

Hatherleigh Community Plan is Here!

The 2nd Phase Community Plan Consultation begins 4th October

Tell us your views

Consultation Phase: Thursday 4th October 2012 – Thursday 15th November 2012

About the Consultation

Who? This project has been led by the Hatherleigh Plan-It Group (volunteers from the local community), in partnership with Hatherleigh Town Council and supported by West Devon Borough Council. This project gives the community a lead role in planning for the town's future.

What? Back in the winter of 2011 a community consultation was undertaken to ask the residents of the Hatherleigh Parish what its needs/wants/issues/concerns are now and into the future. The Plan-It Group have interpreted the gathered evidence and compiled a draft community plan to present these findings. Please bear in mind that we have had many different views and have done our best to balance these and present a plan that meets as many of the community's needs as possible.

Why? Before finalising the document we want to check with the community that the draft is a true reflection of opinions. Have we got the messages right? Once finalised our plan will be used by the Borough Council to help make decisions about future development and provide our community and its service providers with a vision on what type of actions to implement in the town.

For more information or to ask about paper copies of the plan please contact the Hatherleigh Plan-It Group via Hatherleigh Town Clerk:

Email: clerk@hatherleightowncouncil.org

Telephone: 01805 804254

Where can I view the Plan? The plan is available:

- **ONLINE:** visit the Hatherleigh Town Council website at: www.hatherleightowncouncil.org or www.hatherleigh.net
- **PAPER COPIES:** are available to borrow (short-term please to allow others to view) at:
 - Hatherleigh Community Centre
 - Old Schools
 - Post Office
 - The Paper Shop

How can I comment on the plan?

As your response plays a key part we would like you to feedback your views, however small. Please **comment online** or complete a **feedback form** available at the above locations. Here you will also find the boxes to post your comments.

This plan is a consultation version and as a community you all still have the opportunity to comment on the plan and influence what it says.

There will also be the opportunity to come and talk to members of the Plan-It Group at two Drop-in Feedback Sessions:

- *Community Centre on Saturday 27th October at 10am - 1pm*
- *Old Schools on 3rd November also at 10am – 1pm*

Below is an appetiser, a very brief summary of each key area. This level of insight into the town's needs and aspirations marks an exciting chapter in the story of our town. We hope you find we have captured the spirit of this community and recognised the value placed on our environment. We also hope you see this as a plan we can be proud of and an inspiration for other communities who take the initiative towards planning their own town's future.

What does the plan say? Viewing the full plan in its entirety you will find chapter headings of key community areas aiming to present, a) statements of current key facts; b) a presentation of the community's needs; and c) a description on how future activities can achieve those needs.

Our Vision for Hatherleigh

Our vision for Hatherleigh is to encourage a more sustainable future for our town. This means increasing our awareness of local needs and where possible supporting projects, services and facilities that create a positive benefit for the people who live, work and visit here now and for future generations.

A vision that seeks to create a vibrant town where the majority of adults have local employment and all ages are catered for with regards to housing, leisure, healthcare and education.

Hatherleigh, and its residents, should strive to continue its current strong community spirit which recognises social well-being as a vital ingredient for individuals and the wider community.

It should also strive to be a centre for local businesses giving those who provide services and employment a confidence that Hatherleigh is a good place to trade.

Community Life (excerpts from chapter 3)

Community Life is 'alive and well' in Hatherleigh. The community spirit is something that is held dear and is what makes Hatherleigh what it is. However, there is a feeling that the quicker Hatherleigh increases in size, the more diluted the community spirit gets. The plan recognises this and proposes that any new development which takes place should come forward in a steady manner.

Housing (excerpts from chapter 4)

New developments in the town have created a good supply of affordable homes for local people, a wider choice of open-market housing, and a bigger population to support the town's local shops, community activities and the market. Early consultation on the Hatherleigh Community Plan showed that over $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents believed there was sufficient housing in the town to meet the needs of their households over the next 14 years. Views were also expressed on how an increased population can bring money into the town and help sustain local businesses, shops and public transport services. Future development of the market area is a possibility and the challenge is to find a level of housing growth that is supported by the community and helps sustain the town and parts of the market in the future. The plan suggests that a 13% growth is a sustainable level which equates to around 105 new homes provided over the lifetime of the plan (2012-2026).

Local Facilities and Activities (excerpts from chapter 5)

Hatherleigh is well served by a wide range of local groups and organisations and in general these groups make good use of the facilities that are available in the town. Most ages and abilities are catered for through groups that include team sports, music, art, history, gardening, theatre and many more. Suggestions have been put forward for new activities to be started which will require new people coming forward to volunteer their time and contribute to the social mix. The plan presents brief descriptions of facilities highlighting the variety the town has to offer.

Local Services (excerpts from chapter 6)

In general, most residents are satisfied with the range and quality of local services although there were some suggestions during the consultation about how provision could be improved. For instance, relocating the doctor's surgery to the centre of town or provision for a 'hospital car'. Concerns were raised that service provision could be compromised if further housing developments took place. However, service providers (e.g. NHS Devon) have confirmed that current facilities can accommodate some further population growth. The plan seeks to highlight the community's concerns and sets one of its 'development principles' for ensuring appropriate contributions are made towards meeting identified local service needs put under pressure as a result of new development.

Environment (excerpts from chapter 7)

The town contains many handsome features within its built environment and boasts a valuable cultural heritage. It hosts over 60 listed buildings and is designated a Conservation Area. There have been some recent housing developments which some people feel have detracted from the traditional quality of the town's environment. The plan suggests new development should complement the design of traditional housing styles found in the area.

Hatherleigh's open space environment is also rich in what it has to offer. It is clear that many people are aware of the need to preserve and support this wonderful environment. Ideas range from creating more allotment sites to encouraging more bicycle use by installing cycle racks. Another idea offered in the plan is to look at improving footpath and cycle links throughout the town with one suggestion for a footbridge over the bypass creating a better linkage between the Moor View area and the centre of town.

Economy (excerpts from chapter 8)

Hatherleigh's economy is driven, in the main, by its role as a small market town hosting many well established and successful businesses. These provide around 350 to 400 jobs, although there are concerns that there may not be enough job opportunities available locally to support new people moving into the town, thereby increasing the need for people to commute to larger towns and cities. The plan states therefore that any new development should include opportunities for new small businesses to develop. It also proposes that more should be done to promote and support current businesses. A recurring theme is that we should be capitalising on the national and regional cycle routes passing through the town and the plan suggests Hatherleigh becomes a 'cycling mecca' thereby increasing its tourism value. Developing projects like this will also help increase benefits for residents in the town such as providing further social activities and reducing short trip car use.

Transport and Communications (excerpts from chapter 9)

Transport and parking in and around the town is generally considered to be a problem for many people in the community. Traffic flow around the town is often disrupted due to poor parking and is cited as a reason why the bus service has limited bus stops. The plan has raised this issue as a top priority to be addressed and suggests a number of initiatives. The plan also proposes that new developments should incorporate more allowance for car parking so as not to increase this problem. Also, conversion of garages for alternative uses should be discouraged where it would lead to an increase in inappropriate on-street parking. For many people living in Hatherleigh the car is a necessity not a luxury. With rising fuel prices, this could become a problem for people in the town. It also highlights the inadequacy of public transport serving the town and the plan proposes the community open discussions with bus companies to improve their service.

Hatherleigh Market (excerpts from chapter 10)

The market is intrinsically important for the town both socially and economically and gives Hatherleigh a strong sense of identity. The market attracts a huge range of visitors every week, particularly for the Tuesday produce market and surveys have shown that many people visiting the market also use other facilities in Hatherleigh, There is a strong desire amongst the community to see the market continue successfully into the future for the benefit of the town's economy and community life.

West Devon Borough Council has been aware for many years of the likely closure of the market on this privately owned site and made provision within both the 2005 Local Plan and 2011 Core Strategy for an appropriate redevelopment of the site in the event that it is closed. In order to understand how redevelopment of the site could be done in a way that most effectively meets the needs of the community, provision was made in the Core Strategy to look at the redevelopment of the site through a community-led planning process for the town. One purpose of this Community Plan is to address this and key guidelines and principles are set out for redeveloping the market site. As this is such a significant issue for the town the plan addresses the issues in its own chapter.

We look forward to hearing from you with your comments.