Existing employment space must also be safeguarded, and this is even more important in view of the difficulty in finding suitable sites for new employment development. The JLP protects existing employment land and premises, especially for sites which have potential to contribute towards the regeneration of a community, the expansion of existing businesses or with access to wharves or deep water. Each of these categories is relevant for Totnes, and this NP reinforces the JLP in requiring that existing employment land and premises be safeguarded.

**POLICY E1 – The Local Economy**

New development should reinforce and enhance the local economy and the function of Totnes as a market town to the benefit of locals and visitors to the town.

Proposals which will generate significant amounts of movement must be accompanied by a travel plan and transport assessment to demonstrate their acceptability.

Development which will create new jobs without harming the town’s social and environmental qualities will be supported.

Existing employment land and premises will be safeguarded and kept available for such use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site’s continued use for employment purposes.

JLP Policies: SPT1, SPT2, SPT4, SP6, TTV21, DEV14, DEV17

6.1.8 Retail, health and social care, education, and other public services make up some of the largest employment groups in Totnes. The importance of the public service sector is a common feature of many local economies.

6.1.9 Retail is the town’s second largest employment sector, and the retail offer of the town, particularly its centre, is a vital component of its overall economic strength. The preponderance of independent shops, cafés and restaurants does much to give Totnes an edge over other centres, further enhanced by the tight knit historic core of the town.

6.1.10 For a town of its size Totnes is also strong in manufacturing, science and technical activities, hospitality, the arts and entertainment. Such diversity and innovation are distinctive of the local economy, reflecting the cultural, environmental and alternative aspects of the town. New businesses which will reinforce the town’s distinctive identity will be particularly welcomed.
6.1.11 The NP therefore gives specific support to economic innovation, company start-ups, fostering local economic clusters, and the infrastructure necessary to support healthy growth of the local economy such as superfast broadband and business meeting places.

**POLICY E2 – Economic Innovation and Diversification**

New development enabling innovation and diversification in the local economy will be welcomed. This includes development which may encourage the formation of clusters and networks of local enterprises.

Businesses drawing on the town’s distinctive character and identity will be particularly welcomed.

JLP Policies: SPT1

6.2 The Town Centre

6.2.1 Retail offers in the town, particularly in its centre, are a vital component of the overall economic strength. The preponderance of independent shops, cafes, restaurants create a nearly unique High Street in today’s normal pattern of mono-culture national chain outlets.

6.2.2 The NP seeks to ensure that the vitality and viability of Totnes town centre is protected and enhanced, focussing new retail development and activity there and resisting it elsewhere. Town centre floorspace and shopping frontages ought also to remain predominantly in retail use.

6.2.3 The continuing demand for high street premises in Totnes and relatively low vacancy levels suggest that such an approach ought to succeed, despite the national trend for town centres to decline. It will also be important to endeavour to maintain choice for convenience goods and everyday shopping alongside the growth of other independent businesses aligned to the town's thriving tourist and visitor role. In 2017 the former Coop/Budgens store in Fore Street closed. Redevelopment or reuse of that store and car park for retailing should be a priority and alternative uses resisted.
6.2.4 Markets and events contribute significantly to the town’s visitor economy, particularly the regular Friday and Saturday markets but also the summertime Elizabethan market, the monthly Sunday Good Food market and the Christmas late night shopping events. Protecting and enhancing such market activity and improving the operation and quality of outdoor trading spaces will be important and should be achieved through community consultation involving all key stakeholders.

6.2.5 The quality of the shopping experience, for residents and visitors alike, is key to Totnes' success. The NP aims to maintain that quality and to capture opportunities to enhance it still further. The steepness of town centre streets, narrowness of pavements, availability and cost of parking are issues for some. The number of visitors can mean congestion and inconvenience for locals. Improvements to streets, shops, signage, information and interpretation for visitors, car parking, open spaces, facilities and accommodation could help to make Totnes even more successful.

POLICY E3 – The Town Centre

Developments which promote the vitality, viability and retail health of the town centre area are encouraged and will be supported. Proposals which reinforce the distinct character of Totnes as an independent market town focussed on its historic centre will be particularly welcomed.

Within the town centre ground floor space and shopping frontages should be retained predominantly in retail use.

Development which will maintain or enhance existing or new markets, community and arts events will be supported.

The following priorities for the town centre have been identified:

a. Improved vehicle, bicycle and public car parking provision;
b. Enhancements to public squares and spaces and the public realm in general;
c. Improvements to pedestrian safety and facilities;
d. Improved signage, information and interpretation for visitors;
e. Maintaining the offer for convenience and everyday goods; and
f. Monitor and improve air quality.

New development in the town centre will be required, where appropriate, to contribute to the achievement of these priorities either through a Section 106 obligation or through CIL.

Retail developments outside the town centre will be resisted unless:

a. they are minor and ancillary to an established business, or
b. it can be demonstrated that there is an operational need for them to be so located, or
c. there is no suitable central site available.
6.3 Training and Education

6.3.1 Totnes has a broad range of educational and lifestyle offers, from language schools to courses and workshops about Health, Wellbeing, Transition Town, Arts and Culture. These provide employment and additional income streams for locals and have resulted in a wider range of accommodation.

6.3.2 The NP recognises the importance of the training and education sector and supports it as an integral part of the local economy.

6.3.3 The redevelopment of the ATMOS site, The Mansion, Elmhurst Building developments and enhancement of the Industrial estate and other such developments can all help to support this.

POLICY E5 – Training and Education
New development which will support the provision of local training and education and, where possible, enhances the distinct cultural offer of Totnes will be supported.

New development which will support the provision of vocational training to meet the needs of local employees, young people and those seeking work will be supported.

JLP Policies: SPT2
6.4 The Industrial Estate

6.4.1 The industrial estate is an important element of the local economy and is estimated to provide between a quarter and a third of all the jobs in the town. Local and family businesses make up almost 70% of all businesses there and many are relatively long established. The estate is important for the employment of young people and for the provision of apprenticeships.

6.4.2 It contains both traditional and high-tech enterprises, with the green economy making up 17% of 82 enterprises in 2017 and an expanding role in the local food economy.

6.4.3 It is important that the contributions the estate makes to the local economy are reinforced and the NP supports the provision of further floor space, improvement of existing premises and improvements to the overall quality of the estate, specifically its parking arrangements, riverside access and its accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

6.4.4 The need for a retail element for some businesses on the estate is recognised but should remain ancillary and subsidiary to the business being carried out.

6.4.5 The diverse range of services include a growing Not for Profit sector including Refurnish, the Recycling centre, Street Ministry, the Connection Hub, and new food enterprises. Such changes of use will be allowed where impacts on the retail cohesion of the town and parking on the industrial estate can be demonstrated to be acceptable.

**POLICY E6 – The Industrial Estate**

New development increasing the amount and quality of industrial floor space on the industrial estate will be supported and must include adequate parking and servicing arrangements. Retail use will only be permitted where it is ancillary and subsidiary to the business.

Not-for-profit community enterprises will be acceptable where impacts on the retail cohesion of the town and parking on the industrial estate can be demonstrated to be acceptable.

Where development includes opportunities to improve the quality or functionality of the industrial estate these should be taken, including public transport, pedestrian and cyclist accessibility, parking and riverside access.

JLP Policies: SPT1, SPT2, SPT4, SP6, DEV14
6.5 The Green Economy

6.5.1 The United Nations Environment Programme defines the green economy as follows:
"to be green, an economy must not only be efficient, but also fair. Fairness implies recognising global and country level equity dimensions, particularly in assuring a just transition to an economy that is low-carbon, resource efficient, and socially inclusive". (UNEP 2011)

6.5.2 A green economy is one which therefore better serves the need of sustainable development, and specifically, environmental sustainability. The NP supports alternative economic models which are likely to produce more sustainable outcomes. These are the circular economy, re-localisation, the local food economy, and social and community-supported enterprise.

6.5.3 A circular economy aims to keep products, components and materials in circulation and always use at their highest value, so that the need for new products, components and materials is reduced. Reuse, repair and recycling are at its heart.

6.5.4 Re-localisation aims to ensure that a greater proportion of goods and services are sourced locally, benefiting local businesses, reducing environmental impacts and increasing the environmental benefits of local economic activity.

6.5.5 The local food economy encourages local production of food and local purchasing of that food. In addition to local economic and environmental benefits local health may also benefit from eating healthier food.

6.5.6 Social enterprises are businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose. A community-supported enterprise is usually a specific type of social enterprise where members of the community invest in the enterprise and receive either a financial return or products and services in exchange. The most common type is community-supported agriculture where in exchange for a subscription to the business investors receive food from the farm.

6.5.7 Social and community-supported enterprises can offer goods and services at sub-market costs. Frequently this is achieved through not seeking a commercial return or using volunteer labour.

6.5.8 The NP supports the green economy, but it cannot create enterprises or the markets for them. Its role, therefore, is an enabling one. Development enabling the green economy may be acceptable in circumstances where other development would not be.
POLICY E7 – The Green Economy

New development enabling the green economy in Totnes will be encouraged. This includes development which enables circular economy, re-localisation, the local food economy, reducing waste, generating renewable energy, and social and community-supported enterprise.

New development enabling the green economy may be supported in circumstances where other forms of economic development would not, provided that the development’s ongoing connection to the green economy can be ensured.

JLP Policies: SPT1
7. **Environment**

7.1 **Environmental Sustainability**

7.1.1 Totnes is a very environmentally active and aware town, and this is reflected in its NP. New development in Totnes should seek to minimise impacts on the global environment and bring the greatest possible benefits to the local environment.

7.1.2 Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of national planning policy, and the NP aims to:

a. Support and extend Totnes’ pioneering approach to sustainable development and local resilience, reducing the environmental impacts of the town and adapting for climate change.

b. Enable continual transition towards true sustainability, addressing issues including energy generation and use, resource consumption, waste production, and air and water pollution, taking every opportunity to mitigate and adapt for climate change and enhance local environmental capacity.

7.1.3 For Totnes, then, sustainability entails a strong focus on environmental sustainability, as without a strong environment a strong community and economy cannot be attained. This does not necessarily mean less development. Maintaining a strong environment may constrain some development but will also create opportunities for development which maintains or enhances the environment. The NP, therefore, is actively looking for development which will be good for the environment, community and economy.

7.2 **Reducing Environmental Impacts and Increasing Environmental Benefits**

7.2.1 The NP seeks to reduce the environmental impacts and increase the environmental benefits of new development, requiring that new development provides the greatest environmental benefits which can reasonably be achieved.

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2 NPPF para 7 et seq.
Planning applications must include a simple summary of relevant environmental impacts and benefits, including those addressed by specific policies in this NP:

a. Mitigation of (by reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation to climate change  
b. Enhancing local environmental capacity  
c. Renewable energy generation  
d. Waste management  
e. Enhancing air quality  
f. Enhancing water quality

POLICY En1 - Reducing Environmental Impacts and Increasing Environmental Benefits

New development in Totnes must include all reasonable measures to reduce adverse impacts and increase environmental benefits and ecological enhancements.

Applications for new development must be accompanied by a simple summary of the environmental impacts and benefits it would bring.

JLP Policies STP1, DEV32

7.3 The Most Sustainable Use of Land for New Development

7.3.1 Opportunities for development in Totnes are limited, and so it is important to make the best use of development land, ensuring that only that which can be sustainable to develop is used and that development takes place in the most sustainable manner.

7.3.2 The NP does not set specific requirements for density and, in general, the community supports higher densities as a means of limiting green field development. Good design can deliver successful low-rise, high density building, as the historic town centre exemplifies. It can also provide amenity and food-growing spaces as part of development which this NP encourages. The density of each development should be determined in order to deliver the best possible and most sustainable design solution for the site.
7.4 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change

7.4.1 Mitigation of climate change means tackling what is causing it, whereas adaptation means tackling the consequences of climate change.

7.4.2 Climate change is a critical consideration for the NP. All new development will be required to minimise embodied energy and be carbon positive in use. Development should aim to be zero carbon in its construction and the embodied energy of construction materials should receive careful attention. Passive solar design and super-insulation are likely to be the most effective ways of achieving zero carbon development in its use. Off-site measures to achieve this will be acceptable only where they would provide greater all-round benefit than on-site measures.

7.4.3 The effects of climate change are likely to include rising and less stable temperatures, rising sea and tidal levels, and more extreme weather. New development is an opportunity to build in greater adaptation to such changes, both in the location and design of buildings and the space around them.

7.5 Enhancing Local Environmental Capacity

7.5.1 Environmental capacity is the capacity of the natural environment to support human activity. Reducing resource consumption is one way to try and address the imbalance between environmental capacity and human activity. Another is to increase local environmental capacity by requiring that new development should aim to enhance local environmental capacity, for example, by increasing biodiversity and bio-capacity, carbon sequestration, improving management of air and water pollution, and safeguarding soil quality.
7.5.3 Opportunities for increasing biodiversity and bio-capacity will vary. For larger developments appropriate landscaping can contribute, for smaller proposals such as domestic extensions more modest measures, such as the provision of bird, bat or insect boxes, or planting, can make a difference.

**POLICY En4 - Enhancing Local Environmental Capacity**

All proposals for the development or redevelopment of land should provide an overall enhancement in local environmental capacity. This should be demonstrated in terms of the current environmental capacity of the site and what the environmental capacity of the completed proposals will be.

Net biodiversity gains will be expected from all proposals for the development or redevelopment of land, commensurate with the scale of the development.

JLP Policies SPT1, DEV26

7.6 Renewable Energy Generation

7.6.1 The generation of renewable energy on site is a direct way in which new development can support local and therefore global environmental sustainability. The effectiveness of renewable energy generation technologies has increased rapidly and is likely to continue. Solar photovoltaics are likely to be the most common technology in use, but there may also be opportunities for micro wind and hydro generation.

7.6.2 In Totnes, we aim to be at the forefront of behavioural change and be willing to support the use of renewable energy, including roof solar, community scale solar and wind-turbines, battery store and hydro schemes, as a tangible means of reducing carbon footprint.
POLICY En5 – Renewable Energy Generation

New development is expected to maximize opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation and storage provided that to do so would not significantly negatively impact on local built character, landscape or amenity. Solar gain, through the orientation of new buildings and solar panels on south facing roofs will be supported.

Wind turbine renewable energy applications will only be supported where the proposed development site is in an area identified as potentially suitable for that technology and following consultation it can demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by local communities have been fully addressed.

JLP Policies DEV23, DEV24

7.7 Waste Management

7.7.1 It is now common that new development should provide integrated facilities for the storage of recyclable and non-recyclable waste. New development can also reduce the amount of waste entering the waste stream by processing waste on site wherever it is suitable to do so. The NP supports the expansion of community recycling activity and the creation of community composting facilities as the best way of composting waste locally. It also supports on site composting of putrescible waste where it can be undertaken without risk to residents or occupiers.

POLICY En6 – Waste Management

The provision of community composting facilities is supported. Wherever it is feasible for waste to be effectively processed on site, development should make provision for this to happen.

Improvements to waste management and recycling in residential areas and the town centre street scape is to be encouraged.

On site processing of putrescible waste for workspace and community facilities is a priority.

JLP Policies DEV31

7.8 Enhancing Air and Water Quality

7.8.1 It is imperative that new development does not make local air quality worse and if possible, makes it better. This is particularly important in the A385 Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The main impact on local air quality is from traffic, which the location and size of new development can influence.
7.8.2 Major development sites in Totnes for the NP period are already identified in the JLP. New development on these and on other sites can help improve local air quality through suitable design to encourage dispersal of pollution and through landscaping to help manage local air quality, which may also support adaptation to climate change and enhance local environmental capacity. All such opportunities should be taken. Advances in vehicle technology through the NP period (the next 15 years) may also help to reduce the levels of pollution emitted from vehicles.

**POLICY En7 - Enhancing Air Quality**
New development should incorporate suitable design and landscaping to assist in the dispersal of pollution and management of local air quality.

7.8.3 Totnes demarcates the change of the River Dart from the river to the north of Totnes Bridge to the start of the estuary. This results in the town being impacted by tidal as well as fluvial flooding. The convergence of the urban areas creates a pinch point for the river, the upper northern area of the flood zone is wider and overlaps the majority of the industrial area.

7.8.4 New development can also help enhance local water quality through the way in which surface water is retained on site, through landscaping, and rain-water collection. This may also support adaptation to climate change and enhancing local environmental capacity. It is already a requirement of most new development that it effectively manages its surface water drainage. In addition, opportunities to simultaneously improve water quality should be taken.

**POLICY En8 - Enhancing Water Quality**
Opportunities for new development to enhance local water quality should be taken. This is most likely to be through suitable surface water management, landscaping and rainwater collection intended to help manage local water quality.

JLP Policies SPT1, DEV2, SP6, DEV35

7.9 Local Food Growing

7.9.1 Buying food makes up around a quarter of the total ecological footprint of each person in the South West, primarily because of how food is packaged and transported to its end consumer. Food grown and consumed locally will directly benefit environmental sustainability. Growing food also better

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3 SEIREAP Ecological Footprint data.
connects people to the natural environment and supports healthier lifestyles. New development therefore needs to maximise its contribution to space available to grow food locally.

**POLICY En9 - Local Food Growing**

New development should take full advantage of and enable on-site potential to grow food for those living on or visiting the site, including on all land not built on, within and on the outside of buildings, and in public spaces.

JLP Policies DEV5

### 7.10 Designing for Sustainability

7.10.1 In addition to respecting historic character national policy also encourages innovation in the design of new development and sustainability is a strong driver for innovative modern design.

7.10.2 The NP encourages design able to deliver greater global and local sustainability. A major part of this is that buildings should be low carbon in both their construction and use. Other aspects include designing to manage water and local pollution and designing buildings as integral elements of wider site design using approaches such as permaculture.

7.10.3 Totnes already has a number of high-quality, innovative modern buildings. Such buildings contribute towards a new generation of buildings of high-quality design in the town. Modern buildings not embodying this approach offer little and exacerbate worsening environmental conditions.

**POLICY En10 - Designing for Sustainability**

The design of buildings should support greater environmental sustainability. High quality innovative design sympathetic to the traditional local vernacular and in keeping with the character of the locality will be welcomed. New buildings should aspire to passive housing standards.

JLP Policies SPT1, SPT2, DEV20, DEV23
Totnes Town Neighbourhood Plan 2019

TRANSPORT
8. **Traffic and Transport**

8.1 **Travel in Totnes**

8.1.1 Several key routes converge on Totnes, which lies at the lowest bridging point of the River Dart. The town is a service centre for a large rural hinterland and hosts a mainline (London – Penzance) railway station. Traffic congestion is common and has a significant adverse impact on the quality of life and environment in the town.

8.1.2 The Transition Town movement, which has a global reach, originated in Totnes and the town is committed to making the transition towards self-sufficiency and a stable local economy with reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Reducing travel and reducing the need to travel are a fundamental part of this impacting on all three dimensions of sustainable living – community, economy and environment. The NP therefore deals with traffic and transport in a separate chapter.

8.1.3 Around 70% of traffic on Station Road at peak periods is just passing through, and this proportion is likely to increase. Devon County Council recognise Totnes as the third most congested town in the administrative county, but physical, environmental and resource constraints limit the scope for large scale road building measures. While a northern by-pass was suggested in the 1970’s the prospects for any such scheme are now very remote, although public consultation has shown some support for the idea. The health and safety of pedestrians and road users in the town, and improving the air quality, are of paramount importance.

8.1.4 As a result the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026 and the JLP focus on managing traffic flows in and around the town and promoting behavioural change to reduce the adverse impact of traffic on the environment. Elevated levels of air pollution have resulted in the designation of part of the A385 corridor as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Despite these poor conditions a significant proportion of journeys to work in Totnes take place on foot or by cycle.

8.1.5 The railway station is immensely important for Totnes and its surrounding area. It is a gateway to the town, a transport hub and the railhead for the South Hams. Rail travel and passenger use of Totnes station is growing year on year for commuters, residents and visitors to the area. Passenger numbers were estimated at 0.628M in 2013/14 and had increased to 0.732M in 2017/18 (up by 16.5%).

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4 Annual estimated passenger usage based on sales of tickets in stated financial year(s) which end or originate at Totnes from [Office of Rail and Road statistics](#).
8.1.6 Where new development has taken place, such as at Camomile Lawn, Baltic Wharf and Follaton Oak, developers have been required to contribute towards the cost of implementing traffic and transport improvements in the vicinity. Such new developments add to the levels of congestion, with the residents commuting to jobs outside of Totnes. Funding has also been provided for green travel advice and support. However public consultation for the plan has confirmed that for many the wider impact of traffic congestion across the town is their main concern.

8.1.7 Traffic management in the town centre has long been the subject of debate. “Totnes on the Move” (a community led transport movement) suggested a “Shared Space Scheme” for much of the town centre. Devon County Council reduced traffic levels through the town centre by changing the direction of traffic on Fore Street, but this was subsequently withdrawn. A scheme is needed which will create a more agreeable shopping and leisure environment whilst supporting commercial activity and providing access for all.

8.1.8 Elsewhere in the town, such as at Plymouth Road and old Bridgetown, there is scope to reduce the conflicts between traffic, pedestrians and cyclists, and opportunities exist to extend sustainable transport routes serving the town. Some such routes already exist, for example the National Cycle Route which links Totnes to Ashprington and Dartington. Work is also under way to promote new links to surrounding parishes such as Littlehempston and between the various parts of the town, including the development of a full riverside route. Where possible such opportunities should be enabled when development proposals come forward.

8.1.9 There is growing interest in exploring alternative approaches to managing the flow of traffic through Totnes. Measures might include the replacement of traffic signals controlling junctions with a more, free flowing approach operating at lower speeds (20mph). Experience from elsewhere suggest that this could help resolve some of the negative impacts which traffic has on the life of the town. While traffic management lies outside the scope of the NP there is scope for development to contribute towards the delivery of such measures.

8.2 Environmentally Sustainable Transport

8.2.1 Planning can help to reduce the environmental impacts of transport usage and it has long been a planning objective to reduce the need to travel. The NP seeks to reduce the likelihood of travel to and from new development by car and promotes the use of more sustainable modes of transport.

8.2.2 There are three main sustainability impacts of transport in Totnes:

- Motorised transport powered by fossil fuels contributes to carbon and particulate emissions;
- It also directly contributes to poor local air quality and congestion; and
- High levels of mobility can erode community cohesion and identity, as people’s lives are spread out rather than localised.

8.2.3 70% of peak hour traffic on Station Road is through traffic, giving rise to significant problems such as reducing local environmental quality, dividing
neighbourhoods, ‘rat running’ through the town centre and deterring some from visiting the town thus undermining its retail and service roles.

8.2.4 New development in Totnes should therefore be located and designed to reduce the likelihood of motorised travel, make best use of more sustainable modes, and contribute to a more sustainable and effective local transport network for the town as a whole.

8.2.5 Rail is a growing and relatively sustainable form of transport, benefitting the local economy and reducing road journeys. Planning decisions need to prioritise the role of the railway station and the potential for its development as a transport hub with improved provision for bus links on both sides of the station, taxis and car parking.

8.2.6 Proposals for new development should be accompanied by whatever measures are necessary to ensure that it can be delivered and used sustainably and a statement explaining how it will seek to improve the local transport network by measures such as:

   a. Reducing the likelihood of car travel through both the mix of the development itself and its relationship to surrounding development;
   b. Facilitating and promoting the use of more sustainable transport modes; and
   c. Ensuring that new development does not make congestion and air quality in the town worse.

**POLICY T1 – Sustainable Transport**

New development should be designed to reduce the likelihood of travel by car and support a more sustainable local transport network. This means that it should:

   a. Prioritise walking and cycling as the most favoured modes of transport;
   b. Prioritise public and community transport as the next most favoured modes of transport; and
   c. Take all available and reasonable steps to reduce use of cars, local road congestion and air pollution, including provision of charging points for electric vehicles.

Development which would increase the likelihood of travel by car will not be supported.

Development will be expected to contribute, either through on-site works or by way of a S106 agreement, towards whatever traffic and transport measures may be required to enable that development to be delivered and used sustainably.

JLP Policies STP1, STP2, STP9, TTV20, DEV10, DEV17, DEV29
8.3 Walking and Cycling

8.3.1 Walking and cycling are the most sustainable forms of transport, being zero carbon, and are ideally suited to a town as small as Totnes though difficult on hilly outskirts. To maximise use there needs to be a good walking and cycling network which is also safe and pleasant to use. In the past patterns of development in the town have sometimes not allowed selective permeability for pedestrians and cyclists – new development should enhance this permeability. Totnes Town Council’s adoption of the Ramblers ’Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods’ reinforces the importance of walking within the town for health and as a mode of transport (see Appendix D).

8.3.2 Opportunities exist for new and improved connections and facilities for walkers and cyclists, both for recreational use and work, within the town and adjoining parishes and also over longer distances including as part of the national cycle network. New development should take up these opportunities and seek to enhance them.

**POLICY T2 – Walking and Cycling**

New development must be well connected to, maintain and seek to improve the functionality and quality of the walking and cycling network in and beyond the town.

Good connections to the walking and cycling network must be a design priority, taking up opportunities to improve freedom of use and road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Good provision for safe cycle storage, parking, charging and changing facilities for cyclists and motorcyclists should be designed into development proposals.

JLP Policies STP2, STP9, TTV20, DEV10, DEV17, DEV29

8.4 Public and Community Transport

8.4.1 Most forms of public and community transport have a much-reduced carbon impact in comparison with the use of private vehicles, and their impact on congestion and local air quality is similarly reduced. Community transport is particularly important in Totnes, connecting outlying parts of the town and surrounding communities, especially for those who would otherwise find it difficult to access vital services. Public and community transport is therefore supported alongside walking and cycling as part of a more sustainable transport mix for Totnes.
8.4.2 Increased car sharing will complement public and community transport and is encouraged alongside them.

**POLICY T3 – Public and Community Transport**

New development must maintain and improve the functionality and quality of the public and community transport network in the town and promote car sharing.

To encourage the railway station as an effective transport hub with bus, train and coach connections, as well as cycle, pedestrian and taxi links.

Good connections to the public and community transport network must be a design priority.

JLP Policies STP2, STP9, TTV20, DEV10, DEV17, DEV29

8.5 Car Parking

8.5.1 Car parking is currently important to the overall functional sustainability of Totnes, despite the inherently less sustainable nature of travel by private car. The NP therefore supports the provision of car parking sufficient to support the overall functional sustainability of the town.

8.5.2 The use of existing and provision of new car parking should not only support the local economy and the needs of the local community, but also promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport in terms of its pricing, use and location.

8.5.3 Over the NP period, however, the use of electric and driverless vehicles may change the way we chose to travel and the need for parking in the town. The NP sets policies in place to support and enable such change.

8.5.4 New development should meet the need for parking it generates on site. However, the NP supports forms of development which will give rise to reduced need for parking, either through the form and use of the development itself or specific measures to restrict vehicle use and numbers.

8.5.5 Exceptionally it may be acceptable to provide necessary parking off site where this can be shown to provide greater overall functional sustainability for the town and the development in question, and the off-site provision can be guaranteed as permanently available to the development.

8.5.6 When new parking is provided preference will be given to parking for electric vehicles with charging points and car club/pool and autonomous vehicles.
POLICY T4 - Car Parking

Existing public car parking should be used and managed to best support the overall functional sustainability of the town. Where new development has impacts on public car parking these should be neutral or positive in terms of the overall functional sustainability of the town. Development that would involve the loss of public car parking will not be permitted unless that loss is made up for elsewhere which will be of equal benefit to the overall functional sustainability of the town or it can be demonstrated that the parking is no longer needed due to changes in vehicle use.

New development should meet its assessed needs for parking on site unless off site provision would be of greater overall benefit to the functional sustainability of the town and the development in question, and that off-site provision can be guaranteed as permanently available to the development.

Parking and charging facilities for electric vehicles, car club/pool vehicles and autonomous vehicles will be preferred to parking for normal private cars. Where new housing development can demonstrate a reduced need for parking due to the utilisation of car club/pool vehicles and autonomous vehicles this will be supported, provided that there are measures in place to support their use.

Provision for cycle and motorcycle storage, parking and EV charging should be provided wherever appropriate.

JLP Policies DEV29
9. Area Policies

9.1 KEVICC

9.1.1 King Edward VI Community College (KEVICC) has a vital role to play not only as the prime source of secondary education for young people in the town and surrounding villages but also as a focus for community uses, particularly linked to sports, arts and cultural activities. The school occupies a range of facilities on a site bisected by the A385 linked by a pedestrian overbridge. This creates operational challenges for the school which would undoubtedly benefit from significant investment in its physical estate. By comparison with many secondary schools in the South Hams, KEVICC has relatively dated and poorly configured buildings, although it occupies attractive grounds, which enables students to enjoy extensive open space.

9.1.2 At the school’s request, KEVICC’s Lower Field was allocated as a site for residential development in the Totnes Site Allocations Development Plan Document in 2011. The site currently includes unoccupied school buildings, a new all-weather playing pitch and a large playing field. Lower Field is bordered on two sides by the residential areas of Swallowfields and Weirfields, with pedestrian access to the riverside pedestrian and cycle route to the railway station and beyond. Vehicle access is available from the A385 Ashburton Road which runs along the western boundary of this part of the school.

9.1.3 On the opposite side of Ashburton Road lies the main part of the school campus. This includes an extensive area of parking and a range of school buildings including reception, administrative offices, classrooms, School Hall and refectory. The Ariel Centre provides an arts and performance space for both school and community use. Somewhat removed from the main cluster of buildings and occupying the higher part of the site in a wooded setting, lies Kennicott House which is the Sixth Form centre. This historic property, to which additional structures have been added, has pedestrian access from Barracks Hill although the main entrance to the site is from the A385.

9.1.4 To the south of the main KEVICC site, but in the ownership of the school lies Sheepfields which was allocated for housing in 2011. This site is currently unused and increasingly overgrown creating a local wildlife haven. The former Magistrates Court building has recently been sold and planning consent has been granted for a small-scale residential development on the site of the former private nursery. The Police Hub and former police houses occupy the remainder of the land at the junction of the A385 and Western by-pass.

9.1.5 The Joint Local Plan (JLP policy TTV20) carries forward the allocation of parts of the KEVICC site, including Sheepfields, for residential development with an indicative number of 130 homes. This includes a requirement for the provision of a replacement of the all-weather sports pitch, community facilities including public space alongside the River Dart with continuous river access, mitigation to deal with the potential for negative impact on greater horseshoe bats and their flyways, high quality form of development which integrates with existing housing, safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle connections for residents to access local facilities and services and an appropriate strategy to mitigate for any impact on the A385 AQMA.

9.1.6 This NP affirms the JLP’s approach to the site, adding that a comprehensive master planning approach should be taken.
POLICY KEV1 – Educational Improvement

Proposals for the rationalisation and upgrading of secondary educational facilities on land currently occupied by KEVICC will be supported providing they:

a. Make appropriate provision to at least maintain and where possible or enhance community use of sports, leisure and arts/cultural facilities;

b. Adopt appropriate measures to minimise the impact of traffic through provision for sustainable travel by staff, pupils and visitors;

and

c. Are part of a whole site approach to the whole site.

JLP Policies DEV29

POLICY KEV2 – Development of Land at KEVICC as Identified in the JLP

Residential development will be supported on land no longer required for educational purposes at KEVICC providing it:

a. Is the result of community consultation which encompasses all of the KEVICC site the Sheepfield, the former Magistrates Court site, the Police Station and adjoining houses;

b. Is demonstrated how the proposals will facilitate the upgrading of the school facilities and can be integrated satisfactorily with the school; and

c. Will contribute to the broader objectives of the NP, particularly for continuous riverside access, the Northern Quadrant and associated community facilities.

JLP Policies TTV20

9.2 Steamer Quay

9.2.1 Steamer Quay lies on the east bank of the River Dart. It occupies a strategic riverside location, providing a gateway to the town for river boat users and is an important focus for water-based recreation and tourism, particularly given the access it provides to Longmarsh. This role could be enhanced through sensitive development directly related to the river and leisure uses.

9.2.2 The site is owned by South Hams District Council and is occupied by a variety of users including the seasonal caravan site, club facilities and storage associated with the Totnes Boating Association, the scout hut, the Rowing Club, a long stay car park, a coach park, a café, public
toilets, a vet, the river boat business and a number of industrial units. A new riverside development of 60 flats for older people has been completed adjacent to the site and planning consent has been granted for a 68-bed care home on a neighbouring site.

9.2.3 A number of constraints need to be addressed to enable improvements to be carried out, including possible relocation of any existing users affected and protecting direct access to the river for those requiring it. The low-lying nature of the site means that it is at risk of flooding. The site lies outside the Totnes Conservation Area but within its visual sphere of influence. Any proposals should pay careful regard to that sensitive context and to views of the site from across the river. It would also be essential to maintain and wherever possible improve cycle and pedestrian routes alongside the river and connecting the residential areas of Bridgetown, the wider town and neighbouring parishes.

**POLICY STQ1 – Steamer Quay**

At Steamer Quay only leisure or river related development will be permitted. Any such development must:

a. Maintain or enhance leisure and river related facilities and activities on the site;

b. Maintain or enhance existing services, uses, facilities, public areas and rights of way;

c. Have the support of the residents of Totnes and the Totnes Town Council;

d. Not harm the character, amenity, historic, environmental, nature conversation or archaeological values of the area and its surroundings;

e. Respect the site's scenic quality and distinctive sense of place and the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area; and

f. Adopt a high standard of design reflecting the prominence of the location and enhancing the riverside scene.

9.3 Market Square and Civic Hall

9.3.1 The Market Square including the Civic Hall and Civic Hall car park is a key element in the functioning of Totnes as a historic market town. The use of this area for regular markets and events contributes significantly to the vitality and viability of the town centre, drawing in residents and visitors alike. Evidence points to the market being a seedbed for the independent traders who give Totnes such a distinctive character. The Market Square and Civic Hall also fulfil an important social function as a meeting place, contributing significantly to the town's strong sense of place and community.

9.3.2 The functioning of Totnes is also critically dependent upon the availability of adequate car parking. With some two thirds of Totnes’ catchment lying outside the town in surrounding villages and rural areas where public transport provision is limited, the car provides the principal means of accessing the shops and services offered. On market days, the monthly Good Food Market, other occasions such as the
Christmas Markets and during the main holiday season, the demand for parking is high. There is also demand from employees and town centre residents. Protecting the supply of town centre parking is therefore an essential priority for Totnes.

9.3.3 Research shows that there is scope to improve the operation and appearance of the Market Square and Civic Hall, which has been the subject of investment by the Town Council in recent years. A recent public consultation has seen plans drawn up to redesign the Market Square which will include:

a. Improvements to the layout and circulation of the market
b. Repositioning planters and seating
c. Improvements to the hard surfaces
d. Upgrading street furniture (including the installation of a water fountain) and visual decluttering.

There is also scope to extend the Market Square across the High Street to the Butterwalk as part of a strategy for the creation of shared space in the town centre.

9.3.4 It is clear from consultation that the community recognises the vital role which the Market Square and associated town centre car parks play in the life of the town acting as points of arrival and enabling Totnes to thrive and prosper. They are well established assets of genuine community value which need to be nurtured. Any change is likely to be difficult and complex to achieve given the wide range of stakeholders involved, the need to ensure continuity of operation and the likely costs involved. However, the NP aims to provide for positive change to occur and the policy approach being taken should be regularly reviewed (at least every 5 years) in light of changes in travel and transport.

POLICY MSQ1 – Market Square and Civic Hall

Proposals for positive change to the Market Square and Civic Hall will be supported providing they will:

a. Be pursued through widespread inclusive community consultation;
b. Support the economic and social functioning of Totnes town centre;
c. Ensure continuity of market operations;
d. At least maintain the number of trading pitches available;
e. At least maintain current levels of town centre parking; and
f. Reflect the sensitive historic nature of the location.
POLICY MSQ2 – Town Centre Car Parks

Proposals for redevelopment of any land currently used for town centre car parking (Victoria Street, Heath’s Nursery, North Street, the Lamb, Heath Way and the Nursery) will only be supported providing it:

a. At least maintains the current levels of parking with sufficient resident and visitor car parking within easy walking distance of the town centre;

b. Makes provision for the introduction of electric cars and car sharing technologies;

c. Enhances the visual appearance of town centre parking through the introduction of hard and soft landscaping; such as permeable surfaces, tree planting and flower beds;

d. Respects local amenity, especially for neighbours; and

e. Contributes to the vitality, viability and functioning of the town centre.

9.4 Local Green Spaces

9.4.1 The medieval form of historic Totnes and its evolution to accommodate 21st century living, in particular the use of the car, have resulted in there being limited green space for residents, workers and visitors to the town centre. Leechwell, Heath and the Lamb Gardens, which have been established through community initiative, and Vire Island offer important green oases. Other important open spaces in the town include the Totnes Castle grounds, Borough Park, the ‘Chicken Run’ in Bridgetown, Follaton House grounds and arboretum, the allotments, various play area, and the wetlands adjacent to Brutus Bridge (see Appendix E). The NP therefore designates them as areas as Local Green Space to protect them from inappropriate change.
POLICY LGS1 – Local Green Spaces

The following are designated as local green spaces:

a.  Leechwell, Heath and Lamb Gardens;
b.  The Chicken Run in Bridgetown;
c.  Vire Island;
d.  Totnes Castle Grounds;
e.  Follaton House Arboretum and grounds;
f.  Borough Park;
g.  Allotments at Kingsbridge Hill, Castle Meadow, Camomile Lawn, Smithfields, and Bridgetown;
h.  Play areas at Smithfields, Meadow Park, Westonfields Park, Higher Westonfields Loop, and rear Follaton Community Hall;
i.  Follaton Oak.
10. Delivery and Monitoring

10.1.1 Many of the plan’s proposals will only happen with private sector investment, but this does not remove Devon County, South Hams District and Totnes Town Councils or other public bodies from their responsibilities for infrastructure and services. The plan’s policies aim to steer and shape development, but it is expected that developer contributions will be gathered through S106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy or similar in order to address any specific mitigation required and to offset the broader impacts of any new development.

10.1.2 The policies of this plan and the JLP will be complementary, together providing a firm platform for all parties to cooperate in promoting, enabling and delivering beneficial developments and improvements of all kinds. Conformity between plans will be key to unlocking funds to support this plan’s delivery, and it is hoped that Devon County, South Hams District and Totnes Town and neighbouring parish councils will take a proactive role in this regard.

10.1.3 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is approved by referendum it will become part of the local development plan. This means that it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The South Hams District Council will therefore be required to assess development proposals against the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan alongside the JLP and any related implementation plan to ensure that the aspirations of the community are being met.

10.1.4 Monitoring may require the plan to be reviewed in due course to keep it up-to-date and relevant, particularly in relation to changing circumstances related to travel and climate change. A monitoring framework is suggested to help judge the effectiveness of the plan’s policies. Any formal amendments to the plan will have to follow a similar process as was used to prepare the original plan.