

Developing Dartmouth & District

The Dartmouth & District MCTi
Community Plan 2004



June 2004



Forging forward to the future

Developing Dartmouth & District

The Dartmouth & District Market and Coastal Town Initiative
Community Plan 2004



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Chairman's preface

I am delighted to be able to introduce the Dartmouth & District MCTi Community Plan 2004. It has been developed under the auspices of the Market and Coastal Town initiative and represents the conclusion of a year of hard work that has involved in some way literally hundreds of people who live and work in the town of Dartmouth and the surrounding five parishes. It is a unique document because it has been developed as a result of one of the most far-reaching and comprehensive consultation exercises the area has seen. The job of the Steering Group – the majority of whom are elected parish or town councillors – has been to organise and manage the process of consultation and the production of this strategy document.

The Group has been determined to give everybody the chance to contribute. We have visited Dartmouth and all five parishes formally – at least twice; had special sessions for local businesses; held youth consultation events; contacted retirement homes; stood outside corner shops; and had full and continuous coverage in the local press. Over a hundred volunteers have worked on specialist groups to sift, sort, co-ordinate and further develop the responses put forward by the community without undue judgement or favour.

Many of the strategies and resultant project proposals may appear to focus on the town of Dartmouth itself. Yet the contribution from the parishes both in terms of ideas and comments as well as in levels of attendance at theme groups and other events was very high. The reason for the apparent concentration on the town

became evident as the initiative progressed. The parishes recognised that it was in their interests to support the town in its efforts to remain and grow as a commercial, business and social centre. Equally, one of the fundamental benefits of the initiative was the increasing realisation amongst many Dartmouth residents, especially those living at the 'bottom of town', that it is of paramount importance to the survival and development of Dartmouth as an area centre that it takes account of the needs of people living in the parishes and Townstal.

Some may be surprised by the content and the focus and there may appear to be omissions in terms of the issues raised and the projects proposed. There was, for example, virtually no mention during any of the consultations or theme group meetings of agriculture – either by or about farmers. Fishing was not mentioned to any great extent either. Perhaps, as work continues, matters related to these and other issues not represented may be introduced.

There remains the task of taking forward the ideas and projects that have been proposed and certainly all offers to contribute to this process over the next months will be gratefully received. Finally, I would like to thank all those individuals who have contributed to the process and whose efforts have made the Dartmouth & District MCTi so successful.

Andy Borthwick

*Chairman, Dartmouth & District MCTi Steering Group
June 2004*



Illustration: Paul Barclay Designs Tel: 07814 901460

Executive summary

The Dartmouth & District Market and Coastal Town initiative was established in March 2003. It was facilitated by the South West of England Regional Development Agency and supported by Devon County Council, South Hams District Council and Dartmouth Town Council. It was also funded, in part, by resources from Objective 2 of the European Social Fund. The initiative was charged with producing a regeneration plan for the town and surrounding area, based on expressed community need. This Community Plan represents the result of the activity undertaken and outlines the vision, objectives, principles, strategies and some of the projects identified. It is supplemented by a shorter document available to the whole community together with detailed project proposals that continue to be developed in partnership with other agencies.

A steering group made up of representatives of Dartmouth Town Council, the five parishes surrounding the town, the chairmen of two business organisations and a district councillor commenced a comprehensive process of community consultation. The full programme involved many stages and is set out in Appendix I. The responses to the consultations were processed in six 'theme' groups that were organised by a part-time co-ordinator and involved over a hundred volunteers. The groups considered issues related to economic and business development; culture, education, learning and skills; traffic, transport and access; health, social care and safety; sport and leisure; and housing.

As a result of the consultations, analysis and data research the vision agreed for the future of Dartmouth and the surrounding parishes (the Area) was:

“A town and parishes where there are economic and social conditions for the maintenance of a caring and vibrant community where all ages can live, work and enjoy a rich quality of life. It is an area where traditional coastal and rural values and culture continue to exist but which reflects the advantages of life in the 21st century. It welcomes visitors and

sensitively protects its environment as well as continuing to promote and respect its heritage: an area that celebrates diversity and where the town of Dartmouth acts as a centre to meet the major needs of the community.”

Three groups of issues impact on the area. First, the history, heritage, geography and natural environment are the basis for its unique character. Together the river, the beauty of the coast and the tranquillity of the rural hinterland all contribute to the quality of life and make the Area the major attraction it is for visitors and second homeowners. But this very popularity is creating economic and social problems.

Second are the economic or business issues. These include the fact that Dartmouth is no longer the commercial centre of choice for many. It has no major supermarket and totally inadequate parking and traffic management systems – including poorly integrated public transport. The very strong tourist industry provides a surfeit of low paid and seasonal work. Average wages are amongst the lowest in the country whilst house prices are amongst the highest. This creates an enormous problem and forces young people to leave the area in the search for better paid work and affordable accommodation.

This leads to a third, social group of issues. The absence of sufficient post-sixteen education and training provision locally encourages young people to leave the Area. The ageing and static (in growth terms) population that remains suffers from inadequate locally provided health and emergency services. Where these are provided they are placed in a town with poor public transport and inadequate parking – making access very difficult. Despite the recent development of a sport and leisure centre, a community centre in Townstal and the Flavel Centre in the town, the community generally feel that they have inadequate facilities. Overall there is serious concern about the social divisions appearing in the community and the need to increase the overall size and demographic shape of the population.

In order to counteract the adverse issues and build on the positive, three key objectives have been set for the regeneration of the Area.

Objective 1

To increase the levels of prosperity of the resident communities of Dartmouth & District through the further development of the tourist industry and the introduction of new employment opportunities offering a full range of remuneration.

Objective 2

To enhance the quality of life of residents of Dartmouth & District and improve social cohesion within the town and across the parishes.

Objective 3 (cross-cutting)

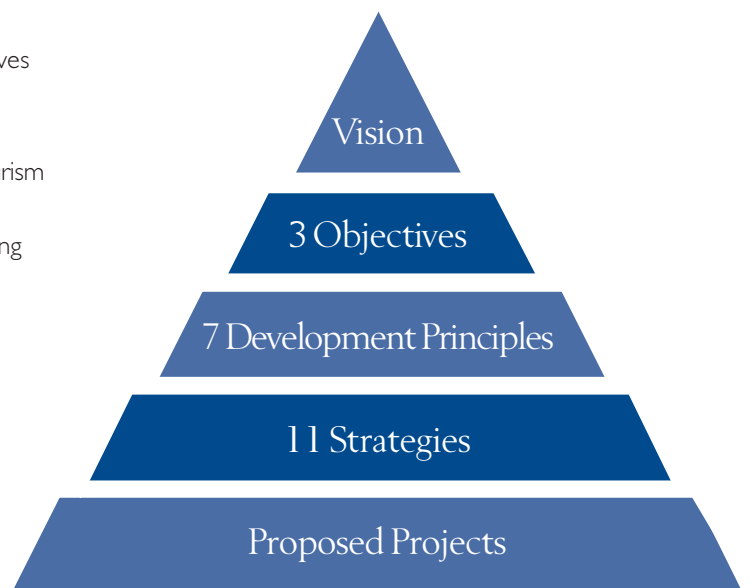
To protect, enhance and capitalize on the history, heritage, geography and natural environment of the Area.

In addition, the seven development principles set out on page 22 were developed against which all the subsequent projects could be measured. These supplement the third objective and ensure that the traditional values and culture of the Area are preserved. From the objectives and principles eleven strategies were developed:

- 1** stimulate and increase high quality, year round tourism
- 2** provide new opportunities for employment
- 3** increase the amount and range of permanent living accommodation
- 4** reclaim the commercial centre
- 5** improve traffic management and access
- 6** enhance the provision of education and training
- 7** improve health facilities
- 8** increase safety and security
- 9** expand sport and leisure
- 10** co-ordinate and stimulate cultural activities
- 11** make the natural environment more accessible

A series of projects designed to contribute to at least one or more of the strategies has begun to be developed. The most significant relate to desired improvements in traffic and transport provision (including parking) and to opening up and promoting the heritage of Dartmouth and the Area in a coherent and 'brand' sensitive manner. The other highly significant project is to provide an indoor swimming pool. The remaining projects are matched with different objectives and strategies.

Finally, the success of the MCTi in bringing together the various interest groups from across the parishes and the town is recognised. A strategic continuation body comprising of representatives of the parish and town councils is proposed to take the projects forward although much work is required before funding agencies and partners are found. However, a firm foundation based on a sound community plan has been achieved.



“ ... the success of the MCTi in bringing together the various interest groups from across the parishes and the town is recognised.”

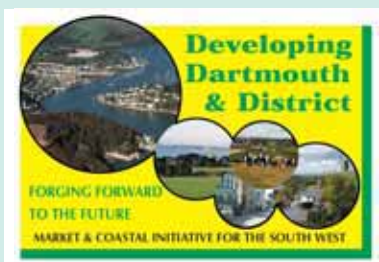
Chapter I Summary

This chapter provides an insight into the main activity of the Dartmouth & District MCTi.

It sets out the:

- background to the Market and Coastal Town initiative
- role and function of the Steering Group
- main activities undertaken including consultation procedures

The agreed overall vision for Dartmouth and District is presented. This acts as the basis for the strategies and projects that are outlined in later chapters. Finally, the purpose of the document is described and reference made to other documentation that makes up the output of the initiative.



“The objective of the initiative was to produce strategic plans that promote the regeneration of market and coastal towns.”

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Market & Coastal Towns initiative (MCTi) was launched in 2001 by a regional partnership of organisations in response to Government and South West regional policy initiatives including the Rural White Paper, the South West of England Regional Development Agency Regional Economic Strategy and the Countryside Agency's Market Towns programme.

1.1.2 The objective of the initiative was to produce strategic plans that promote the regeneration of market and coastal towns. The fundamental concept was that the plan should be a consequence of community aspirations and not be generated by local government bodies; in short it had to be: 'community fed not authority led'. It was recognised that the plan should cover a long time scale – up to thirty years if necessary.

1.2 The 'Expression of Interest'

1.2.1 In September 2002, Dartmouth Town Council submitted their 'Expression of Interest' to South West of England Regional Development Agency. In the application a brief description was required of not only the town of Dartmouth but also the hinterland, encompassing the parishes of Blackawton, Dittisham, Kingswear, Stoke Fleming and Strete, leading to the concept of 'Dartmouth & District', referred to in this document as "the Area". By March 2003 approval for the initiative had been granted, the funding agreed and the 'process' begun.

1.2.2 Although established through the South West of England Regional Development Agency, the Dartmouth & District MCTi was actively supported and sponsored by Devon County Council, South Hams District Council and the Dartmouth Town Council.

1.3 The MCTi process for Dartmouth & District

1.3.1 The Dartmouth Town Council engaged the services of a MCTi co-ordinator to start the process.

The Dartmouth Town Council engaged the services of a MCTi co-ordinator to start the process. He established the necessary structure to manage the process, informed the community of the opportunity before them and sought volunteers to become involved more fully with the process.

A marketing plan was put in place, and a logo designed to include recognisable elements of every parish within the Area. An extensive programme of community consultation was initiated. Leaflets were designed and distributed by volunteers to every household in Dartmouth and the parishes of Blackawton, Dittisham, Kingswear, Stoke Fleming and Strete, so that all residents would be fully aware of the MCTi and of the opportunity it represented. This was reinforced by an extensive poster campaign, as well as coverage in the local press.

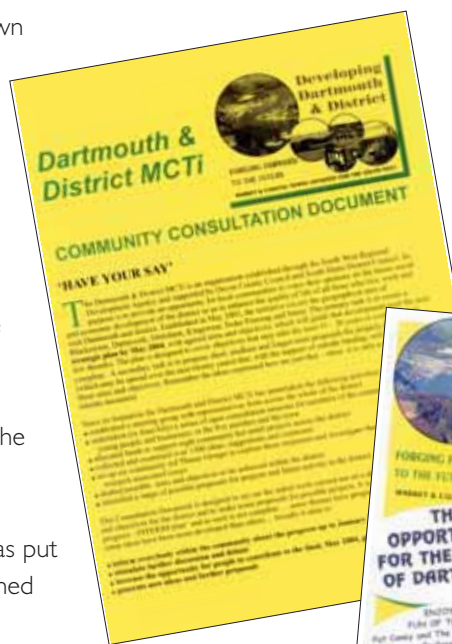
It was felt from the outset that the MCTi had to be accessible to all, and so the next step in the process was to hold a series of 'Drop-in-Days' in every parish. Their



purpose was to capture the opinions and wishes of the residents of the whole Area, and to identify potential volunteers for greater involvement. In order to ensure that the young people of the community would be involved, a special Young Person's Voice Conference was conducted. There were also two meetings specifically aimed at the local business community.

The Dartmouth & District MCTi Steering Group was established to oversee the process and to direct the production of the Community Plan. The Group, which was established with 12 members, was representative of the whole Area, and had 4 members from the Dartmouth

Town Council and one each from the Parish councils in Blackawton, Dittisham, Kingswear, Stoke Fleming and Strete, as well as a district councillor and the chairmen of Dartmouth & District Chamber of Trade and Businesses, and the Tourist Information Centre. The first meeting of the Steering Group was held in July 2003.



The main tasks of the Steering Group were:

- to produce the Community Plan within the timescales laid down
- to oversee the process
- to ensure that all agencies and all members of the community were consulted and had the opportunity to be involved
- to establish a structure that would support, sustain and implement the Community Plan

Part of the overall MCTi budget was allocated to what became known as 'Quick Wins': simple, relatively inexpensive projects that would both assist the relevant community and encourage it to become fully involved in the remainder of the MCTi programme. Twenty-five applications were received and ten approved across the whole Area.

A meeting of the Theme Groups

1.3.7. The information gathered from the consultation events revealed six major themes:

- economic and business development
- culture, education, learning and skills
- traffic, transport and access
- health, social care and safety
- sport and leisure
- housing

1.3.8 The Steering Group, together with the MCTi Co-ordinator, organised a meeting in October 2003 and invitations were sent to everyone who had expressed a wish to become involved in the initiative. Those volunteers elected to join the theme group that covered the topic that particularly interested them. Each of the six theme groups then chose its own chairman.

1.3.9 Each group was given a detailed summary of the information gathered from, and the views expressed by, the community. Their main task was to consider each and every suggestion, but at the same time each group was required to conduct a rigorous investigation of its chosen theme. This process included a SWOT analysis setting down the Area's strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats. Groups were also required to consider options for addressing the issues and deriving benefit from the opportunities. All groups received detailed statistical information drawn from a range of sourceS – a so called 'Healthcheck' (see Appendix 4) – which provided them with source data about their themes. The groups were also invited to set out their own vision for the development of their theme.

1.3.10 A second community consultation programme was undertaken in January and February 2004, by which time ideas about the future had already begun to develop. The programme began with the publication of a leaflet detailing the initial findings of the six theme groups which was distributed throughout the Area. The main contents of the leaflet also appeared as a centre spread in the local press.

1.3.11 Consultation evenings were held in every parish and in Dartmouth, giving the public the opportunity to hear about the work of the theme groups, and to ask questions about the whole MCTi process. All of these evenings were well attended. In addition a consultation exercise was undertaken in the Townstal ward of Dartmouth. A Youth Consultation event was held with students from the Community College.

“Consultation evenings were held in every Parish and in Dartmouth ...”



‘Quick Wins’ – extra security for a local scout group; burial ground restoration, Dittisham; Heritage Trail booklet, Dartmouth and Kingswear Society



Meeting local residents at consultation events



1.4 The Results

1.4.1 As part of the second community consultation a statement was drawn up which described the type of Area the majority of the community wished to create. This was published in the local press and circulated as part of the consultation leaflet. A final statement was drawn up and this became the agreed 'vision' that would sustain all future work.

The Strategic Vision for Dartmouth & District

A town and parishes where there are economic and social conditions for the maintenance of a caring and vibrant community where all ages can live, work and enjoy a rich quality of life. It is an area where traditional coastal and rural values and culture continue to exist but which reflects the advantages of life in the 21st century. It welcomes visitors and sensitively protects its environment as well as continuing to promote and respect its heritage: an area that celebrates diversity and where the town of Dartmouth acts as a centre to meet the major needs of the community.

1.4.2 This Community Plan represents the central output from the Dartmouth & District MCTi. It summarises the work of the six theme groups by rehearsing the key identified issues, sets key objectives arising from these, establishes operating principles and outlines strategies and possible projects. Finally, it proposes an organisation and management structure for taking this Community Plan forward.

1.4.3 The purpose of the Community Plan is to provide a point of reference. The Plan deliberately does not set timescales, although the underlying assumption is that it has short, medium and long term relevance and applicability. It provides background and explains the Dartmouth & District context. It offers a perspective that justifies and rationalises the need for the proposals that are outlined. It provides the strategic underpinning to support the advancement of individual projects in order to demonstrate to planning and funding agencies how the projects contribute to the overall development of Dartmouth & District and the realisation of the strategic vision. It is not designed to be a document that project proposers take to external agencies on its own. Considerable additional, supporting detail relating to specific projects will be developed and presented alongside this Plan.

1.4.4 Another, abridged document that summarises the main points arising from the initiative and records the main proposed projects has been prepared. This document is designed to be available to all households and displayed in libraries and other public places in the Area in order to show the results of the consultation and publicise widely the ideas that it is intended will be taken forward.

1.4.5 Finally, a host of projects and proposals are currently being worked on and which are at different stages of development. Not all of these, due to insufficient space, are referred to in either this or the shorter document. All the projects may be considered as 'work in progress' and are the foundations for further work. As that work is completed, over differing timescales, stakeholders, partners and funding agencies will work together to ensure successful implementation.

Chapter 2

Summary

This chapter gives a brief background picture of Dartmouth and the five parishes. It highlights the importance of the cross cutting issues of the heritage and the natural environment of the Area – including the river.

It identifies important business issues:

- Dartmouth has ceased to be the commercial centre of choice for many residents
- the Area does not benefit from an all-encompassing supermarket
- inadequate parking facilities and poor traffic management have a negative impact
- tourism is the principal component of the local economy but is essentially seasonal in nature
- for road traffic, especially commercial, access to the Area is limited
- well-paid, permanent, full time job opportunities are at a premium
- there is a degree of dysfunctional interaction within the business community

Key social issues are apparent:

- lack of growth in the number of permanent residents
- very low average earnings of the Area's working community
- insufficient affordable housing
- growing social division within the Area and in particular within the town
- poor access to emergency and healthcare facilities
- inadequate range of local post-16 educational and training provision
- strength of feeling over the absence of a modern covered swimming pool as an integral component of the new leisure centre

The chapter ends by setting out why 'no change' cannot be an option.



2.1 History, heritage and the natural environment

2.1.1 Dartmouth & District (the Area) is made up of the town of Dartmouth and the individual and very picturesque villages of Blackawton, Dittisham, Kingswear, Stoke Fleming and Strete, and is an integral part of a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The coastline is part of the South Devon Heritage Coast and is host to a section of the South West Coastal Path. Overall the Area can be considered to be a jewel in the South Hams 'tourism' crown, providing an inspirational destination for the more discerning visitor.

2.1.2 The Area straddles the very beautiful River Dart and its estuary. Perhaps more than any other feature, it is the river that defines and shapes it. The river is at the same time a commercial asset, a communication route, and a social and leisure attraction. The Dartmouth Harbour and Navigation Authority, which is responsible for the river, has been an active part of the Dartmouth & District MCTi and it is vital that all parties continue to work in partnership so as to ensure that this priceless asset remains a focus for regeneration and sensitive development.

Natural, business and social environments

2.1.3 Dartmouth is an ancient town developed around one of the best natural deep-water harbours in the South West and was, in its day, one of the foremost ports in the country. The town is rich in historical sites, among them the Mayflower Memorial at Bayard's Cove, recording the time in 1620 when the Pilgrim fathers spent a week in the harbour aboard the Mayflower and its sister ship the Speedwell; Gallants Bower, an important earthwork dating from the time of the Civil War; and Dartmouth Castle.



2.1.4 Blackawton is a small rural community nestling in the rolling hills of the South Hams. It has its roots in the farming community although many new families now live here. There is a strong sense of 'village life', supported by three local pubs, post office, village hall, church and a thriving primary school. The challenges facing the parish are cost of housing, employment and lack of transport infrastructure.



2.1.5 The picturesque village of **Dittisham** lies on the banks of the river Dart, an attraction for second/holiday homeowners. The village, and the surrounding hamlets have something to offer everyone. In Dittisham, there are two inns, a café, post office stores, village hall, church, bed and breakfast accommodation, a sailing club, and many footpaths for walkers. Pedestrian ferries run on demand to The Greenway, taking passengers for a visit to the historic gardens at the home of Agatha Christie, and also to Dartmouth for sightseers and shoppers alike.



2.1.6 The parish of **Kingswear** is the eastern edge of the Area and its population of approximately 1400, divided equally between the village of Kingswear and the ward of Hillhead, has strong links with Dartmouth forged over many centuries. The busy community, that includes Noss-on-Dart, is much appreciated by visitors who arrive by car, boat and steam train. The parish boasts shops, pubs, a school, church, village hall, café, post office, marina, and The Royal Dart Yacht Club.



2.1.7 The Parish of **Stoke Fleming**, with more than 500 households, is situated high on cliffs above Dartmouth with records first appearing in the Domesday Book of 1086. The village has one of Devon's premier primary schools, an award winning hotel, post office and shop, garage, a pub, a number of businesses and an historic church. A recently constructed village hall and numerous sports and other clubs mean that there is a thriving social scene. With Blackpool Sands, a blue flag beach, lying within the parish boundaries, Stoke Fleming is a much-favoured location for visitors and local people alike.



2.1.8 Strete, is about fifteen minutes drive from Dartmouth on high coastal ground at the eastern end of Slapton Sands. It is a small parish with a population of approximately 500. There is an excellent parish hall with all facilities, an inn, post office and shop, church and restaurant. There is a small wooded community area where picnics can be taken, a leisure field with a wildlife section and a children's play park.



“The river is at the same time a commercial asset, a communication route, and a social and leisure attraction.”

2.1.9 The villages all traditionally share a close association with Dartmouth. In days gone by, when the main industry of the district was farming, the town was home to a livestock market and served as the commercial centre. A fat stock show is still held there each December. More recently, as commercial port operations in Dartmouth and Kingswear have dwindled and leisure activity on the river has increased, concurrent with the general decline in farming activity in the district, tourism has grown in importance as the Area's principal industry.

2.1.10 The Area's maritime history is relatively well known. Most notable is its long association with the Royal Navy since the days when it became the base-port for the training of its young officers. Over the years, the strategic importance of Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) to the Area has grown; it has become a crucial feature of the economy, is now the largest employer and one of the very few that offers a wide range of job opportunities. It is essential that its future remains secure, as the effect of its closure would be catastrophic to the community.

2.1.11 Less well known is the Area's industrial history: Dartmouth was the birthplace of Thomas Newcomen, a pioneer of the steam engine and an important figure at the start of the industrial revolution. Ship-building has taken place at Noss-on-Dart and elsewhere on the estuary for centuries. An early industrial site in Dartmouth – a handsome building in a prominent site at Warfleet Creek – served as a paper mill, a floumill, and a brewery, as well as a small factory manufacturing detergents and latterly pottery.

2.1.12 The Area shares a number of major architectural assets including important listed buildings as well as many others which have great charm, including: Britannia Royal Naval College, the picture of which has become synonymous with the name of Dartmouth; the 17th

century Butterwalk – aptly described as “Dartmouth's pride”¹; St Clements Church in Townstal, the oldest church in the Area; Coleton Fishacre in Kingswear, a house in the Arts and Crafts tradition set in splendid gardens owned by the National Trust; St Saviours Church, included as one of the 1000 best churches in Britain. The list goes on and on.

2.1.13 Dartmouth & District rightly has a reputation as a delightful and desirable area in which to live as well as to visit. However, its own success in offering its residents an extraordinary quality of life is in part, the cause of some of the main business and social problems it faces today.



The Thomas Newcomen engine



The Britannia Royal Naval College

¹ Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner: *The Buildings of Devon*, Penguin Books 1989.



2.2 Business issues

2.2.1 Traditionally Dartmouth has been seen as the commercial centre of the Area. There are three main reasons for this:

- Dartmouth's size when compared to the surrounding villages
- Dartmouth's role as a port
- Dartmouth's role as a market town

2.2.2 However, many residents of the Area – and increasingly of the town itself – no longer see Dartmouth in this role, and elect to use Totnes, Kingsbridge and the Torbay towns as their commercial centres.

2.2.3 This has undoubtedly contributed to Dartmouth's decline as a retail centre, and particularly to the fact that many of the 'traditional' retail businesses – especially food shops – have closed and been replaced by more visitor-oriented businesses such as gift shops, art and craft galleries, and restaurants.

2.2.4 The reasons why so many Area residents have abandoned Dartmouth as a shopping centre are varied. However, with large supermarkets now operating in surrounding towns, and the ownership of, and access to, cars being more widespread, the principal reasons are considered to be: the lack of car parking spaces in the town centre; poor public transport facilities linking the villages with the town; and the lack of an all-encompassing supermarket with adequate free parking.

2.2.5 Roadside parking restrictions only come into force during the summer months. During the winter period, there is a tendency for residents and the staff of local businesses and service organisations to fill most of the available space for all day parking of their vehicles. Area residents report that they find it very difficult to visit the town for short periods and are not inclined to pay for what is perceived to be 'unnecessary' parking expenses.

2.2.6 Available in the summer, the Park & Ride facility has been the cause of much discontent in the past, when it was deemed to be expensive, inconvenient and not at all user-friendly. A new contract has been let for the summer of 2004 and the community will monitor operations. There is a very poor public transport infrastructure with infrequent services within the Area – and very few linking the parishes. In addition, there is little integration with public transport outside the Area – such as trains at Totnes or the regional airports of Exeter or Plymouth.

2.2.7 In the summer the scarcity of formal car parks in conjunction with the vast increase in the number of vehicles attempting to park within the town results in a state of traffic saturation and frequent blockages on the main roads. Visitors can be expected to opt for the Park & Ride facility, but community consultation has highlighted that the Area's residents are not prepared to pay the Park & Ride charges (which are often quoted as being more expensive than, say, Exeter) and would rather shop elsewhere.



Dartmouth's Park & Ride service

“It is apparent that the lack of a carefully considered traffic management strategy for the town is a key component of Dartmouth's inability to operate effectively as the commercial centre of the Area.”

2.2.8 It is apparent that the lack of a carefully considered traffic management strategy for the town is a key component of Dartmouth's inability to operate effectively as the commercial centre of the Area. There are services (such as the surgery and library) which are located in the centre of town and could be expected to attract people. However, because of the transport and parking difficulties, residents from outside the centre of town appeared to suggest that they remained for the minimum time required to visit the particular service.

2.2.9 Retail is only one of the functions of a commercial centre, which is usually the base for a range of business and professional services such as solicitors or accountants. There is a lack of such services in Dartmouth where there is only one firm of accountants; and although there are ostensibly three firms of solicitors, one is a branch of a firm located in Totnes and consultations are strictly on an "appointment only" basis. Provision of such professional services is to an extent led by demand, but there are other factors contributing to the scarcity: the lack of parking for both employees and clients; and a shortage of available office space.

2.2.10 With regard to the latter, it is noted that very few shops in Dartmouth have office space above them, and there are planning restrictions governing the number of ground-floor premises that can be used for such purposes. This, combined with a continuing demand for retail premises, means that any future office developments will have to be located outside the town centre.

2.2.11 Dartmouth is also the base for the Area's industrial activity. There are three main industrial zones, of which the oldest is the Nelson Road/Collingwood Road area of Townstal. This is a diverse site, ranging from medium-sized industrial premises to small workshop-style units. Most of the units are occupied, although little manufacturing takes place, with most premises used for support services ranging from building supplies to car repairs to tool hire. It is understood that some premises are currently used for storage. Two of the larger employers on this site are Dartmouth Smokehouse and Eltek Semiconductors; both are successful businesses providing catering services and electronic components respectively. This

zone is unattractive, merges into the residential area of Townstal, and vehicle access is affected by traffic-calming measures introduced for the benefit of local residents. A new access road has been completed and this has helped alleviate some, but not all of the problems associated with the industrial estates.

2.2.12 Some of these problems have been overcome by the town's newer industrial estate, Admiral's Court, which is at the junction of the A3122 and Nelson Road. This estate, which is currently 25% developed, is owned by South Hams District Council. It is fairly well landscaped and is removed from the residential area.

2.2.13 The third industrial site is at Sandquay, which benefits from river frontage and is the site of operations of VT Ltd (Vosper Thomeycroft), a major local employer. This site suffers from local access difficulties.



**Industrial sites – above: Nelson Road
below: VT Ltd, Sandquay**



2.2.14 There is a fourth potential industrial area at Jawbones, on the edge of Dartmouth and on the road to Stoke Fleming and Strete. This large site is owned by South Hams District Council and zoned for industrial use. It is largely undeveloped, and the only businesses based on the site are a small garage and a skip-hire concern.

2.2.15 There is much criticism levelled at the state of the main artery into the town, the A3122. From Halwell to Dartmouth, the road has frequent pinch points where large vehicles cannot pass each other and there are few opportunities to overtake slowly moving vehicles. In addition, the two vehicle ferries that bridge the River Dart are limited to 7.5 tonnes; yet these ferries are an integral element of the A379 road providing the Area with direct access to Torbay. There is little doubt that the deficiencies of the access routes to the Area have been a factor in the gradual withdrawal of some industrial operations in recent times and remain a deterrent to prospective industrial activity. Devon County Council has acknowledged that this is a matter that needs some resolution.

“A majority of visitors to Dartmouth actually stay elsewhere and come to the town on day visits.”

**Tourist Information Centre,
Dartmouth**



2.2.16 Tourism is the major contributor to the economy of the area. The benefits of tourism are not simply derived from the provision of accommodation. Additional income is generated for: the catering trade, including the farmers and wholesale suppliers of food in and outside the Area; the retail trade, who benefit from an increase in 'passing trade'; service providers of transport, car and yacht maintenance; and almost all business within the Area to one degree or another. A survey carried out in 1998 by the then Chamber of Trade (now the Chamber of Trade and Businesses) suggested that, of the retailers surveyed, 75% of their takings derived directly from visitors².

2.2.17 Despite this, the statistics below³ show that the number of available tourist beds in the district has seen no growth in recent years.

2.2.18 A majority of visitors to Dartmouth actually stay elsewhere and come to the town on day visits. A survey has shown that 65% of the town's visitors are staying in the Torbay towns, and only 20% staying in Dartmouth itself⁴. This particularly strengthens the case for improving and enhancing access, including parking, if these numbers are to continue to grow.

Tourist bed spaces in Dartmouth & District	1997	2002
Serviced Accommodation	590	640
Flats & Houses	600	580
Holiday Park Units	1120	1080
Totals	2310	2300

2.2.19 The current nature of tourism in Dartmouth & District is that it is seasonal. As such, tourist-based businesses in the Area rely on 3–6 months of the year to operate at maximum capacity and will run at a very reduced level for the remainder of the year. It is common practice for a number of businesses to close for varying lengths of periods during January and February and many retailers have difficulty covering their costs during the winter months. This cycle of operations leads to the creation of a vibrant and colourful ambience in the

² Dartmouth & District Chamber of Trade market research document, 1998

³ Source: Devon County Council website

⁴ Dartmouth & District Chamber of Trade market research document, 1998

summer and during specific holiday periods such as Christmas, New Year and Easter that has a positive effect on trade. However, at other times when the town centre appears to be relatively empty of people, the very quiet ambience can be disconcerting and correspondingly detrimental to trade.

2.2.20 Dysfunctional interaction between business organisations combined with the lack of a holistic development strategy has reduced the effectiveness of the support on offer from local government at District and County levels. The reason for this is that business interests in the town differ. There are two organisations that provide the opportunity for debate on business issues: The Chamber of Trade and Businesses draws most, although not all, of its members from retailing and catering; Dartmouth Tourist Information Limited, which (like the Chamber) is a company limited by guarantee, operates the Tourist Information Centre (TIC). The TIC is independent from local government and has to cover the majority of its operating costs by commercial activities. It publishes the annual Dartmouth Guide and regards advertisers in this publication as its members. They are primarily accommodation providers and caterers, although some retailers are also members. These organisations and others, including the Dartmouth Town Council, all have access to officers of the South Hams District Council and Devon County Council. While open access is entirely appropriate, there have been many instances when the individual organisations have communicated very different wishes and requirements to the external authorities.

2.3 Social issues

“The average national salary is reported to be around £24,000 ... ”

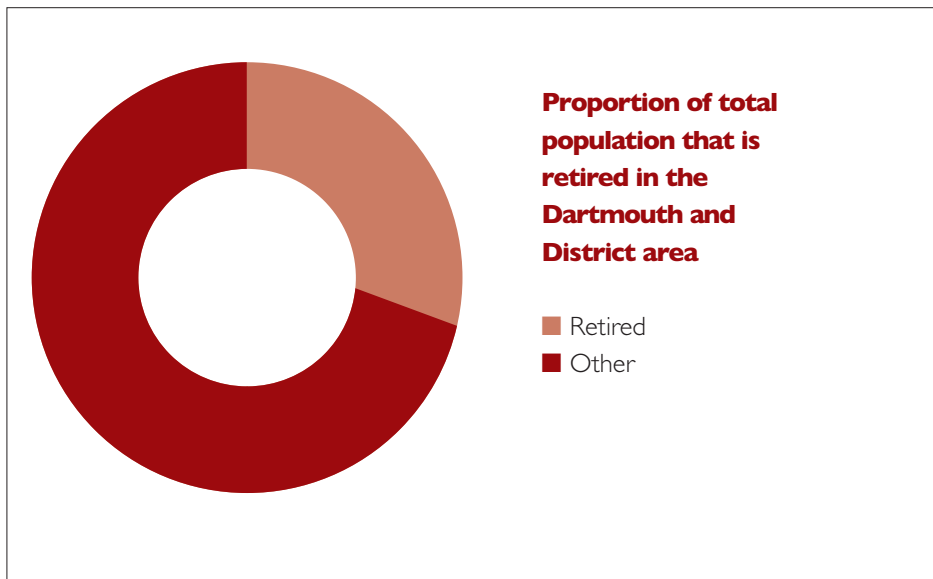
2.3.1 Census figures for 1971 through to 2001 show that the registered population of Dartmouth has gone from 5707 to 5841, an increase of 134 (2.3%) and is hovering around the 5800 mark. The Area’s registered population of voters has grown from 9262 to 9861 (6.5% increase over 30 years) indicating there has been a slightly stronger growth in the villages. However, in comparison with the other main towns in the South Hams – Ivybridge 297%, Kingsbridge 75%, and Totnes 42%, growth in Dartmouth can be seen to be negligible.

“In Dartmouth & District the average salary for a male is £13,978; for a female £6,524.”

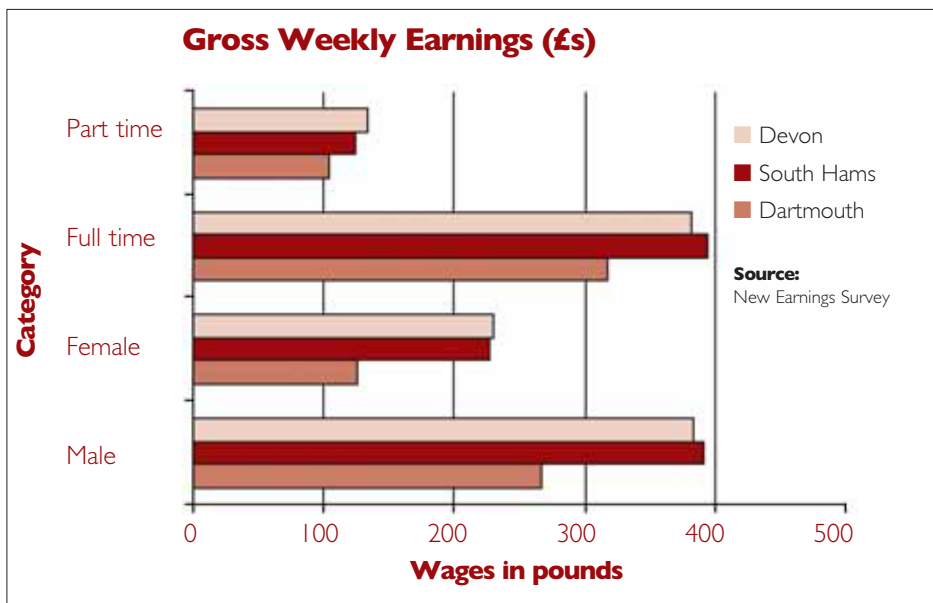
Age breakdown of population

Resident population (percentage)

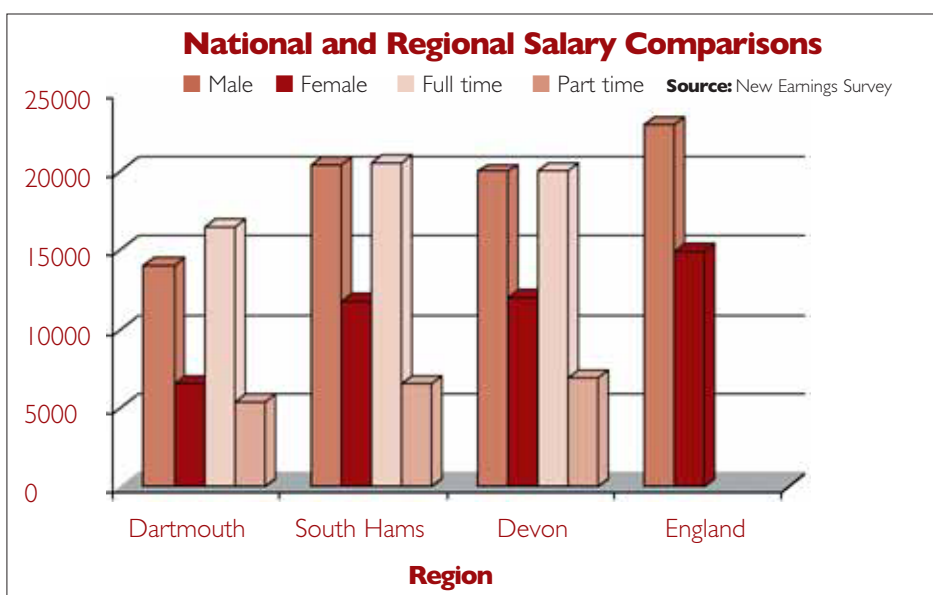
	Dartmouth & Kingswear	South Hams	England & Wales
Under 16	10.5	18.4	20.2
16 to 19	3.1	4.5	4.9
20 to 29	6.4	7.7	12.6
30 to 59	40.1	42.7	41.5
60 to 74	23.2	16.4	13.3
75 and over	16.7	10.3	7.6
Average age	51.1	42.8	38.6



2.3.2 The average age of a resident of Dartmouth or Kingswear is 51, and 31.5% of the population is retired.⁵ The national average age is 38.6. The implication is that Dartmouth is tending to attract more retired people than is average. When matched with the relative lack of growth, the lack of gainful employment within the town, and the very high cost of housing (see 2.3.6), it indicates that younger residents are making way for retired persons. Without action it is expected that this trend will continue.



2.3.3 Over the last few decades, the Area has witnessed the decline, closure and external re-location of a number of industries: Daler Rowney, Philips Shipbuilders, TTB, Valeport and Proctor Masts to name but a few. All once provided jobs for local residents.



2.3.4 The average national salary is reported to be around £24,000; the equivalent figure for Devon is circa £20,000, the second lowest paid county in the country. In Dartmouth and District the average salary for a male is £13,978; for a female £6,524. This inevitably means that many people will earn very much less

⁵ 2001 census

Average weekly earnings			
Source: New Earnings Survey			
	Dartmouth	South Hams	Devon
Male	£266.89	£391.31	£383.74
Female	£125.47	£226.77	£230.27
Full time	£317.01	£393.79	£382.06
Part time	£103.64	£124.21	£133.67

than this average figure: a questionnaire issued to the local community indicated that for some working families in the Area their combined annual income was no more than £11,000 – £14,000.

2.3.5 With tourism as the principal industry, many of the job opportunities are seasonal, provide very low wages, and offer little security or career prospects. Those individuals who enjoy more gainful employment – with a salary approximating to the district average – are more than likely to be employed elsewhere in Devon.

2.3.6 In the last five years, the price of properties has escalated across the nation. The average cost of a terraced house in Devon is now recorded as £139,000.⁶ In the South Hams, and Dartmouth & District in particular, the significance of this issue is amplified due to the very low average wages. In an article in the *Dartmouth Chronicle*⁷, Tor Homes, an affordable homes provider in the South Hams, released figures that showed that the average cost of a house in the area was £93,400 in 1998, £155,800 in 2002 and £213,000 in 2003. At the same time the average cost of the cheapest 25% of homes went from £43,000 in 1998 to £82,200 in 2002; no figure was quoted for 2003.

2.3.7 There has been a steady rise in the relative number of houses that are no longer 'owner-occupied'. The very strong housing market is the consequence of the current financial environment where property represents the best possible investment for cash-rich individuals and organisations. The cost of housing is now far beyond the reach of most working people within the South Hams district (more than 10 times average income).

⁶ Land Registry statistics extracted from the BBC website

⁷ *Dartmouth Chronicle* Friday January 9, 2004

2.3.8 There has been an increase in the number of homes that are occupied by retired people and the Census showed that 21.7% of homes in Dartmouth were second homes. The subsequent increase in the volume of retired people living in the area will cause a further rise in the average age and percentage of retired people living in the Area and potentially, a corresponding decline in the number of people available for employment.

2.3.9 Across the Area there is a lack of social cohesion with an emerging stark division between the local residents who exist on extremely low wages and those who have high incomes (or significant assets) including, especially, retired people and second-home owners. It is epitomised by the shift of balance that has occurred within Dartmouth. The Clifton ward, situated on the slopes of the hills down to the riverbanks and home to the most desirable residences within the town, now accommodates less than 50% of the town's residents but has the lion's share of the retired sector. In the Townstal ward, situated at the top of the hill, the community has a younger average age and comprises many of the seasonal and lower-paid workers that traditionally provide the resources essential to the business operations of the town. More recently it has expanded to include additional new private housing with a younger, more affluent population whose search for higher paid employment will only succeed if they look outside what is currently provided in Dartmouth. There are similar examples of social divisions in the parishes.

2.3.10 Anti-social behaviour, particularly by an element of younger members of the community, has become a major concern for residents of Dartmouth & District. Allied to this is a growing perception that police cover across the Area is both inadequate and their performance ineffective when cover is present. The police do undertake routine patrols and provide emergency cover throughout the Area. However, Dartmouth police station is closed during the evening and at night. It is also noted that the police station, and other emergency services, remain sited in the Clifton ward in the lower part of the town, whereas the majority of the Area's residents live in the Townstal ward and in the villages. Area residents have also expressed their concerns about the limited provision of the emergency services (particularly, ambulances and police), the potential delays in response to emergencies, and subsequent access to hospitals able to cope with significant crises.

2.3.11 Residents of the Area use the town's health services, which include the Dartmouth & Kingswear 'cottage' hospital, yet they too are mostly situated in the lower part of town. There are difficulties in accessing these facilities, due to the lack of public transport and the well-known parking difficulties in central Dartmouth. The lack of overnight ferry services forces Kingswear residents to look elsewhere for emergency medical treatment and accordingly they have been encouraged to seek routine elements of healthcare in the Torbay area.

2.3.12 Historically, Kingswear has enjoyed a synergistic relationship with Dartmouth. It has provided the terminal for the rail link, and its wharves provided the docking and landing facilities for commercial vessels. One of the area's principal industrial businesses, Philips shipbuilders, also operated on the Kingswear side of the river at the Noss works. With the growth of tourism, Kingswear is now home to the largest marina on the river and the end destination of the privately run steam train service.

2.3.13 Both the Lower Ferry and the privately owned passenger ferry service are crucial to the continuance of Dartmouth and Kingswear unity, with respect to the business and social environments. With the creation of district councils and the demise of borough councils, ownership of the vehicle-carrying Lower Ferry, that links Dartmouth and Kingswear, was passed to the South Hams District Council.

2.3.14 The cost of concessionary tickets for local people is a significant issue especially when associated with other difficulties (queues, parking availability, etc.) incurred in use of the ferries (particularly in the summer months). Together these are causing Kingswear residents to adopt Torbay towns as their natural commercial centre in increasing numbers, thereby detracting from Dartmouth & District.

2.3.15 It has been established that within the Area there are currently 459 children of pre-school age, but there are only 36 fulltime places available in pre-school groups. It is also difficult to develop additional facilities, as there are no training courses locally which have crèche facilities, thus essentially ruling out the very people – parents with children – likely to take on the challenge of starting a pre-school group.



Development of affordable housing at Blackawton



Marina at Kingswear

Dartmouth Hospital





Dartmouth Community College for students up to the age of 16.

2.3.16 The Area is well served by primary schools and has an 11–16 Community College which delivers some post-16 'A' level and vocational provision in association with Churston Grammar School and South Devon College. Local students are often faced with considerable daily journeys, with consequent high dropout rates at transfer and during post-16 provision. There is a particularly pressing need for the provision of specialist, locally based, training which will ready students for employment, especially in such areas as tourism, catering and marine skills. Here business and social issues come together, for it is only if young people are better trained that increases in wage levels can be achieved. Student numbers at the college are low, under 500, and it is essential that the secondary aged population of young people is increased in order to keep the college at a viable size and to be able to provide local provision of post-16 education and training.

2.3.17 Over the last two years adult and community based education has been provided directly by Devon County Council. Although provision has remained of a high quality and every effort has been made to deliver courses in the parishes it is to be regretted that local control has been lost – and with it the opportunity to more closely co-ordinate those courses with other locally organised activities. For example, voluntary associations

such as the Dart Valley University of the Third Age make a considerable contribution to community based learning and in addition the Flavel Centre, when it opens, may host some adult education.

2.3.18 Dartmouth is naturally viewed by a great number of its visitors as a major yachting centre, and is also noted for the quality of its rowing. The success and reputation of the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta, which incorporates West of England Amateur Rowing Association rowing events, attests to this. In addition, the South West Rowing championships will be held in Dartmouth in 2006. However the launch slip by the Higher Ferry is inadequate.

2.3.19 The overdue provision of a purpose-built sport and leisure facility at Norton will offer a much needed asset. However, the community consultation identified a strong demand for an indoor swimming pool to be attached to this facility.

“... a strong demand for an indoor swimming pool to be attached to this facility.”

2.4 Managing change

2.4.1 Some members of the community registered concern over the idea that planned changes should be considered. They felt that, in order to protect their quality of life, change should be resisted. However, the majority recognised that 'change' can be considered as a constant; that is to say that change is an ever-present fact of life and not necessarily the result of deliberate activity within or without the town and district. The recent and very significant rise in the price of property in the South Hams is a consequence of national economics and not the result of any policy implemented by local government officers. The desire to sustain a position of 'no change' within a community such as Dartmouth & District would also require strategies to counteract the external change elements that will inevitably impact on the local community. Therefore, a policy of 'no change' is, in reality, impossible.

“A policy of no change is, in reality, impossible.”

2.4.2 However, the community can exercise some choice: it can allow change to permeate in a haphazard manner, to suffer the consequences and perhaps attempt to react after an event, or it can choose the proactive option and endeavour to manage aspects of change to its advantage.

“... the community can exercise some choice: it can allow change to permeate in a haphazard manner, to suffer the consequences and perhaps attempt to react after an event, or it can choose the proactive option and endeavour to manage aspects of change to its advantage.”

Clearly, the latter option is preferable if there is to be a controlled attempt to achieve the Strategic Vision.

2.4.3 In order to manage change, it is necessary to adopt a range of strategies. The most usual source of change experienced by a community will arise as a consequence of change elements at work in the business or social environments. It is therefore necessary to monitor those environments with the intention of recognising change elements as they materialise, evaluating their likely outcomes and planning accordingly, either to take advantage of an opportunity or to ameliorate the effects of a threat.

2.4.4 Change can be initiated from within a community. The current building projects being undertaken (Flavel Centre, Townstal Community Hall and the Leisure Centre) are examples of this. Such community-generated changes are best derived from a forward-looking, coherent and holistic strategy consistent with the vision, strategic objectives and principles of the community as a whole.

2.4.5 The MCTi has provided the residents with a unique opportunity to debate and analyse the business and social environments and also to reflect on the necessity for change. This chapter has attempted to paint a picture of some of the central problems, concerns and issues that those residents have identified. Chapter 3 will focus on the objectives and strategies that can be pursued to address and overcome them and Chapter 4 will identify projects designed to achieve the agreed vision.

Chapter 3

Summary

As a result of the analysis of the natural, business and social environments this chapter introduces three key objectives, seven development principles and sets out eleven business and social strategies.

■ **Strategy 1**

stimulate and increase high quality, year round tourism

■ **Strategy 2**

provide new opportunities for employment

■ **Strategy 3**

increase the amount and range of permanent living accommodation

■ **Strategy 4**

reclaim the commercial centre

■ **Strategy 5**

improve traffic management and access

■ **Strategy 6**

enhance the provision of education and training

■ **Strategy 7**

improve health facilities

■ **Strategy 8**

increase safety and security

■ **Strategy 9**

expand sport and leisure

■ **Strategy 10**

co-ordinate and stimulate cultural activities

■ **Strategy 11**

make the natural environment more accessible

3.1 Key objectives

3.1.1 The analysis of the environment of the Area outlined in chapter 2 leads to the identification of three key objectives:

Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
<p>Economy</p> <p>to increase the levels of prosperity of the resident communities of Dartmouth & District through the further development of the tourist industry and the introduction of new employment opportunities offering a full range of remuneration</p>	<p>Social</p> <p>to enhance the quality of life of residents of Dartmouth & District and improve social cohesion within the town and across the parishes</p>	<p>Cross-cutting</p> <p>to protect, enhance and capitalize on the history, heritage, geography and natural environment of the Area</p>

3.2 Development principles

3.2.1 A number of concerns were raised in the community consultations about the need, notwithstanding a recognition that change must take place, to protect the unique values and culture of the Area. This concern was reflected in the Vision statement but additionally the community expressed its concern that projects should not lose sight of, or indeed damage, the very characteristics that make Dartmouth & District such a unique and attractive area in which to live. Consequently, a set of 'development principles' has been devised. Their purpose is to bind together any development work

envisaged within the Community Plan and to ensure that all project activity is consistent with community aspirations. The seven 'development principles' are that the:

- 1 maintenance and enhancement of the outstanding natural beauty, heritage, culture and ethos of the area are paramount
- 2 existing and new business and commercial activities should reflect, value and supplement the essential characteristics of the Area
- 3 maintenance of an active, diverse and sustainable economy is central to the continued prosperity of the Area
- 4 economy should provide employment opportunities that cover a full spectrum of wage, salary and skill levels
- 5 resident population needs to be sufficient in quantity and demographic range to support a locally accessible social infrastructure
- 6 social infrastructure, including health, safety, education, leisure and housing needs to reflect the needs of the Area's population
- 7 economic and social needs of the Area are best addressed by a cohesive and integrated strategy, reflecting community need, rather than by piecemeal activity

From these three objectives and seven development principles we can identify the eleven business and social strategies.

3.3 Strategies for change

Strategy 1 Stimulate and increase high quality, year round tourism

3.3.1 Tourism is now the main driver of the local economy, and this fact must not only be acknowledged but positively embraced. Tourism does not simply mean the provision of accommodation through hotels, bed-and-breakfast establishments, and caravan and chalet parks: it also includes such elements as restaurants, cafes and take-away food outlets; public houses; shops and services; and visitor attractions such as Woodlands Leisure Park at Blackawton; Blackpool Sands at Stoke Fleming; the steam railway which runs from Kingswear to Paignton; the riverboat trips; and tours of Britannia Royal Naval College.

However, jobs in tourism are inclined to be seasonal in their nature and are often poorly paid: extending the visitor season, and by so doing, making the industry more profitable, is an important element to the strategy.

3.3.2 Thus it is important that ways be found to improve and extend the tourist season including the provision of attractions that are not fine weather dependent. This will not happen without co-ordinated marketing and capitalisation on the natural assets of the area: in short the development of coherent 'brand' image is required as well as the development of particular activities.

3.3.3 Dartmouth is home to a number of regular festivals and events, all of which, in their different ways, attract visitors and in this way contribute to the local economy. The Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta is well known and a great attraction, while other events related to the river range from gig racing to the October Fishing Festival. Other events are more recent, such as the Music Festival each May and the Shakespeare Festival. Also many of the town's art galleries hold special exhibitions and regular visitors come to the town specifically for them. Additional events should be established with the specific aim of extending the traditional tourist season.

The Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta



Strategy 2 Provide new opportunities for employment

3.3.4 The vision that underpins this strategic objective is for an Area that benefits from a dynamic mixed economy offering secure employment, with a range of wage and salary levels, for a suitably qualified workforce and where quality tourism is supplemented by viable marine and other light industrial commercial activity. To base a local economy on any one principal industry has an element of risk for if that industry suffers a reverse so too will the whole local economy: therefore, other industries should be developed as a counterbalance (and support) to tourism. These may take the form of micro businesses involving single self-employed professional or business people (working from home or business units across the Area) to large scale developments. It is essential that no further employment sites are lost to residential or other development and that those which exist have their business and employment potential exploited to the full.

3.3.5 The former Philips' shipyard at Noss-on-Dart, Kingswear, offers a major opportunity to develop a range of marine-based industries and activities, from boat building, repair and maintenance to a marine training centre. This site, which includes a deep-water quay, could also provide a new and more suitable base for the port's fishing fleet. At present the future of the site is far from certain, but major stakeholders, led by South Hams District Council, are involved in discussion with the owner of the site. Dartmouth & District MCTi has been recognised as a stakeholder, and will play a role in future discussions concerning the site.

3.3.6 The Admiral's Court industrial estate on the edge of Dartmouth has considerable scope for further development and three more employment units on this site are



Admiral's Court industrial estate has considerable scope for further development

"It is essential that no further employment sites are lost to residential or other development and those that exist have their business and employment potential exploited to the full."

planned. There are also possibilities for development in the other existing industrial sites. Before more development takes place, however, it is considered essential that more research is commissioned into the size, nature and distribution of the Area's workforce and the skills it possesses. This should take the form of a professional skills audit, and the results would be the logical basis for decisions concerning both the nature and the mix of future commercial development, including inward investment and related education and training.

3.3.7 There is a further business and commercial site at Jawbones (sited between Dartmouth and Stoke Fleming) that has considerable potential. There are also actual and potential small units situated across the parishes, which could be developed sympathetically to make a contribution to the wealth and employment of the Area.

Strategy 3 Increase the amount and range of permanent living accommodation

3.3.8 The creation of more employment with improved wages, salaries and security is central to the first two strategies. However, it may not be sufficient to simply create new jobs, for many local employers already report difficulty in recruiting staff. There is little point in creating jobs for their own sake if this is to lead to more unfilled – and perhaps unfillable – vacancies, as such action might endanger the viability of a number of existing businesses. In addition, if the social services infrastructure (i.e. the health provision, schools, etc.) desired by the community is to be preserved, an element of population growth has to be seen as both inevitable and also desirable. This demands a compatible strategy related to housing.

3.3.9 Accommodation is possibly the issue that, more than any other, highlights the dilemma that has been faced by Dartmouth and the surrounding area in recent years. The deadly combination of high house prices and low wages means that home ownership, for many residents of the Area, is practically impossible. The effect of this is twofold. First, when houses come onto the market, they are likely to be purchased as retirement or holiday homes; and second, many young people are simply moving away because they cannot afford to stay, exacerbating the problem that some local employers have in recruiting staff.

3.3.10 There is a shortage of privately rented properties, no doubt because landlords prefer to let properties to the more lucrative self-catering holiday market. Very few new houses are being built in the Area. However, if new job opportunities do draw more people into the region, more private housing must become a priority, otherwise prices, led by demand, will continue to spiral upwards. In particular there is a need for the provision of affordable housing, which the housing theme group defined as housing available to people on low income who would otherwise be unable to rent or buy on the open market. It includes social housing rented from local authorities and housing associations (in the South

Hams all social housing is now owned and operated by Housing Associations); low cost housing built by the private sector; and shared ownership schemes, where an occupier buys a proportion of the property and the remainder is rented. While acknowledging that the provision of affordable housing is one of the highest priorities of South Hams District Council, the housing issues in this Area are developing some unique features which may require some variations in that authority's approach to the issue.

Strategy 4 Regenerate the commercial centre of Dartmouth

3.3.11 Regeneration of Dartmouth itself – the commercial heart of the Area – must inevitably begin with the revival and refocusing of the town's retail base. The initial public consultation carried out by MCTi revealed that many Area residents would welcome a new large supermarket. Logic dictates that, given the shortage of available land and the known parking problems in Dartmouth's town centre, this would best be situated in Townstal or close to one of the villages. However, until there is substantial population growth (see Strategy 3) it is believed unlikely that the catchment area is sufficient to attract a substantial development. The consultation also revealed equal concern that more practical shops selling food and services should open in Dartmouth, and that the existing shops in the villages should be preserved. These concerns might be reduced if there was a modern, large supermarket within the Area.

The Old Market, Dartmouth



3.3.12 The regeneration of Dartmouth's Market would present a major opportunity to begin the revival of the town's commercial and retail base. The Market is a listed building and therefore a valuable heritage site. However, at present it is seen primarily as a pannier market and this is to the detriment of the permanent traders who are based there. Other than on market days, there is little to draw visitors there. The Market building could be presented and promoted as a small, specialist shopping centre with the intention of attracting visitors and residents on days other than the traditional market days, and there is also scope for special events to be held on the site. Revitalising the Market is likely to have the effect of improving trade in the surrounding area and would be well placed to provide synergy with any supermarket.

3.3.13 Any retail or business services development in the centre of the town demands an increase in parking and an improvement in traffic management (see Strategy 5). An attractive and sensitive element of this, which would aid strategies related to tourism, could include increasing pedestrian zones.

Strategy 5 Improve traffic management, access and transport

3.3.14 The strategy should make Dartmouth a centre in which all Area residents can enjoy affordable parking that gives convenient access to their home, place of work and retail outlets, and where visitors can conveniently, safely and economically leave cars in order to enjoy the Area. There should be a realistic

choice between private and public transport for all in which journeys to town, river, coast and countryside can conveniently and safely be made. The importance of undertaking this and other traffic related projects cannot be overstated. Current traffic management systems are not working and transport problems are having an adverse effect on both social and economic development.

3.3.15 The Area has a number of major weaknesses that stem from transport issues. The main access to the area is via the roads, as the nearest national rail service is at Totnes, just over 13 miles away, while the steam train service which runs from Kingswear to Paignton is operated primarily as a visitor attraction. There are three main access roads: the A3122 runs into Dartmouth from the Totnes-Kingsbridge Road; the A 379 leading from Kingsbridge through Strete and Stoke Fleming; and the A379 coming from Torbay, making use of the Higher Ferry (also known as the "Floating Bridge"). The principal weakness of the first two is that there are several pinch-points, where they are so narrow that coaches and heavy lorries can cause serious hold-ups. On the third, the need to queue for the

ferry can result in delays of up to 2 hours during the peak season. The town's other car ferry, the Lower Ferry, is equally prone to great delays at this time.

3.3.16 Dartmouth is an old town and many of its roads were not designed for traffic. Access can be difficult for large vehicles, and loading and unloading can cause serious problems. There is also a severe shortage of parking-spaces in the town, and local residents often find themselves competing with visitors for the spaces that are available. This undoubtedly discourages residents of Townstal and of the surrounding villages from shopping in Dartmouth.

3.3.17 A new transport plan for Dartmouth itself would seek to reduce congestion in the town centre by making the existing Park & Ride service more reliable and introducing further Park & Ride facilities, including one on the Kingswear side of the river. Visitors and residents must be encouraged to use these services (in part through sensitive pricing policies) rather than attempting to park in the town centre. In addition, changing the

"... retail or business services development in the centre of the town demands an increase in parking and an improvement in traffic management ..."

drop-off point for coach passengers so that coaches themselves are kept out of the town centre would also improve traffic flow, thus reducing congestion.

3.3.18 Transport issues are a constant problem. In the community consultation, parking and access and inadequate and poorly integrated public transport were the most frequently cited areas of concern. Imagination is needed to solve the Area's transport problems. New kinds of Park & Ride are considered essential, with alternative modes of mass transport requiring exploration. As a minimum, an integrated public transport system is required.

Strategy 6 Enhance the provision of education and training

“The Area has a number of major weaknesses that stem from transport issues.”

3.3.19 The vision in respect of education, learning and skills is for an Area that demonstrably values the importance of high quality educational opportunity for all age groups. There should be a coherent range of pre-school, primary and secondary provision that encourages individual development and high achievement. There needs to be a range of locally delivered post-16 vocational and academic learning opportunities to support individual, social and economic needs.

3.3.20 The Area is particularly well served by five primary schools, each with its own separate governing body. Currently there is no single organisation where educators, parents, governors, business people and the wider community can raise and discuss issues of common interest.

3.3.21 The Community College is seeking Specialist College Status and ways need to be found to support this by the community and the business sector. Indeed, for the economy of the Area to grow as envisaged, employers and potential employers must be assured of a properly trained and skilled local workforce. Education, training and businesses must work together, not only to determine skill requirements both locally and in the surrounding 'travel to work' areas, but also to make

available locally accessible, high quality provision that meets identified needs. It would be beneficial if adult and community education was brought once again under local control so that all the provision in the Area could be more easily co-ordinated.

Strategy 7 Improve health facilities

3.3.22 The vision in respect of health, social care and safety is for a varied but united Area that has adequate health and social support services. It has been already shown that the demography of the Area reflects an ageing population. Disquiet over the access to health facilities was a particular concern of the theme group. There are two principal dimensions to this: first, ensuring that suitable health provision and facilities are located within the Area – as opposed to being in distant hospitals, and second, that there is public transport and adequate parking to permit access.

3.3.23 The majority of the Area's residents now live outside the centre of the town – in the Townstal ward and the parishes. Despite this, all major health facilities, including the hospital, the surgery and both pharmacies, are located in the town centre. This means that a routine visit to consult a doctor must involve the use of either public transport – practically impossible in some of the villages – or private car, which is then difficult or impossible to park.

3.3.24 It would appear a consideration to re-locate the services on land at Townstal itself. Using resources from the sales of existing buildings – in prime central sites – could not only provide more accessible services but could ensure the provision of the most cost effective and up to date medical services. The site could combine, among other things, a surgery; consulting rooms that could be

Dartmouth Lower Ferry



used by nursing staff; a dispensary; dentist; hospital facilities and visiting consultancy services from Torbay or Derriford hospitals. Such a provision would require its own dedicated parking area.

Strategy 8 Increase safety and security measures

3.3.25 The vision is for an Area where there is a high level of concern for the locality and for neighbours and where people feel secure and at ease. For fast access to emergency health and other services the provision of locally based ambulance, police, fire and sea rescue services that can respond quickly and effectively to urgent situations is essential to community safety and security. Currently there is concern over response times for these services across the whole Area especially at certain times of day and night. Measures are required to ensure that provision meets local and national targets.

3.3.26 At present there is considerable unease caused by such issues as vandalism, public drunkenness and other anti-social behaviour. Local people would undoubtedly welcome a greater police presence on the streets, not only in Dartmouth town centre but also in the villages. Additionally, many people during the consultations articulated a range of concerns. These varied from the numerous nuisances caused by seagulls to the general appearance of the area. Frequent mention was also made of the problems such as litter and dogs' mess. It is possible that a Resident's Charter would promote greater ownership and pride in the locality, supported by the appointment of town wardens.



“It is also important that strategies establishing increased social, sporting and cultural activities make specific and accessible provision for young people.”

3.3.27 Dartmouth is a busy port and has become an extremely popular centre for all kinds of marine-based activity, from sailing to rowing. Dartmouth Regatta is one of the longest-established and best-known events of its type in the country. Despite this the Area has no inshore lifeboat of its own.

3.3.28 Its young people are the future of any community, yet their views on issues that concern them are rarely heard or even sought. It sometimes appears that young people are somehow invisible, unless of course they are felt to be causing a problem. It is important their voice is heard and acted upon. It is also important that strategies establishing increased social, sporting and cultural activities make specific and accessible provision for young people.

Strategy 9 Extend sport and leisure activities

3.3.29 The vision for sport and leisure is for an Area which has a comprehensive range of indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities accessible to all ages of residents and visitors. It is essential that Dartmouth's long-awaited leisure centre situated on the edge of the town and thus easily accessible to most of the surrounding Area becomes well used by both local sports clubs as well as by visitors. In order to ensure this, provision must be co-ordinated and based on identified need. Also, the opening of the leisure centre should not stifle or replace the sports facilities required in the villages. For example, Stoke Fleming Cricket club plans to move to a new site in the village, which will be shared with local tennis and archery clubs. There is also a perceived need for additional tennis facilities in Kingswear and Blackawton, as well as for upgrading the range of sports and leisure facilities in Coronation Park in Dartmouth.



The new leisure centre – currently under construction – does not include an indoor swimming pool

Dartmouth's existing outdoor pool



3.3.30 The single most commonly raised issue during every stage of the consultation has been that Dartmouth, unlike other towns in the South Hams, has no indoor heated swimming pool. Indeed, it has become almost a talisman for the community – especially those who suffer social exclusion. The lack of the facility appears to act as a specific indicator which demonstrates in many community members' minds the general lack of concern amongst planning and service providers for their social well-being. Apart from the usual health and sport benefits, the business advantage of providing an attraction that extends the tourist season and contributes to other strategies would be considerable. The existing outdoor pool is only open during summer months, and is nearing the end of its useful life, and with Castle Cove currently closed for the immediate future, this means that opportunities for swimming in Dartmouth are more limited than ever before. Indeed, many local schoolchildren are no longer taught to swim, an ironic omission considering the district's proximity to both river and coast. A footprint has already been established adjacent to the sport and leisure centre but provision of a pool represents a long-term ambition.

3.3.31 Dartmouth is an extremely popular centre for water sports of all kinds: they are popular with both residents

and visitors alike, and can generate considerable revenue. A new launch facility is required which the rowing club and the general public can use. A purpose built water sports centre would be an asset for both the local population and tourists. An ideal site for this centre could be Noss-on-Dart and this could be integrated with associated training and other developments.

“A new launch facility is required which the rowing club and the general public can use.”

**Castle Cove
is currently
closed**



Strategy 10 Co-ordinate and stimulate cultural activities.

3.3.32 The vision is for the Area to have a wide diversity of cultural activity that is attractive to residents and visitors alike. Currently cultural activity includes various drama and music groups throughout the Area, which are successful and well supported. The Dart Music Festival is now well established in the local calendar. In addition Dartmouth Film Society, which has been widely praised and has won an award, has begun to attract good audiences for its screenings. There is potential to increase the range of festivals across the Area providing additional cultural activities for residents and visitors alike.

3.3.33 The Flavel Centre, opening in spring 2005, will provide a cultural and social focus for residents and the 80 or more societies and amenity groups in the Area. The Centre will include a multi-media library, a community hall/theatre for up to 220 people, meeting rooms and catering facilities. It will be necessary to ensure that whilst this Centre is the focus for development of the arts and culture it also recognises the activities taking place in the parishes and aims to reach out to meet the needs of all the Area. It is to be hoped that the provision made by the Flavel Centre, including much requested cinema facilities, will contribute to the general economy of Dartmouth and Area, by stemming

the loss of customers to other entertainment venues and increasing the provision of indoor facilities that may be attractive to visitors.

“It has long been recognised that young and teenage children are especially poorly served by the local facilities.”

3.3.34 It has long been recognised that young and teenage children are especially poorly served by the local facilities. The new Flavel Centre will support youth culture by providing access to films, Broadband internet, CD and DVD hire and facilities for media students and local musicians who currently have to travel miles to the nearest recording studios. It is hoped to extend the opening hours of the new expanded state-of-the-art library to cover lunch hours and to open from five to six days per week.

3.3.35 The community centre at Townstal is also currently under construction. It is anticipated that this will provide a local social and cultural facility for young and old.

Strategy 11 Make the natural environment more accessible

3.3.36 One of the Area's major assets is that it is part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. While it is important that this is respected and conserved, new ways must be developed for greater numbers of residents and visitors to enjoy and gain access to the area. Problems of access are not confined only to car drivers. The area surrounding Dartmouth has become extremely popular with walkers in recent years, and the coastline is part of the South West Coastal Path. However, a section of the path between Dartmouth and Stoke Fleming is incomplete and has to detour inland on roads. Work is needed to open new coastal sections of the path to eliminate this problem.

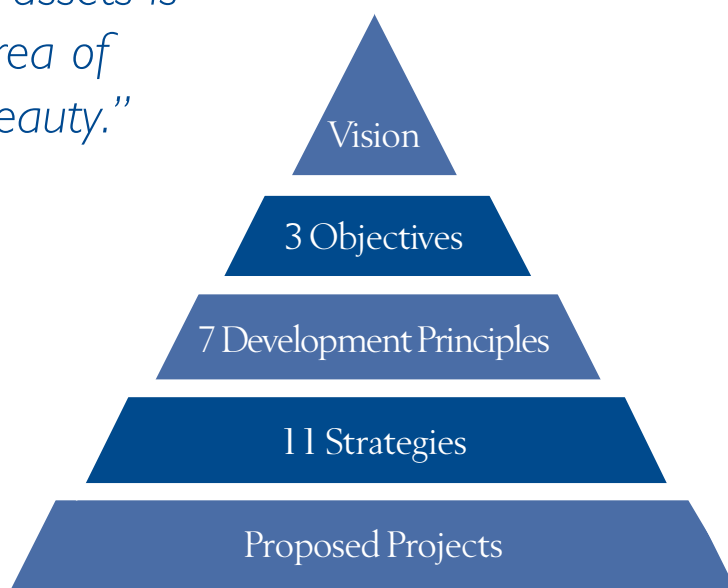
3.3.37 There is also the opportunity to increase the number of rural footpaths, bridle paths and Green Lanes. Examples include a new footpath from Old Mill Creek to Dartmouth; a footpath linking Stoke Fleming and the Norton leisure centre; and an enhanced network of footpaths and cycle paths linking the villages.



Old Mill Creek to Dartmouth – proposed new footpath

“One of the Area’s major assets is that it is part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.”

3.3.38 A further example of the need for improved access within the area of natural beauty is the considerable local demand for the reopening of Castle Cove. The Area of Natural Beauty Management Plan 2004–2009 recognises the role of the MCTi in taking forward projects designed to promote the AONB and it is to be hoped that this Community Plan can be taken forward together with the statutory AONB Partnership.



Chapter 4 Summary

This chapter introduces many of the projects on which work has begun in order to move towards the achievement of one or more of the key objectives. They all contribute in different ways to the strategies outlined in the previous chapter. The projects are in the first stages of development and require:

- considerable additional work before plans are complete
- 'champions' from the community itself, if they are to be achieved
- substantial discussion and review amongst all stakeholders
- support from a range of funding agencies
- formation of constructive partnerships with different agencies and public and private organisations

Other projects and ideas have been put forward and these will be pursued as and when appropriate by the continuation body and/or motivated community groups.

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Community Plan is based on a vision for the future of the Area. It identifies three key objectives and sets out the seven principles underpinning proposed activity. Much of the effort of those participating in the MCTi process was directed at suggesting and developing ways designed to move the Area closer to achieving that vision. The six theme groups worked to bring together the ideas raised in the consultation exercises and to analyse the key issues and data related to them. This resulted in establishing eleven strategies.

4.1.2 The resultant proposed projects take a wide variety of form, size, cost, complexity and timescale. In this document reference is made, beside each project title, to the main strategy being addressed and to which other strategies it contributes (see also Appendix 3). In some cases project implementation has already begun. Others have had considerable effort expended upon them and have attracted 'champions' and are being taken forward: some remain little more than ideas or concepts and require not only considerable additional effort but are reliant on attracting substantial external funding and on the commitment of government and/or outside agencies. Most require the involvement of partners and the support of the Parish and Town councils.

“Project proposals may be considered ‘work-in-progress’ ”

4.1.3 Those projects that have been progressed have already sought the participation of some potential and actual partners. As work is taken forward so additional stakeholders and funding organisations will become involved – each project seeking and attracting its own unique combination. Project development at this level is best seen as an iterative process and adapted and refined in the light of the dialogue with stakeholders and the needs of partners and external funding agents.

4.1.4 Attempts have been made to weigh the importance of the proposed projects objectively and thus to prioritise them, but their diverse and differentiated nature makes this an all but impossible exercise. Furthermore, it suggests that such project-based activity may be organised, contained and controlled when in reality community



championed developments are more likely to thrive in the type of diverse and vibrant culture alluded to in the strategic vision. However, a subjective review based on factors such as a project's contribution to achieving the vision, how well it 'fits' one or more of the strategies together with the importance placed on it by the community during consultation exercises indicates five projects have a particularly high significance.

4.1.5 This in no way suggests that other projects are unimportant. The impact of implementing a number of smaller projects may well, in the final event, equal that of an individual, large project. Those proposals that are still more or less at concept stage may through serendipity be brought forward more quickly than expected and have greater impact than currently recognised. Others may, through the commitment of a specialist group of people or efforts of particular agencies, become reality much sooner than currently envisaged.

4.1.6 Project proposals are set out in this strategy document in an outline format. All may be considered 'work-in-progress' although many have already had a considerable amount of work undertaken on them, details of which are available through the MCTi office. They are presented here under five headings:

- those with particular significance
- those primarily supporting the economic objective
- those supporting both the economic and social objectives
- those primarily supporting the social objective
- other proposals not yet formulated as projects

It is recognised that the third objective, related to the environment, will be supported by all the projects and that the agreed principles will be adhered to throughout.

Project proposals with particular significance

4.2 Traffic access and public transport

A project developing an integrated transport service linking Area transport with town based services using comprehensive Park & Ride facilities. (Strategy 5: supporting strategies 1,4,7 & 11)

4.2.1 This project, which has a number of related elements, involves the provision of an integrated transport service linking Area transport with a town service based on comprehensive Park & Ride facilities. Two sites are required: the current one at Norton and a new site on the Kingswear side of the river. Public concern over the inadequacies of both the Park & Ride service and the local bus services within the town and district, and the ever-growing reliance of community residents on private cars for essential transport emphasised the requirement for a comprehensive re-examination of the planning and management of access to the town and across the Area.

4.2.2 The project promotes an alternative and integrated approach to public transport with two Park & Ride sites becoming the main hubs for the Area working together with local buses as well as tour coaches. The Park & Ride sites would benefit from improved facilities and services including security elements, a café and rest rooms. It proposes that all public transport arriving from, and departing to, the Area should use the Park & Ride sites as turning points/rest areas and local buses should provide the service within the town's boundary on the west of the river and Kingswear on the east.

4.2.3 The project also identifies the need to improve access to the Area. It proposes that the 'pinch points' on the A3122 be removed to allow vehicles easier access. Devon County Council has already instigated a programme to address this issue.

4.3 Reduction and management of town traffic

A project to ensure efficient and environmentally sound traffic management in and around Dartmouth. (Strategy 5: supporting strategies 1, 4, 7 & 11)

4.3.1 It is necessary to ensure efficient and environmentally sound traffic management in and around Dartmouth for the benefit of commercial interests, Area residents and visitors alike. The inadequate number of parking spaces within the town, encompassing the designated car parks and the roadside parking spaces, is the cause of increasing discontent of town and Area residents as well as business operators. 'Doing nothing' is not a viable option in the short, medium or longer term as the town's traffic problems hold back social and economic development.

4.3.2 This town parking project encompasses a number of proposals designed to reduce traffic congestion in the town centre, meet the needs of residents and business owners and, in conjunction with the Traffic Access project, encourage car owners to leave their vehicles out of town and use the local bus services. It proposes a roundabout at the Greenhouse at the end of Mayor's Avenue to enable the turnaround of coaches; changes to expand the Mayor's Avenue car-park; changes to bus management near the market square and promotes pedestrianisation of additional areas of the town.

4.4 Dartmouth & District – a national heritage area

A project to present the history and heritage of Dartmouth & District in a modern, innovative and interactive manner. (Strategy 1: supporting strategies 2,4 & 5)

4.4.1 Dartmouth & District is an area of heritage and culture – in fact, this project promotes the Area, especially the town of Dartmouth, as a dispersed heritage site. New initiatives that help to celebrate and interpret that heritage will be developed. The Area is rich in sites of historical or architectural importance, and the concept of a distributed heritage centre would seek to link together various sites. Some linkages suggest themselves naturally. There is, for example, a natural trail which begins at Bayard's Cove, where the Mayflower memorial records the time in 1620 when the Pilgrim Fathers spent a week in the harbour, and ends at either Gallants Bower, an earthwork dating from the time of the Civil War, or at Dartmouth Castle.

4.4.2 The wealth of architecture, history and heritage that belongs to the town and district has been a predominant aspect in all of the debates. The fact that these resources have not been tapped to the full provides a major opportunity to enhance the attractiveness of the area to visitors and to generate 'out of season' appeal. The project aims to capitalise on these aspects and, using a number of sites distributed around the town encompassing at one end, Dartmouth Castle and at the other end – with appropriate approvals from the Ministry of Defence authorities – the Britannia Royal Naval College. A key component is the creation of a site of sufficient size to provide a number of presentations and displays to generate all-weather interest. In addition, a modern facility will be needed in the centre of town (or possibly at the Park & Ride if other projects are successful) that can provide information and ticket sales and some first 'orientation' displays to whet the appetite of visitors to the town. A linked project could develop a similar distributed heritage trail around the villages and parishes of the Area. This is a very ambitious and challenging project and a feasibility study will need to be commissioned in order to establish options for the future. It is envisaged that development will need to be incremental and proceed at a gradual pace over many years.



4.5 Marketing the Dartmouth & District brand

A project that develops and markets a 'brand' identity that will promote the Area as a hub of commercial and leisure activity for investors and visitors as well as residents. (Strategy 1: supporting strategies 2 & 4)

4.5.1 Throughout the work of the theme groups, there has been a realisation that Dartmouth and District has much to offer. Acknowledging that substantial marketing is already undertaken, the opportunity exists to improve its effectiveness at the same time as achieving a degree of synergy and efficiency in the effort. Marketing Dartmouth & District as a brand name, a name that stands as a byword for quality and excellence would not only benefit existing enterprises, but also facilitate the search for sponsors and hasten the introduction of future projects and enterprises. The 'Brand', which could promote the project at 4.4, should also take account of current cuisine, marine and environmental strengths of the Area.

4.5.2 The key factor in implementing this proposal would be the employment of a Marketing Director whose tasks would include:

- marketing of the Dartmouth brand, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- search for inward investment
- fund-raising
- provision of a professional marketing consultancy service for all town and district initiatives
- management of event and festival co-ordination and programming
- co-ordination of visitor services

4.6 Heated indoor swimming pool

The realisation of a sustainable heated indoor swimming pool for the use of Area residents and visitors. (Strategy 9: supporting strategies 1, 6 & 7)

4.6.1 The provision of an indoor, heated swimming pool was the most frequently specifically mentioned issue arising in the community consultations. Water, in the form of the River Dart and the sea, is an influence that literally and figuratively runs through the area. Even in the very centre of Dartmouth there exists the tidal Boat Float. For this reason alone it is imperative that children and others unable to swim have access to a pool to learn to swim safely and be able to fully enjoy, all year round, one of the activities most likely to contribute to the fitness and health of the population of the area.

4.6.2 With the current construction of a new Leisure Centre underway, many of the town's sporting and leisure aspirations will, in the near future, have been addressed. However, Dartmouth remains the only one of the four towns identified as 'area centres' in the South Hams District's Local Plan that lacks a modern, covered swimming pool. The acquisition of such a pool would benefit not just residents but visitors as well.

4.6.3 This project will develop through a long-term plan to generate the necessary funding and to build a pool adjacent to the new Leisure Centre where the 'footprint' for a pool has already been established. There is a feasibility study underway, funded through the MCTi, and plans are currently being developed to form a specific Trust.

Project proposals to support the economic objective

4.7 Noss-on-Dart site development

The commercial development of a valuable site on the River Dart to permit a range of activities and provide new opportunities for employment. (Strategies 2 & 6)

4.7.1 The Noss site represents the best and major opportunity for the generation of new employment opportunities in the area. The South Hams District Council is heavily engaged in debate with the owners of the site to ensure that the needs of the community are balanced against the commercial objectives of the owners. This project establishes a Dartmouth & District MCTi voice in the debate and will add weight to the arguments for solutions that optimise the use of this crucial deep-water facility for the facilitation of marine-based industry and enterprise.

4.7.2 The recent loss of another traditional employment site to residential accommodation makes the need to utilise the Noss-on-Dart site for the economic regeneration of the Area a crucial priority.

“... utilise the Noss-on-Dart site for the economic regeneration of the Area a crucial priority.”

4.8 Sign improvements

The development of a series of informative and user-friendly signs, predominantly aimed at pedestrians to enhance their experience of the area. (Strategy 1: supporting strategies 4 & 11)

4.8.1 Current inadequacies and errors in some of the town's tourist signs are detrimental to business operations and do not facilitate or enhance the experience of visitors to the town.

4.8.2 This project proposes some rectification activity as well as some additional signs and is a project that can be addressed in the short term. It can also begin to outline possible routes and sites that will form the basis of the dispersed heritage site project. Additional information and 'trail' leaflets, both for the town and the district, should support the project.

4.9 Regeneration of The Old Market, Dartmouth

The regeneration of the Market as a viable and active commercial complex that is attractive to both residents and visitors. (Strategy 4: supporting strategies 1&2)

4.9.1 The Market is a heritage building and a commercial site that is being under-utilised as a consequence of historical circumstance. Once the centre of Dartmouth's commercial hub, the Market has been subjected to some piecemeal structural alterations over the years to the detriment of its character and possibly its utility. Although much has been done of late to restore the condition of its fabric, the Market is a site that would benefit from a radical review of its business and marketing strategy.

4.9.2 The project proposes options for reviving the commercial success of the Market. Structural restoration of this listed building linked with sympathetic creation of commercial units would create the potential for a vibrant shopping community. Pannier, Craft and Farmers' markets, operating under strict management to ensure quality and diversity, could be a feature that works in synergy with a revitalised Market. Crucial to the success of this project would be full-time management of the facility and the addition of more permanent traders in the interior retail spaces.



4.10 Mariculture in the River Dart

A successful commercial enterprise able to provide River Dart oysters of the highest quality. (Strategy 2)

4.10.1 As a consequence of early work by the Dart Estuary Environmental Management team, and the EU sponsored Project CYCLEAU, South West Water have a programme underway to bring the water quality of the river to 'tertiary' standards, fit for the farming of molluscs. DEFRA have issued the Waddeton Fishery Order 2001 that has identified an area of the river (based around Dittisham) where licences for the cultivation of oysters can be purchased.

4.10.2 This project seeks to further the initiative in order to attract commercial interest in the farming of oysters in the River Dart. This project could also be closely related to that of the Noss site, should the option for a landing, storing, grading and supply facility on the site become available. In addition, it would also relate to the Dartmouth & District Branding project if Dart Oysters were to be developed to a quality that would attract top-of-the-market interest.

4.11 Business incubator units and skills audit

Creating a better understanding of the nature of the local workforce to enable further development of business incubator units, craft workshops and office space, as well as attracting inward investment. (Strategies 2 & 6)

4.11.1 Many of the current industrial units within the area are both unattractive and badly positioned with respect to the nearby residential estate. The most recent development (Admiral's Court) is an exception but is only 25% complete. However, attracting new enterprise to the town and district requires not only the space to operate, but also incentives to small business operators, craftsmen and artisans, and a workforce able to supply the necessary skills. Some business units exist in the villages and there is potential for more. A study is required to identify where local, environmentally non-intrusive units and space, can be provided.

4.11.2 This project seeks to initiate a skill survey of the town's and district's workforce and current employer requirements (to be undertaken in collaboration with the post-16 education and training proposals) in order to undertake more informed marketing of the town and district's assets to potential entrepreneurs and to identify any mismatch with current business needs. The development of new incubator units, workshops or a business centre would then be led by demand and related to the key strengths promoted by the 'Brand' image. A study would also be conducted to determine the type and manner of incentives that might be attractive.

“...attracting new enterprise to the town and district requires not only the space to operate, but also incentives to small business operators, craftsmen and artisans, and a workforce able to supply the necessary skills.”

4.12 Jawbones development

The development of a valuable and under-used site to provide a unique visitor attraction and aid access into the town. (Strategies 1 & 2: supporting strategies 4,5 & 11)

4.12.1 The 'industrial' site at Jawbones, situated between Dartmouth and Stoke Fleming is under-utilised, but offers a large level surface for development and benefits from outstanding views of the river and its estuary. This project seeks to capitalise on the position and the availability of land designated for industrial use with proposals for an hotel complex, grounds, parking facilities (additional Park & Ride) and possibly, exciting forms of transport into the town such as gondola cable ways or funicular railways.

4.12.2 This ambitious project would depend on significant investment for its full completion. From the outset, a feasibility study should be commissioned to examine a number of options, covering uses that might range from a simple picnic and parking site to a full hotel complex; from a visitor centre as part of the distributed heritage site to the base for a unique transport route into the centre of Dartmouth.

"... 2005 has been designated 'The Year of the Sea'..."

Project proposals to support both the economic and social objectives

4.13 Events and festivals

The development of new festivals and events that recognise and build on the unique characteristics of the Area and its residents. (Strategy 1: supporting strategies 4 & 10)

4.13.1 Dartmouth & District currently enjoys the benefits of several events and festivals each year. Most notable of the regular items on the calendar include the Music Festival, the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta, the New Year celebrations and at Blackawton the International Worm Charming competition. This project seeks to promote the concept of additional festivals and proposes a number of themes for exploration: classic boat or traditional fishing craft events based on the river; food, films and books; historical re-enactments based around the castle and perhaps the role of the Town in the Mayflower's departure to America (with the obvious potential to attract American interest); an Autumn Heritage Week and even a 'crime' festival, based on Agatha Christie's association with the local district.

4.13.2 Co-ordination of these events could with benefit fall within the remit of the Marketing Director proposed in project 4.5. However, the very successful management and promotion of the current festivals and events suggests the enthusiastic support of businesses and residents is vital to their success. Crucial will be the sensitive and planned calendar of activities and linking them to the overall 'Brand' image of the Area. Perhaps more of the events should actively promote and take place across the whole Area – certainly an event that promotes the natural environment could fall into this category.

4.13.3 There is already progress on one event related to promoting Dartmouth's maritime associations. The year 2005 has been designated 'The Year of the Sea' and to contribute to this a classic boat festival in Dartmouth harbour – linked to a cross-Channel race has been proposed. It could be linked to a similar event in Brittany generating interest from French and British visitors alike.



4.14 Broadband across the Area

To ensure Broadband is available to all within the Area for business, education and leisure use. (Strategy 2: supporting strategies 1,6 & 9)

4.14.1 Dartmouth is Broadband enabled; Dittisham, Blackawton and Kingswear have all reached sufficient levels to be enabled soon. Some households in Stoke Fleming also have access to a radio based scheme.

4.14.2 The Economic and Business Development Group worked closely with the public-private partnership Broadband 4 Devon to ensure that Stoke Fleming and Strete (regarded as one by British Telecom) reach the required trigger level. However, BT has announced that all trigger levels are to be abandoned and, although Stoke Fleming and Strete will become enabled, they now join a very long queue. It is the intention to pursue the provision of Broadband across the whole Area.

4.15 Project enabler

The provision of accessible and user-friendly project management consultancy for the benefit of community and business project groups. (Supporting all strategies)

4.15.1 The project aims to enable groups within the community, that do not have the expertise to deal with funding agencies, government, European and private bodies, to have access to expertise that can support their intentions.

4.15.2 This project could be linked to the future development of the Dartmouth & District MCTi, its role and function. It could also be seen to be part of the Marketing Director role. What is recognised is that the attraction of external funding to match local commitment energy and expertise is a crucial component of the Community Plan.

4.16 Public slip

The realisation of a new public launch slip to improve access to the River Dart. (Strategy 1: supporting strategy 9)

4.16.1 The river users' most urgent need is to build a new small craft launch slip. A site close to the Rowing and Gig Club and adjacent to the upper ferry has been located. This is needed to overcome issues that affect the present inadequate slip facility and to provide a larger modern slip.

4.16.2 The river is recognised as a key asset and maritime activities already contribute much to the Area. A new, improved slip will greatly contribute to these and provide opportunities for increasing or extending activities and events. It is intended that the new slip, which will be suitable for rowing eights, will be completed in time for the South West Rowing Championships in 2006.

Project proposals to support the social objective

4.17 Pre-school programme

The establishment of a stakeholder group that will give focus to the enhancement of pre-school development and facilities in the Area. (Strategy 6)

4.17.1 Pre-school facilities are insufficient for the Area's needs and the disparate nature of the set of facilities with their individual improvement plans is a cause for inefficiency and a lack of cohesion of the corporate effort.

4.17.2 It is proposed to form a stakeholder group that would be able to promote and develop the existing pre-school facilities within the district in a co-ordinated manner and provide a vehicle through which parents and providers are able to raise areas of concern and proposals for further development.

4.18 A learning campus with education forum

A single location where education, training and support services can be accessed simply and coherently. (Strategy 6)

4.18.1 Ways in which the various support and advisory services/agencies related to education (provided for both students at all levels and parents) can be made more coherent and comprehensive are continually being sought. It is therefore proposed that a single 'Learning Campus' (based on the existing Community College/Primary school site) be created, where all such services may be located.

4.18.2 Currently there is no central focus for education, training and learning within the Area. Support services ranging from careers advice through to education health and welfare considerations do not have a single access point. The Dartmouth Community College/Primary school site is well placed to be developed for such a purpose – particularly if seen in conjunction with other proposals for education and training. The College Governors are keen to explore how best such a 'Learning Campus' may be developed.

4.18.3 A starting point for development is the formation of an Education, Training and Skills Forum (possibly building on, or relating to the existing Academic Council). Such a Forum should have representation from all parts of the community including, especially, business. The remit of the Forum should be to cover all aspects and all age groups of education and training in order to create a coherent range of lifelong learning provision.

4.19 Enhanced post-16 education and training

Provision of education and training suitable for the needs of those over the age of sixteen – including those at work. (Strategy 6: supporting strategies 1 & 2)

4.19.1 Dartmouth Community College currently has no formal sixth form. However, in line with developments promoted nationally it is providing some 'A' level and vocational courses in partnership with other providers, including Churston Grammar School. This provision should be developed further so as to provide more choice and variety. It is proposed that the College, with the support of business and the wider community, seeks to develop additional further education and training provision, including the development of specialist facilities. These will relate to the provision envisaged in the two training proposals made elsewhere.

4.19.2 It is proposed that the College make application for Specialist College status to support the post-sixteen proposals. The skills audit project will be conducted jointly with education in order to link skill requirement information with provision.

4.20 Marine industry training

The provision of accredited training and development covering all aspects of boat building and maintenance. (Strategy 6: supporting strategies 1 & 2)

4.20.1 Over recent history there has been a decline in the number of boat building and repair yards on the banks of the River Dart. However a few remain and VT, a main operator in the ship repair business, based at Sandquay is one of the major employers in the Area. Formalised training usually takes place outside the Area and is particularly costly for the smaller businesses. Development on the Noss-on-Dart site is likely to be marine-based and the growth of the leisure marine industry is a potential area for greater employment. Little formal training in the requisite skills takes place, however. It is, therefore, seen as essential to see the establishment of locally based training across a wide range of marine industries. The Noss-on-Dart site may in time become an appropriate location.

4.20.2 The project seeks to provide an accredited ongoing training and development facility covering all aspects of boat building and maintenance building on key skills currently offered. Closely linked to the needs of the industry and reflecting the cyclical nature of marine employment it will incorporate both long-term developments with short-term training needs. This project should be taken forward in association with proposals for the more general development of post-sixteen provision and the catering training proposal in project 4.21.



4.21 Localised catering training

The provision of an accredited training and development facility covering all aspects of food preparation and delivery. (Strategy 6: supporting strategies 1&2)

4.21.1 Catering and related services in the Area account for some 800 job opportunities and are the single largest employment division. Although there are numerous training schemes available, most fail to address the needs of the individual owner-manager and the short-term, usually younger, unskilled staff.

4.21.2 The project seeks to provide an accredited on-going training and development facility covering all aspects of food preparation and delivery building on key skills currently offered. Closely linked to the needs of the industry and reflecting the cyclical nature of catering employment, it will incorporate both long-term developments and short-term training needs. It is likely that the project will link with others trying to establish an enhanced locally provided post-16 provision.

4.22 Youth council

The integration of all age groups in the community in the Area's decision-making processes. (Strategy 6: supporting strategies 8, 9 & 10)

4.22.1 Whilst many decisions taken by parish and district councils affect the day-to-day lives of teenagers and younger children, there is little opportunity for youths to channel their views to those authorities. Consultation with young people has shown there is desire and sense of responsibility amongst all the younger age groups to participate and contribute to issues that affect their future. The link made between Stoke Fleming Parish Council and a local school council has demonstrated the beneficial outcomes from such links.

4.22.2 It is proposed that an elected voluntary junior council should be established which would encourage the participation of all age groups in local decision making processes. It is proposed that the junior council should make reports to the parish and town councils as well as receive reports from those councils on issues raised.

4.23 Multi-media facilities

The provision of a comprehensive sound and recording facility for the benefit of all. (Strategy 10)

4.23.1 There is much demand for a diverse range of sound & recording equipment. At present, individual aspirations and requirements are stifled due to a lack of means to purchase or hire equipment appropriate for the purpose.

4.23.2 The project seeks to coordinate the provision of a comprehensive sound and recording facility at a one stop locally based venue. It is envisaged that this project would be developed in conjunction with the Flavel Centre.

4.24 Cultural forum

A Forum to stimulate and co-ordinate arts and culture. (Strategy 10)

4.24.1 The Flavel Centre project is advancing and completion is expected next year. For the first time there will be a natural centre and focus for culture and entertainment in the Area. Both the parishes and the town are rich in a variety of local cultural activity; the parishes have their own village halls and the Townstal Community Hall is also nearing completion.

4.24.2 It is proposed that the Flavel Centre be encouraged to establish a Forum that seeks to promote and stimulate the arts and entertainment provision across the Area. This is not a proposal to centralise all activity on the Flavel Centre but, rather, a proposal to co-ordinate and enrich the variety and strength of provision across the Area. An output of the Forum could be a 'What's On' guide to events in the Area.

4.25 Health village

The realisation of a health village based at Townstal to serve Area residents and visitors located to the west of the River Dart. (Strategy 7)

4.25.1 It is apparent from the public consultation responses there is some concern about the type and location of health care facilities. Issues raised included the location and accessibility of Dartmouth hospital, doctors' surgery, clinic, chemists and dentists. Apart from the residents of Clifton Ward who can walk to these facilities (and residents of Kingswear, many of whom use medical services in Brixham) some of the Area's residents suggested that a Health Village encompassing all of these services near to or at the Park & Ride terminal, with a number of dedicated parking spaces, would be far more accessible.

4.25.2 The project to develop the Health Village would allow the replacement of the current hospital and to increase the range of services available with modern, up-to-date, provision. It is reported that fewer surgeries are conducted in the villages and that more health care services will be delivered in the home. The major hospitals are located either across the river or in Plymouth; the consolidation and enhancement of the services available and accessible locally will provide a major advantage.

"... the consolidation and enhancement of the services available and accessible locally will provide a major advantage."

4.26 Health transport

The provision of a co-ordinated and enhanced health transport facility. (Strategy 7: supporting strategy 5)

4.26.1 The public transport services to Torbay or Derriford hospitals are poor. Parking and public transport to the services in Dartmouth are difficult (as reported in the Health Village project). Care workers themselves have to have access to private transport in order to get to homes across the Area. Dartmouth Caring does an excellent job in providing transport but is not well funded and can struggle to find drivers. Some other community transport services exist (and indeed some are reported as being underused).

4.26.2 It is proposed that a feasibility study be undertaken to assess fully the level of need and range of difficulties, to map the current transport provision against that need, and to identify how more co-ordinated and accessible services may be secured.

4.27 Health and care directory

The production of a directory of social and care services provided within Dartmouth & District. (Strategy 7)

4.27.1 There is evidence that there is lack of clarity across the community about the levels of health and social care that are available locally. It is also clear that there are social divisions within the town and across the Area and that some groups are particularly disadvantaged in terms of information.

4.27.2 The project proposes the issuing (and updating) of an information directory available through Internet, published documentation and telephone support.



4.28 Civic pride

Establishing a charter encouraging citizens to take pride in their locality and take responsibility for their own environment, safety and social care. (Strategy 8)

4.28.1 The MCTi consultation process identified considerable concern over the perceived level of anti-social behaviour, together with lack of pride in surroundings. Issues raised included: rubbish from visitors and second-home owners being left for collection at the wrong time; seagull and dog mess; litter; vandalism and anti-social behaviour. It is recognised that some of the reasons for the latter two in particular, relate to the absence of appropriate activities and facilities but there is also an understanding that there is a need for the community to take more active responsibility for ensuring that their environment remains safe and secure.

4.28.2 A project is proposed that promotes a citizen's charter, develops a citizen's day and good citizen awards i.e. promotes a distinct definition of citizenship. Included in the project would be the appointment of community wardens to monitor behaviour and encourage good practice as well as advise on needs in terms of additional provision e.g. litter-bins, rubbish collections, facilities for the young, etc.

4.29 Inshore lifeboat for Dartmouth

The provision of a locally based, inshore RNLI lifeboat in Dartmouth. (Strategy 8)

4.29.1 On average there are 25 incidents a year that warrant the use of an inshore RNLI craft. It is understood that the RNLI are considering the provision of an in-shore life boat to supplement the service provided by the offshore vessel based at Brixham.

4.29.2 This project seeks to support and if necessary facilitate the provision of a locally based RNLI boat to cover the River Dart and the coastline from Start Point to Berry Head.

4.30 Norton Sports and Leisure Centre

The development of additional facilities at the new Norton Sports and Leisure Centre. (Strategy 9)

4.30.1 The future of the sports facilities at Britannia Royal Naval College and at Coronation Park is not completely certain. There is also some advantage in centring facilities where they are easily accessible to the whole Area. The new Norton Sports and Leisure Centre is an important focal point that can embrace all interest and age groups and ensure the viability of the Centre.

4.30.2 Enhancements would include:

- a floodlit all weather hockey pitch
- a floodlit grass pitch
- a 200 metre athletics practice track and athletics field sports facility
- skateboard and BMX biking facilities

4.30.3 It is also proposed to establish a Sports and Leisure Forum, based at the leisure centre, to co-ordinate and publicise sports and leisure facilities – including Adult Education – throughout the area. The facilities on offer should also be expanded to enable use by Dartmouth AFC and by the rugby, hockey and athletics clubs.

4.31 Footpaths in the Area

Enhancement of walking & rambling on new and existing footpaths that are all well-maintained throughout the Area. (Strategies 9 & 11)

4.31.1 Walking is the nation's favourite leisure pursuit and the Area is a ramblers' paradise for residents and tourists. This project will pursue grants for the maintenance and development of footpaths and bridleways and promote the publication of maps of the different walking routes in the Area.

4.32 Dartmouth & District sports clubs forum

The establishment of a forum of local sports clubs and leisure associations to advise on the use of the Norton Sports and Leisure Centre and further develop these and other facilities across Dartmouth & District (Strategy 9)

4.32.1 The Area benefits from a rich variety of sports and leisure clubs and societies. There does not exist any local co-ordination body for these where expertise can be pooled and where activities can be mutually supported and co-ordinated. It is proposed that a Sports Forum be formed that can as a minimum:

- liaise with South Hams District Council and achieve local representation on the new Sports and Leisure Centre Charitable Trust
- identify stakeholders to cooperate over the future development of local facilities;
- support local sporting initiatives
- liaise with the business community in order to maximize the use of local sports and leisure facilities by visitors

4.32.2 One of the other key tasks which the Forum would undertake would be the mapping of current sporting activity across the Area in order to determine how local, parish based facilities may be enhanced and to establish increased sporting facilities as well as to maximise use of the facilities at the Norton centre. Membership of the forum would be drawn from existing clubs and societies.

Other proposals not yet formulated as projects

4.33 Housing

Following consultations the housing group has produced a paper on housing development, including affordable housing. The group has met – and will continue to meet – with both the District Council and with the housing association Tor Homes. (Strategy 3: supporting strategy 2)

4.33.1 The economic regeneration of Dartmouth and the Area will be dependent on population growth. For the social infrastructure and facilities relating to education, health, safety, care and sport to be maintained and enhanced a sustainable and sufficiently high population level is required. The resident population size is remaining static but with more and more houses set aside for visitor rental or second homes even the current level will be under pressure. At the moment, the current population of the Area is probably too low to attract a supermarket; the health facilities require a larger population to ensure continued presence; without sufficient children of secondary school age even the survival of the Community College cannot be guaranteed. A larger population must be attracted with the provision of more homes.

4.33.2 A full report has been produced which particularly focuses on affordable housing but which has a vision of an Area where a viable community of permanent residents can live and where there is a range of rent and/or buy accommodation affordable to old and young, single or family group, high and low income. The report recognises that much of the responsibility for the provision of housing lies with the South Hams District Council and others and it is not the intention to establish a rival to these. Rather it hopes that such bodies and agencies will work more closely with the MCTi so as to address the local concerns with local solutions.

4.33.3 The aim for the provision of housing is to:

- allow people of local origin to remain in the area
- preserve the character and ambience of the Area whilst accommodating essential expansion
- provide for the needs of a balanced community
- have a range of different priced, rented and privately owned, accommodation
- give priority to affordable housing

4.33.4 The high priority given to affordable housing is due to the relationship between the needs of the lower income in rural families and the requirements for commercial regeneration. One cannot succeed without the other. A survey (see Appendix 2) undertaken by the



Dartmouth & District MCTi identified particular issues associated with the Area:

- there is a critical shortage of affordable housing for people on low incomes
- second-home owners and wealthy retirees have contributed to higher than average rises in house prices
- Dartmouth and District has the same problems as most other rural areas, but the area's attractive location, poor communications and the huge demand for second homes in the area compounds them
- the differential between house prices and wages is probably the highest in the country
- the average income for an unskilled or semi-skilled working family in Dartmouth and District is between £12,000 and £14,000
- such families can afford to pay a maximum of between £60 and £70 per week in rent/accommodation costs
- Dartmouth and District is an expensive area to live in because of its distance from major conurbations, (food, clothing and other essentials are more expensive here than in Torbay or Plymouth)
- public transport to lower cost areas is expensive, time consuming and infrequent. Car ownership is an expensive luxury many of the lower paid cannot afford
- the differential in housing quality adds to the lack of social cohesion
- the most frequent reason given for young people leaving the area was not the lack of job opportunities but the lack of affordable housing

4.33.5 The MCTI report concludes that 'The provision of affordable housing, with priority being given to local people who are prepared to live and work in a generally low wage area, is of paramount importance if viable mixed communities are to be maintained.' There are number of ways of supporting low cost housing developments including self-build initiatives, use of new style prefabricated units as well as introducing special subsidies such as the 'key worker' scheme. The Dartmouth & District MCTi is anxious to further develop its thinking and proposals through the continued development of an open, active and ongoing debate with statutory agencies and other responsible bodies. It is imperative for all concerned that solutions to this difficult topic are found in order that the housing needs of the Area are met.

4.34 River use and Kingswear

The river is at the same time one of the major assets of the Area and one of its greatest challenges. It is both a common link and a divisive boundary. The provision of economic, frequent and comfortable crossing is essential in order to avoid the separation of Kingswear and Dartmouth and the slow transfer of economic and social allegiance to Torbay. (Strategy 5: supporting strategy 4)

4.34.1 Regular and reliable ferries offering frequent departures with the provision of comfortable shelters on both sides of the river is essential. But so too is the need to ensure that there is sufficient traffic of people to maintain an economic and regular service. It is proposed that private and public stakeholders be approached with a view to determining ways of enhancing the railway service so as provide car-free transport to and from mainline services. As a first step it is hoped that a winter service be provided so as to support the lengthening of the visitor season and to provide a sustained year round provision for local users.

4.35 Improving access to natural amenities

Supporting moves to open up natural amenities. (Strategy 11: supporting strategies 1 & 9)

4.35.1 Any brand image of the Area (see project 4.6) must include reference to its natural amenities and environment. Promoting and increasing access to these will be a key element in the promotion of the Area. In particular, there are four in which the MCTI has a particular interest:

- opening of new sections of the coastal footpath where the current path is inland – particularly between Dartmouth and Stoke Fleming
- establishing a network of cycle/footpaths linking villages and the Norton Leisure Centre
- ensuring that 'Slapton line' (although outside the Area) is kept open so as to allow access to and from Slapton Ley
- opening Castle Cove to visitors and residents
- opening Mill Creek to Dartmouth

4.35.2 It is proposed that the Dartmouth & District MCTi supports all attempts to take these matters forward and in particular seeks to work with the Area of Natural Beauty Partnership. All these proposals will contribute to aspects of the economic, social and environmental strategies for the Area.

Chapter 5 Summary

The Dartmouth & District Market and Coastal Town initiative has produced a vision, objectives, development principles, strategies and projects based on extensive community consultation and analysis of data. If the hard work and enthusiasm is not to be lost then an organisation and structure is required to take the projects through to implementation.

It is proposed to create a:

- Dartmouth Area Committee to act as a publicly accountable strategic body
- Strategy Working Group to co-ordinate and manage the projects and proposals on behalf of the Dartmouth Area Committee
- variety of ways to organise, manage and promote the projects

As the projects are taken forward, using different management approaches, partnerships with stakeholders and funding agencies will be developed and the projects refined accordingly.

5.1 A successful initiative

5.1.1 The origins of the Market & Coastal Towns initiative have been outlined in Section 1. It is important to remember that it is an initiative designed to inspire the community to analyse its own position in the world and then to articulate strategies that, when implemented, will benefit that community in as many ways as possible in order to achieve the overall vision.

5.1.2 As such, this Community Plan and its associated publications is evidence of the success of the Dartmouth & District MCTi. However, the initiative has achieved much more and it is vital that these beneficial outcomes are not lost but are instead built on and strengthened. In particular the MCTi has:

- brought together groups from across the Area which, through the generation of a spirit of co-operation and common purpose, have been able to work together and appreciate the benefits of partnership working in support of the community
- developed an awareness of the interdependence of the parishes and the town and the benefits that can accrue from unity and joint action
- demonstrated the amount of commitment, expertise and enthusiasm that can be found within a community
- widened the understanding of individuals, the community, local government, councils and other agencies about how each operate and interact

5.1.3 These outcomes and the publication of this Community Plan represent only the first stage of the MCTi process. For the vision and objectives to be attained the strategy and its associated proposed projects must be implemented and the following activity is required:

- create the organisation to take overall responsibility for moving the Community Plan forward
- establish an appropriate management structure
- refine and further develop projects
- take the strategies and projects forward to the Brokerage Table
- establish project management arrangements and seek sources of funding
- continue to manage the overall plan
- co-ordinate the projects
- maintain, co-ordinate and develop a unified Area consciousness and commitment
- foster and maintain partnerships
- undertake periodic reviews and updating of the Community Plan



5.2 Building on success

5.2.1 Considerable discussion has taken place about the role, funding and structure of a continuation organisation. It is recognised that as the Community Plan is taken forward the demands and requirements for its management may well change. It is, therefore, important that any continuation organisation maintains the capacity to be flexible and responsive. As a result the steering group has agreed that a body should be created to manage the next stages of the Plan but that the exact format and status should be defined in the light of progress. There has been general agreement that such a continuation organisation should:

- be independent of any other individual public or private agency
- be legitimised through democratic processes
- represent the interests and views of the whole Dartmouth & District community – the Area
- not unnecessarily duplicate the functions of other agencies
- remain associated with The MCTi Devon Chairs Forum and South Hams MCTi Towns Forum
- seek funding in order to maintain its activities

“It is proposed to form a Dartmouth Area Committee (DAC) as a direct replacement of the MCTi Steering Group...”

The proposals made below are subject to agreement and ratification by the five parish councils and the town council.

5.2.2 It is proposed to form a Dartmouth Area Committee (DAC) as a direct replacement of the MCTi Steering Group and that membership and constitution should be very similar to that of the existing steering group. The Committee would consist of ten people: one

representative from each of the five parish councils, four representatives of the town council and the chairman of the Strategy Working Group (see below), with the remit to oversee the strategic management of the Community Plan. Once established it is expected that this Committee should not expect to meet more than quarterly and should report formally, as a minimum, once a year to the parish and town councils. Budget and financial management would be through a recognised accountable body (such as the town or a parish council.) The DAC will elect a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and financial scrutineer from its members.

5.2.3 It is further proposed that the DAC appoint a Strategy Working Group (SWG) with the objective of managing the implementation of the strategy on a day-to-day basis; it will provide the ‘engine’ to power the process and to co-ordinate the continuing development of the projects. The chairman of this group will be a member of the DAC and the role of the group will be to address the activity highlighted above. Membership of the SWG will be on a voluntary basis and drawn from across the community by invitation, so as to provide a proactive, energetic and practical team. The DAC will seek to provide from a variety of sources (e.g. external grants, direct financial contributions, contributions ‘in kind’ etc.) sufficient resources to allow the SWG to undertake its work.

5.2.4 Chapter 4 set out the projects currently under consideration. These vary considerably in size, complexity, financial value and time-scale. It is proposed that these should be taken forward in one of three ways:

- directly managed by the SWG (where necessary in partnership with other agencies)
- managed on behalf of the SWG by an existing group or agency
- managed by an organisation specifically formed for the purpose

5.2.5 The maintenance of overall coherence should be the responsibility of the SWG as will the co-ordination of development and funding. The various project management groups should be responsible for refinement, development, funding, initiation, implementation and subsequent management. The SWG will be expected to provide support and guidance to the project management groups in the pursuance of their activity.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 This Community Plan, together with its associated projects, has been developed in just over a year of available working time. It represents a significant achievement not only for the very many people that have participated but also for the community of Dartmouth & District as a whole. There remains much more to be done. In particular, although all the work undertaken has drawn heavily on statistical data made available through the 'Healthcheck' activity and other sources, it will be necessary to set out more rigorous performance criteria and to quantify more clearly intended outputs. Many of

the projects require significant further development work, in some cases stretching over years rather than weeks or months, before they are likely to reach a conclusion.

5.3.2 The end of this first stage of the Dartmouth & District MCTi, however, is not the time to dwell on such issues. Rather it is hoped that the community as a whole, after appraising the Plan, will celebrate that so many individuals and organisations have invested so much time and energy in building a common vision for the future of their Area.

"... so many individuals and organisations have invested so much time and energy in building a common vision for the future of their Area."



Appendix 1 Community consultation process

The 'process' was quite clear, in that the final Community Plan must be a product of the Community. It must be based on public perceptions and opinions and on what the community wants – community fed.

Process	Objectives / Action	Timing
Marketing Plan	A plan to address the most effective ways of informing the community.	March 2003 to May 2004
The Mcti Logo	The vehicle to create identity, credibility and recognition	April 2003 onwards
The Mcti Title and Slogan	DEVELOPING DARTMOUTH & DISTRICT – 'FORGING FOWARD TO THE FUTURE'. Informing the community of the initiative and defining the area covered.	April 2003 onwards
Publicity	Coverage in the <i>Dartmouth Chronicle</i> , the <i>Herald Express</i> and Parish Magazines/Newsletters by press releases	Constant coverage from March 2003 onwards
Quick Wins	£3600 of budget allocated to 10 Quick Win Applications from Clubs/Groups across the district. Giving further recognition and credibility to the MCTi through publicity	Spread over months of September 2003 to May 2004
Drop-in-days	The first community consultation days. 6000 leaflets delivered to every household in the community inviting the public to attend these days and to 'Have your say'	14th June Dartmouth, 21st June Strete, 28th June Dittisham 5th July Blackawton, 19th July Stoke Fleming, 26th July Kingswear
Young Person's Voice	Approximately 50 students from ages 12 to 16 in Dartmouth & District attended a workshop to express their interests/concerns and priorities	8th July, Guildhall, Dartmouth
Business Meeting	All businesses in the area invited to meetings to express their concerns and interests in the economic development of the area.	28th July. 4.00pm to 6.00pm and 6.30pm to 8.30pm
Steering Group	To oversee the process and to include representatives of all the Parishes and the town.	Guildhall, Dartmouth First meeting 10th July 2003
Data Analysis	From hundreds of comments received from the community and other meetings, six Theme Groups emerged – Economic & Business Development: Culture, Education, Learning & Skills: Traffic, Transport & Access: Health Social Care & Safety: Sport & Leisure: Housing	August and September 2003
Theme Groups	Over 100 volunteers identified from the Drop-in-days invited to attend an inaugural meeting and to form the 6 Theme Groups	16th October 2003, 7.00pm. Guildhall, Dartmouth

<i>Process</i>	<i>Objectives / Action</i>	<i>Timing</i>
Theme Group Meetings	Over 70 'volunteer' meetings held by the Theme Groups to develop themes and projects .	October 2003 to May 2004
Community Consultation Events	The second major community consultation events. Over 6000 Community Consultation Documents delivered to every household in the area inviting the public to attend the events and comment on the 'interim report'	27th January Blackawton 28th January Dittisham 29th January Kingswear 30th January Stoke Fleming 2nd February Strete 4th February Dartmouth
Communication with Stakeholders/Partners	Over 100 copies of the Community Consultation Document mailed to Clubs/Associations/Authorities etc., to engage comment on the 'interim report'	February/March 2004
Economic & Business Development Theme Group	Major stakeholder and partners invited to presentation of progress	31st March 7pm Guildhall, Dartmouth
Hard to Reach Groups	Over 1000 leaflets delivered to every household in Townstal area advertising the 'MCTi team' attendance outside the two supermarkets. Over 100 people successfully interviewed. Presentations and questionnaires completed by elderly groups in both Retirement Homes and Dartmouth Caring lunchtime groups.	13th March 2004 March 2004
Youth Consultation	Further consultation of project interest and priority, conducted by Dartmouth Community College for students ages 11 to 16	4th to 10th May 2004 Dartmouth Community College
Community Plan	To be in three forms: Booklet – audience of stakeholders/partners Handout – audience the whole community Projects & Data – audience as required	May/June 2004

Appendix 2 The MCTi housing questionnaire: summary of results

Distribution

The Housing Committee sent out 1800 questionnaires (untargeted) to all houses in Townstal and to Parish residents via their local Post Offices. After counting uncollected questionnaires from the PO's about 1500 were either delivered or picked up.

84 questionnaires were returned completed by people in need of affordable housing which is 5.6% of those distributed. In addition the team talked to over 200 people on a one-to-one basis at parish and town hall meetings and at supermarkets.

A summary of the answers to the questionnaires follows:

40% were in immediate housing need and 60% were interested in the concept of affordable housing either through direct purchase, shared ownership or self build.

Of those interested in affordable housing 60% had no objection to a contract limiting the resale value of the house (e.g. tied to inflation) and 70% liked the idea of shared ownership.

In addition 25% stated that they anticipated a housing need in the next few years.

30% were single young people and 35% were families or couples without children. 25% were single mothers with children and 10% were single older people.

48% wanted a house, 25% wanted a flat, 16% wanted a bungalow and the rest wanted various things from 0.5 acre to house a caravan to planning permission to convert farm buildings to residential. Over 50% wanted 2 or more bedrooms.

40% of all people had a declared primary preference for renting, even if they were subsequently interested in buying.

70% could afford less than £100 per week rent and none could afford more than £125 per week.

50% of those interested in affordable housing to buy indicated they had access to some money for a deposit ranging from £1500 to £3,000, although one answer was simply "loads".

The average weekly income of those not in receipt of benefit was £250 and the average weekly income of those in receipt of benefits was also £250.

The smallest household weekly income was £100 and the overall average income per person was £114, but many families seem to be existing on £200 or less which probably indicates there are many who do not claim benefits to which they may be entitled.

40% of low income families were dependant on public transport and several commented that it was poor and expensive.

Only 50% were on the local housing register.

Appendix 3 Projects/strategies matrix

Projects	Strategies											Section no
	1 stimulate and increase high quality, year round tourism	2 provide new opportunities for employment	3 increase provision of the amount and range of permanent living accommodation	4 reclaim the commercial centre	5 improve traffic management and access	6 enhance the provision of education and training	7 improve health facilities	8 increase safety and security	9 expand sport and leisure	10 co-ordinate and stimulate cultural activities	11 make the natural environment more accessible	
1 Traffic access and public transport	■			■	■						■	4.2
2 Reduction and management of town traffic	■			■	■						■	4.3
3 Dartmouth & District – a national heritage area	■	■		■	■							4.4
4 Marketing the Dartmouth & District brand	■	■		■								4.5
5 Heated indoor swimming pool	■					■	■		■			4.6
6 Noss-on-Dart site development		■				■						4.7
7 Sign improvements	■			■							■	4.8
8 Regeneration of The Old Market, Dartmouth	■	■		■								4.9
9 Mariculture in the River Dart		■										4.10
10 Business incubator units and skills audit		■				■						4.11
11 Jawbones development	■	■		■	■						■	4.12
12 Events and festivals	■			■						■		4.13
13 Broadband across the Area	■	■				■			■			4.14
14 Project enabler	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	4.15
15 Public slip	■								■			4.16
16 Pre-school programme						■						4.17
17 A learning campus with education forum						■						4.18
18 Enhanced post-16 education and training	■	■				■						4.19
19 Marine industry training	■	■				■						4.20
20 Localised catering training	■	■				■						4.21
21 Youth council						■		■	■	■		4.22
22 Multi-media facilities									■			4.23
23 Cultural forum									■			4.24
24 Health village						■						4.25
25 Health transport					■	■						4.26
26 Health and care directory						■						4.27
27 Civic pride								■				4.28
28 Inshore lifeboat for Dartmouth								■				4.29
29 Norton Sports & Leisure Centre								■				4.30
30 Footpaths in the Area								■		■		4.31
31 Dartmouth & District sports club forum								■				4.32
32 Housing		■	■									4.33
33 River use and Kingswear				■	■							4.34
34 Improving access to natural amenities	■								■		■	4.35

■ Main strategy ■ Supporting strategy

Appendix 4 Healthcheck

Healthcheck is a statistical analysis of the Area based on a series of worksheets devised by The Countryside Agency. It consists of four principal sections, together with a snapshot.

Environment	Economy	Social and Community	Transport and Accessibility	Snapshot
<p>This section details the geographic environment of the Area with general observations on the Area's character and details of such land classifications as conservation areas and sites of Special Scientific Interest. It also examines the relationship between town and countryside.</p>	<p>This section examines employment trends, including fluctuations in the local labour market, and household earnings. There are also analyses of retail outlets and industry, of business support mechanisms, and of tourism. Additionally there is a survey of local education facilities.</p>	<p>This section covers the fabric of the local population, the housing situation, and the relation of local government to local residents. It also covers sports and leisure facilities, and the local cultural heritage.</p>	<p>The efficiency of local traffic measures is examined, including access to Dartmouth from the surrounding villages and movement around the town itself. There is also an assessment of the town from the viewpoint of the mobility-impaired.</p>	<p>A selection of facts and figures, many of which reiterate the information set out in the four worksheets.</p>

Appendix 5 Cross-references (by page number)

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Key objectives **4, 21**

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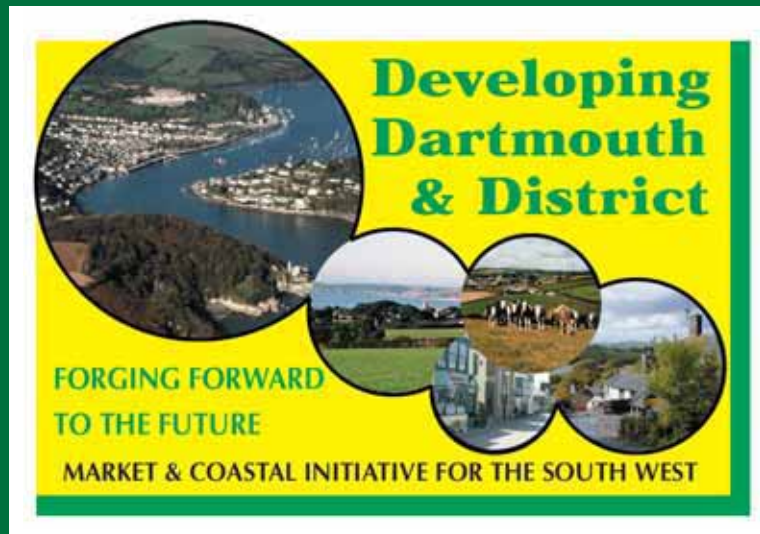
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“The Dartmouth & District MCTi has achieved its objective of producing a Community Plan to regenerate the Area.”



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