

WHAT HAS SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL DELIVERED TO THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES OF THE DISTRICT IN 2008/09

Last year we set out our aspirations. Whilst some of these have been particularly challenging at a time of declining financial support from Central Government, and a difficult economic situation, we believe that much has been achieved.

CP1 – Secure a supply of housing for local people at affordable levels

- We will progress our new affordable housing policies enabling us to provide more affordable homes in the future; **The Affordable Housing Development Plan Document was adopted on 25.09.08**
- We will complete the 2nd phase (53 houses) of the development of Totnes Southern Area and begin the necessary work to prepare for the third and final phase of the development; **Ongoing. Phase 3 is currently under review in the light of the economic situation and desire of the local community to engage in further consultation for this development at this time**
- We will work with landowners, partners and the local community to enable new affordable homes at Dartmouth, Totnes, Lee Mill and Newton Ferrers; **Discussions with developers/landowners ongoing but the pace of progress has been affected by the economic situation. As a response, the Executive has agreed a range of new ideas for supporting our top priority in a declining development market**
- We will work with landowners, local communities and partners to provide between 70 and 100 affordable homes; **We completed 52 affordable dwellings in 2008/09, 32 properties are under construction and we expect to start 94 properties in the current financial year, subject to economic circumstances**
- We hope to receive an acceptable planning application for the development of Sherford which will provide jobs and housing for people across the South Hams; **an application has been received but not determined. Negotiations on the Section 106 are continuing in the light of the resolution of the Development Control Committee on 23 April, but the economic situation has made the discussions challenging.**
- We will avoid the long term use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households and continue to help people across the district avoid homelessness; **in any one month we have not had more than one household in bed and breakfast. This is in comparison to the situation experienced in 2006 where we had up to 19 families in bed and breakfast. In the last 12 months we have prevented homelessness in 178 cases**
- We will fund adapting at least 60 homes where a disabled person resides. **In 08/09 we adapted 87 homes**

CP2 – Create the conditions for the growth and maintenance of quality economic activity

- We will complete at least 5 employment units at Admiral's Court and plan for developing a fourth phase; **we have completed the 5 employment units. We are currently reviewing our plans for the fourth phase, but progress has been affected by the economic situation**
- The employment space at the Watermark Centre, Ivybridge will be completed with a financial contribution of approximately £1½ million from the Council; **The centre was officially opened on 2 October 2008**
- We will work with landowners to promote the regeneration of key sites such as Noss on Dart and Baltic Wharf in Totnes so as to help achieve more jobs; **Ongoing. Discussions are progressing and both sites have been subject to public consultation exercises which the Council has encouraged the respective developers to carry out, however the current economic situation appears to have affected the proposals**
- We will work to achieve employment development at Langage; **Ongoing. The Council leads a range of strategic partners who are working together to bring forward a major employment development in challenging economic times**
- We will work with local people in Dartmouth to enhance Dartmouth Town Centre; **Ongoing. Community priorities have been established in principle, and detailed discussions now taking place**
- We will support tourism businesses to carry out Sustainable Tourism initiatives; **Ongoing. Businesses are encouraged through workshops, events and regular online communication**
- We will encourage businesses to improve environmental performance and business profitability through the Green Tourism Business Scheme. **Ongoing. The Council helps to fund, in partnership with the Tourism Skills Network, Green Awareness Workshops for businesses to encourage them to be accredited with the Green Tourism Business Scheme award**

CP3 – Maintain the district’s distinctive environment whilst enabling access and sensitive development

- We will start a major tree planting programme in the Langage area; **Initial phases of strategic planting implemented**
- We will bid for lottery money to improve open spaces in South Hams and also review opportunities to upgrade our key parks; **Ongoing. The Council agreed the Capital Programme in July 2008 which includes proposed upgrades to a range of open spaces/parks**
- We will carry out environmental improvements at Norton Park & Ride; **Landscape scheme implemented**
- We will, with partners, revise and renew the plan for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to ensure action is taken to conserve and manage this special area over the next five years; **The Executive adopted the AONB Management Plans in April**
- We will work with our partners in West Devon and Teignbridge to address climate change issues. **The Executive adopted the Carbon Management Plan in March**

CP4 – Maintain a clean environment

- We will recycle or compost at least 50% of household waste generated in the South Hams; **The Council recycles 57%, which is second highest recycling rate and we have the least amount of land fill per household in the country**
- We will set up a pilot scheme to deliver a seamless street maintenance service with at least one Quality Council in the South Hams. **The pilot with Stokenham Parish Council has recently been extended to include grounds maintenance services, and will run until October**

CP5 – Work with others to improve access to key services

- We will work with Tone leisure and the youth service to improve access to the leisure centres for children and young people; **Ongoing. Examples include Leisure Youth Nights and enhanced children's holiday activity programmes**
- We will work in partnership with Tone Leisure to deliver 10 Play Ranger sessions in 3 parks to improve access to safe and exciting play opportunities for children and young people; **This initiative began in summer 2008 and will continue to provide 30 sessions annually until June 2010**
- We will work with Mansion House to provide a new Family Playbus to provide access for families with under 5s to play and extend services to reach rural communities; **The bus has been purchased and with revenue funding from Barnardos currently delivers 6 out reach play sessions a week to our rurally isolated communities**
- We will deliver 2 day Play schemes to 5 locations in South Hams, the recycling scrapstore, to provide access to holiday activities for children aged 8-13, with a recycling message; **A total of 5 Play schemes were delivered in Dartmouth, Totnes, Modbury, Harberton and West Charleton in 2008 with planned delivery of further events in 2009 and 2010**
- We will aim to work with Ivybridge Town Council to provide easier access to services for local people; **this initiative was explored but was unable to be progressed at the current time. The principle of the proposal will be kept under review, alongside other opportunities for improving access to services which may emerge across the District**
- We have launched a Customer First Policy and will review our procedures to best meet customer expectation. **Work continues to improve response times and first time resolution of enquiries in order to provide the best possible service for our customers. We now run a series of outreach events and surgeries for a range of services throughout the district. We are also working towards gaining a Customer Service Excellence accreditation, a recognised standard in customer service delivery**

CP6 – Improve core service performance in a cost-effective way

- We will deliver savings of £500,000 (of which at least £100,000 will be efficiency savings from shared services); **This had been achieved**
- We will carry out efficiency reviews of services that are important to you. **A number of reviews are in place or are planned**

In addition to meeting many of the primary actions we set out in May we have also achieved the following:

June

- 4 Blue Flag beaches announced at Bantham, Blackpool Sands, Challaborough and Bigbury-on-Sea
- South Hams launched its programme of customer services outreach events. At the first event alone over 160 enquiries were dealt with

July

- Published government figures show a total of 99.2% of Council Tax due in 2007/8 was collected putting South Hams at the top of the league in the South West

September

- 2007/08 Accounts signed off by the Audit Commission and received another unqualified opinion
- Award of £1m Housing and Planning Delivery Grant

October

- South Hams sees 28% drop in the number of certain crimes over the last three years, which exceeds the target figure set by the Government (15% target)

November

- Retained Investors in People (IIP) status which has been held for 15 years
- Salcombe Harbour Authority achieved national recognition and awarded "Leading Light" status by the British Ports Association (BPA) and the Government. The award acknowledges ports across the country who are working to recommendations set out in a review of municipal ports in England and Wales

December

- Completion of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in Woolwell which was funded through a partnership of South Hams District Council, Devon County Council, Bickleigh Parish Council and a grant from The Youth Capital Fund

January

- Launch of range of support for businesses and residents to respond to economic situation
- Public consultation on the replacement of Batson Pontoons

February

- Agreement to freeze Council Tax for 2009/ 10
- Agreement not to increase car parking pay and display charges

- Agreed to introduce free residents' parking permit
- Exploratory task with the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment to support the Council's Local Development Framework

March

- New energy efficient refuse vehicles received
- Local Action Group funding arrangements in place
- Free swimming arrangements for older people in place
- Member Locality Budgets established
- Very positive Annual Audit and inspection letter received
- Maintenance dredging programme in Salcombe Harbour
- Benefit customer survey results for 2008/09 released showing a satisfaction rating of over 95%

April

- Despite the financial situation we achieved 5% as a return on our investments
- All national targets for dealing with planning applications met
- 'Visit South Devon' Area Tourism Partnership established
- Completion of the passenger ferry pontoon at Kingswear

Cross cutting themes – while many of the initiatives under the Council's 6 corporate priorities relate to the Council's cross-cutting themes, there are a number of specific additional actions which have been implemented.

Children and Young People

- Established South Hams Children's Trust

Climate Change

- Introduced bin liners suitable for composting
- Young artists 'decorate' the Council's new refuse vehicles with a recycling message

Healthier Communities

- We have secured further funding for the Healthy Walks initiative