

South Hams Public Space Strategy

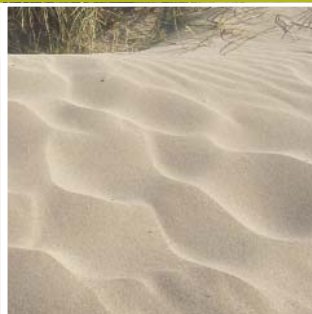
Draft for Consultation - Summary Leaflet



South Hams
District Council



special
places &
active
spaces



This **summary leaflet** sets out the main messages from the draft public space strategy. Please take the opportunity to read this summary and make your views known to the Council by **January 5th 2007**. Full details of how to respond are at the end of this leaflet.

What do you want from South Hams Public Spaces?

Public Space is taken to be any area over which the public can gain access. Residents of the South Hams have many opportunities to enjoy public space. Whether walking the stunning coastal footpath, visiting riverside embankments or enjoying the local park, the pleasure of public space, sport and recreation is important to every one of us.

Despite this importance, there are challenges to be faced in maintaining and improving the quality, quantity and accessibility of Public Spaces. In order to address these issues South Hams District Council has produced a draft Public Space Strategy. The strategy has been produced by the district council but is intended as a strategy for all – and not just a management document for the council. It needs the comment and support of other councils, landowners and, most importantly, the residents of the South Hams.

Public Space has many benefits.

These include:

- Providing an attractive environment in which to live, work and play.
- The promotion of health and well being through recreation in the form of organised sport, casual sport, walking and social interaction.
- Space to relax and enjoy the outdoors or just to escape briefly to enjoy the tranquillity of open space.
- Destinations for visitors and tourists.
- The reduction of anti-social behaviour through the provision of good and relevant play, and informal sports areas.
- High quality public space attracts business and investment.
- The contribution to landscape character, cultural heritage and visual amenity.
- Habitats for both rare and common wildlife.
- Opportunities for informal and formal education.
- Focal points for events and activities.
- Opportunities for community management and involvement, strengthening civic pride and community development.



What is the purpose of a Public Space Strategy?

- To set a clear vision and objectives for the provision and management of public space in the South Hams.
- To establish a set of standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of public spaces that provides greatest benefit and best use of available resources.
- To set out principles for the design and management of public space.
- To bring forward a detailed Action Plan with partners.

The Strategy has been drawn up in consultation with a number of organisations. It proposes the following overall vision for Public Space in the South Hams:

**Spaces for all to enjoy:
locally and district wide**

What are the suggested objectives for public space?

The strategy identifies the following eight objectives:

- Increasing accessibility and use of Public Space.
- Improving quality and public benefit.
- Accessing funding and delivering value for money.
- Working in partnership.
- Community involvement.
- Places for activity and exercise.
- Space for children and young people.
- Designing and managing for wildlife.



What do we know about existing public space?

The strategy includes an analysis of existing South Hams public space. Spaces are identified under 10 different categories - and for each type of public space a key challenge has been identified. These include:

- To improve the **accessibility** of Natural Spaces and Greenways
- To improve the **quality** and **accessibility** of Parks, gardens and Play Spaces
- To improve the **quantity** and **joint use** of Outdoor sports facilities
- To improve the **quality** and **community use** of Amenity Greenspace
- To improve the **quantity** and **accessibility** of Allotments
- To improve the **quality** of Cemeteries and Churchyards, Civic spaces and Beaches.



What public space do we want in the future?

In order to address the current challenges the strategy suggests some possible local standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of public space in South Hams. Setting local standards is a key recommendation from government and is considered essential to seeking external grant aid and contributions from developers. The suggested standards are:

Improving Quality.

- It is suggested that outdoor sports facilities be increased from the current level of 0.94 ha per 1,000 people to a total of 1.16 ha per 1,000 people in order to address known deficiencies in outdoor sports facilities.
- That based on an assessment of a current deficiency in allotments, that there be a local standard of 12 plots per 1,000 households in line with the national standard set out by English Allotment Society.

Improving Quality. The Strategy sets a series of guidelines relating to how sites, should be managed to achieve high public quality. Achieving quality of public spaces was a strong message identified by residents in the South Hams Community Strategy.

How do we want public space managed in the future?

The strategy concludes with suggested management principles that might be applied to public space – and these are related to the eight objectives. In overall terms, they are seeking to drive up quality, improve accessibility, achieve targeted improvements to quantity and to increase community involvement and ownership.

Improving accessibility.

The suggested standards identify the distance that people would normally want to walk or travel to find different types of public space. Specific access improvements at sites to make them accessible for all are also suggested.

Improving strategic location and management. In order to target resources most effectively, the strategy proposes a hierarchy of provision. It suggests that the main centres identified in the South Hams Local Development Framework have the widest range of public spaces, that local centres have a more limited range of public space and that the other settlements have a relatively limited range of public space as a baseline minimum.

The strategy proposes that greatest overall benefit can be achieved for the widest range of people, by providing the larger ranges of public space and more costly facilities in the main centres and local centres. The strategy makes it clear that where other settlements already have a wider range of public space, or opportunities arise to extend the range of public space, this should be supported where there is clear public benefit in doing so, and a secure long term means of funding management of additional public space.





What is the purpose of a Public Consultation?

The Council wants to seek your views on:

- The strength of the vision and the objectives
- The accuracy of the information on existing public space.
- The proposed standards for future provision
- The suggested principles for public space management

Who is being consulted?

The strategy is being sent to:

- Town and Parish Councils
- Sports clubs using or owning outdoor sports facilities
- Major land owners of public space (including the Woodland Trust, National Trust and Forestry Commission)
- Other organisations interested in the management of public space (including Natural England, Devon Wildlife Trust and the Groundwork Trust)

The council also welcomes comments from any individual.

How to find out more and make your comments

We value your views, and the draft Public Space Strategy will be available for public consultation until **Friday 5th January 2007**.

All of the following documents and information are on the district council website at **www.southhams.gov.uk**

- **Special Places and Active Spaces**
draft public space strategy: this is the full version of the strategy
- **South Hams Public Space Map**
this interactive web map shows the location of Public Space in South Hams
- **Consultation response form**
please use this to make your comments. It can be downloaded or completed on line.

Paper copies of the strategy are available on request from Customer Services Unit on 01803 861234 or email **public.space@southhams.gov.uk**

What Happens Next?

After January 5th 2007 the council will consider all responses and discuss these with other councils, clubs, users and other organisations. Following this the council will issue

- An adopted Public Space Strategy
- A detailed Action Plan