

NOTES OF A MEETING OF SOUTH HAMS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES, ON MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2008

Present: Vaughan Lindsay – Dartington Hall Trust (SHSP Chair)
Matt Bell – Devon County Council (for Roger Grainger)
Cllr Roger Croad – Devon County Council
Adele Dawson – South Devon College
Michael Hourican – Tor Homes
Paul Sadler – Environment Agency
Tony Steer – Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Pete Tansey – business representative
Laura Whitehead – South Hams CVS

Others also present and participating (non-voting):
Lee Bray – SHDC (for Alan Robinson)
Amanda Harvey – SHDC (for Kay Kilgallon)

Apologies: Cllr Julian Brazil – Devon County Council
Steve Brown – Devon Primary Care Trust
Hugh McCahill – South Hams VSF
Alan Robinson – SHDC
Jo Rumble – Dartmoor National Park Authority
Cllr John Tucker – Leader, SHDC (SHSP Vice Chair)
Cllr Anne Ward – SHDC

1. Apologies and minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2007 were confirmed as a correct record, and the list of apologies was noted. The Chair welcomed Michael Hourican, the new Tor Homes representative, to the meeting.

2. Project Updates

- a) The Skills Pledge. The Skills Pledge was a government scheme, similar to Investors in People. The Skills Pledge required a public commitment by the leadership of a business or organisation to support their employees to develop their basic skills and work towards gaining valuable qualifications. The initial working group meeting had set the target of having 500 businesses signed up to the Pledge by December 2008. However, the current baseline number was two (the Devon Youth Association, Ivybridge and the Globe Building Company, Ermington) indicating that the target should be reviewed. The working group suggested that all partner organisations take the Skills Pledge in time for a launch event in May 2008, which it was hoped would create a significant amount of media interest.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:

- i) the number of businesses in the South Hams, with many of them having 5 or less employees;

- ii) the benefits received by the employer. It was noted that employers would have access to a dedicated Skills Broker who would provide advice about training options that were relevant to the business;
- iii) measurable targets. The Partnership agreed to publicise the Skills Pledge. There was a discussion around any Train to Gain targets and a suggestion that the Partnership set a target of 10% of businesses in the South Hams signing up to the Pledge. (The total number of businesses in the South Hams needs to be confirmed).

Action: Adele to find out Train to Gain targets to enable the Partnership to set a sign-up target.

Vaughan Lindsay to check the number of small businesses in South Hams with M. Cozens.

- iv) the administering of the Skills Pledge. A Member questioned how the Partnership would know if it had a positive impact on the number of businesses that had signed up to the Skills Pledge. The Partnership was informed that Train to Gain was administering the Skills Pledge and that unless the businesses signing up stated who had influenced them, there was no clear way to measure the impact of the Partnership.

Action: All Partnership organisations to send a variation of the letter (circulated at the meeting) to Hilary Herring of Business Link to sign up to the Skills Pledge by the end of April 2008.

- b) South Devon Business Excellence Awards. The awards were launched in November 2007. To try and encourage more businesses in the South Hams to enter, the Partnership had agreed to sponsor an award. Initially it was felt that the award should be aligned to the Partnership's priorities, but further investigation found that there were already awards for businesses who demonstrated practices aligned with these priorities.

During discussion, a number of award titles were suggested and it was agreed that the Partnership would sponsor an award for 'Best Business in the South Hams'.

Action: The Partnership to sponsor an award for the 'Best Business in the South Hams'; with Vaughan and Pete agreed to judge the award. Criteria would be based on achievements against SHSP priority targets.

- c) Sustainable & Affordable Housing Demonstration Site. This project would aim to demonstrate a range of housing options that were both sustainable and affordable. A business plan was being written, and upon confirmation of the project viability, a planning application would be submitted to South Hams District Council.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:

- i) the involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the working group.

- ii) the capital funding. The Partnership was informed that the land used for the site was part of the estate owned by Dartington Hall Trust. The interested architects and building companies would pay for the building costs, as the site would be a living demonstration of their latest and most innovative technology and design;
- iii) the term 'site'. A Member felt that 'project' should be substituted for 'site' which could focus attention on the location of the buildings as opposed to the technological and educational value of the project.
- iv) the potential for South Devon College students to build the project.

Action: Michael and Laura to join the working group.

- d) Community Initiatives. The working group had originally thought that it would hold a workshop with communities that were interested in creating a safe access route / greenway, inviting communities that had already created such routes to share their experiences and best practice. The working group had been in contact with Devon County Council as the Highways Authority, who had added a cautionary note about raising expectations as their capacity to assist communities was limited. Upon such a warning, the working group had considered targeting an area where there was a cluster of interested parishes.

During discussion, the Partnership felt that the access route / greenway project should not be viewed as 'exclusive', and whilst the concerns of Devon County Council were taken on board, the Partnership felt that by championing the sharing of best practice, such a workshop could make the procedures easier to administer.

Action: Paul to get back in contact with Devon County Council to agree a way forward.

- e) Community Planning & Engagement. The working group investigated what was achievable with current resources and decided to raise the profile of the 'Communities in Action' community planning database. To make best use of the database, all new community planning documents were to be placed on the website, enabling all partners to respond directly to the communities that had produced them. A guidance note on the database would be appended to the minutes of this meeting (see appendix A).

The Partnership was informed that there had been a positive response to the database from communities. The Partnership also recognised that it was important to encourage organisations to use the database, which could be found at www.communitiesinaction.org.uk.

Action: The Chair requested that a demonstration of the database be scheduled for the next meeting.

3. Information Sharing – Partner Updates

Each Member was asked to provide a brief verbal update on their progress, issues and achievements from their briefing papers:

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

The Partnership was informed that the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary website was to be re-launched in March 2008.

An area that the Constabulary was hoping to develop, in conjunction with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), was to improve the operational 'tasking' process for all the CDRP partners. It was hoped that these improvements would enable the CDRP partners to react dynamically to emerging issues.

South Hams District Council

The Group was informed that there were a number of significant developments being progressed, in particular Sherford, Langage, Noss-on-Dart and Baltic Wharf.

At one of the recent parish cluster meetings, the District Council was asked whether there were any plans to include representation from Town and Parish Councils on the South Hams Strategic Partnership (SHSP). It was also noted that Town and Parish Councils were all invited to attend Community Partnership Forum meetings. During discussion, the group felt that it would be difficult for one person to represent 61 Town and Parish Councils. It was suggested that the Secretary of the Devon Association of Parish Councils may be an appropriate representative. A member noted that the CVS had developed a toolkit which could help town and parishes to choose a representative. It was suggested by the Chair that the issue be further debated at the next meeting when the Partnership's Terms of Reference were to be reviewed.

Environment Agency

Representatives from the Environment Agency attended Dartmouth & Kingswear Society's annual forum to engage with people and to discuss how they would cope with extreme weather. It was hoped that the result of such a debate would be the creation of an extreme weather archive. However, it became apparent that such an archive would have been a considerable piece of work.

Action: Paul to provide South Hams climate data which will be circulated with the minutes.

Devon County Council

The group was informed that the Boundary Commission had published its terms of reference, to which the County Council were currently constructing a reply.

South Devon College

Representatives attended a meeting of the Eastern Corridor Development (Sherford and Langage) with regard to the skills that would be required in the area.

The College was to host a 'Skills Summit' on 29 April 2008 which will focus on the Government's agenda to try and keep 18 year olds in training and education.

Dartington Hall Trust

An announcement had been made that Dartington College of Arts had signed the final documents to enable the merger with Falmouth College to be concluded. Dartington Hall Trust would be announcing its future plans in May 2008.

4. Joint Working – Progress on Delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy Themes

a) Affordable Housing

Members were informed that the Housing Corporation had announced that 20% of its funds would be available for those who wished to bid for funding. The Partnership noted that the housing development at Bonfire Hill, Salcombe, had been completed. The development of further sites was reliant on partners working strategically together.

The Partnership was also informed that work on the Beacon Projects was ongoing. It was hoped that the first draft report of the Community Land Trust Project would be published in April 2008.

b) Competitive Local Economy

The Partnership noted progress on the new Watermark Centre in Ivybridge.

Action: Cllr Croad offered to organise a tour of the Watermark Centre for SHSP partners.

The Devon Economic Partnership would be publishing a report in April 2008, which would build upon work which had been compiled by individual districts. The report would incorporate the whole of Devon, detailing employment space and also attempting to make links with affordable housing issues.

The Group noted that South Devon College was due to commence a Marine Apprenticeship, which the college viewed as a starting point in tackling the current skills gap in the marine industry.

c) Environment South Hams

In addition to the report, Members were asked to note that funding for community-led planning was due to conclude in March 2008.

d) Community Vibrancy

i) Community Planning

The group was informed that Bigbury and Ugborough were currently undertaking Parish Plans. Comments on the draft SHSP response to Kingston Parish Plan were requested by noon on Thursday 28 February 2008. The Halwell and Moreleigh Parish Plan had been completed.

ii) Volunteering

The Group was made aware that an invitation to attend a meeting to promoting employee volunteering would be circulated shortly.

iii) Active South Hams

Members noted that work was being undertaken in Totnes to create a 'Sports Hub' whereby children and young people could try different sporting activities and facilities without limiting themselves to a particular club.

iv) Awareness Raising

The group noted that the Community Partnership Forum had been postponed until autumn 2008, due to capacity issues and the need to refresh its format to encourage greater partner engagement. The winter 2007 edition of the South Hams Strategic Partnership Newsletter had not been published due to a lack of articles.

Action: Amanda, Laura and Vaughan to liaise on the way forward for the Community Partnership Forum, Newsletter and webpage.

5. LAA Update

The LAA Update was deferred until the next meeting of the South Hams Strategic Partnership on Monday 12 May 2008.

6. Statutory Sector Compact Champion

The Devon Compact Hub comprised of two Champions from each Local Strategic Partnership, one from the community and voluntary sector and one from the statutory sector. The Partnership was informed that upon the departure of Ruth Bagley, (former Chief Executive of South Hams District Council) there had been a vacancy on the Devon Compact Hub. The Partnership was informed that prior to the meeting, Alan Robinson had agreed to fill the vacancy.

Action: Alan Robinson to fill the statutory sector vacancy on the Devon Compact Hub.

7. Possible Future Agenda Items

- Review of the SHSP Terms of Reference
- Review of the South Hams Sustainable Community Strategy Initial Action Plan 2006-2008
- SHSP webpage

8. Proposed dates of future meetings

- 12 May 2008 at **2 pm** – Conference Call
- 21 July 2008 at **2 pm** – Dartington Hall

(Meeting commenced at 2.10 pm and concluded at 4.35 pm)

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Find out what community action is happening in your area

Community-led Planning is a way for local communities to voice their aspirations and needs. This database contains information from all available community-led plans across Devon. This includes Parish and Market Town Plans. You can now easily find information about what is going on in your area.

Search by text or within geography

 [Advanced Search](#)

District: OR Parish:

To cancel the geography selection choose the blank first option on the droplists

Devon Communities in Action – Guidance Note www.communitiesinaction.org.uk

Devon Communities in Action is a brand new resource for use by communities and agencies which will increase access to information about community-led plans. Community-led plans include parish plans, Market and Coastal Towns initiative plans, village appraisals and village design statements. Broadly speaking for any plan to be entered on this database it should meet the following standards, although there is recognition that existing plans cannot be retrospectively checked:

- be holistic; in the sense of addressing social, economic and environmental issues and concerns in the round;
- be undertaken by a group that is committed to genuinely representing the issues and needs of the whole community;
- be based on thorough and socially inclusive local consultation in relation both to establishing the key issues for consideration and to deciding the policies and action points to be pursued;
- contain a plan of action that flows clearly from the earlier analysis of issues and that is clear and realistic in terms of 'what, why, how and by whom?';
- have local legitimacy, for example by being formally ratified / adopted by the local community forum or parish or town council;
- demonstrate that it has been undertaken with the guidance of an external facilitating organisation, who themselves are prepared to endorse the process adopted (for example the local Rural Community Council and or Market Towns Forum as appropriate).

Frontline practitioners, service managers, commissioners, policy makers and senior management should all be aware of this new resource. If used, supported and advocated to communities it will bring the following benefits:

- much easier access to current community issues;
- much easier analysis of community need for commissioning and strategy;
- much easier access to information with which to engage communities;
- better use of resources to support community-led planning and activity;
- better fit of service delivery to community need;
- more empowered communities through recognition of the value of community-led plans and activity;
- better linkages between community-led plan activities.

Communities in Action has been supported and developed by the following organisations:

Community Council of Devon
Dartmoor National Park Authority
Devon County Council
Devon Rural Network
Devon Strategic Partnership
Devon Towns Forum
Market & Coastal Towns Association
Mid Devon District Council
North Devon District Council
South Hams District Council
Torrige District Council
West Devon Borough Council

The following structure and tasks have been agreed to support the use of Communities in Action:

Devon level support provided by:

Community Council of Devon – Greg Davies
Market & Coastal Towns Association – Mark Goodman
Devon Towns Forum – Paul Delahoy
Devon County Council – Matt Bell
Devon Rural Network – Jen Anderton

- to receive comment and feedback from the website;
- to liaise with named district contacts when necessary and log issues for development;
- to liaise with the technical support to arrange any technical maintenance.

District level support provided by:

North Devon – Hannah Harrington (NDDC), Alison Boyd (DCC)
Torrige – Malcolm Harris (TDC), Alison Boyd (DCC)
South Hams – Amanda Harvey (SHDC), Matt Bell (DCC)
West Devon – Robert Plumb (WDBC), Sonia Burgess (DCC)
Dartmoor National Park (Teignbridge area) – Jo Rumble (DNPA)

- to verify information with community groups and parishes after initial central data input;
- to meet and train community planning groups who require support, including those who require help to input information;
- in exceptional circumstances, to input information.

Simple guide

The website has the following main functions:

Searching

This will be the main function used by the widest number of people. There are a number of ways of searching:

- by keyword
- by category/theme
- by geography

Or by combination of the above: plus there is an advanced search.

Users will also be able to register to receive email updates on the searches of their choice.

Recording information

Community groups and parish councils can use it to record the content of their community plan (parish or MCTi) and record the detail of any actions taken to address the issues raised in the plan.

The information is structured in four stages:

PLAN – information about the community, the group involved in writing the plan and the area covered by the plan.

ISSUE – information about the broad issue headings contained within the plan. These may be headings such as 'Environment', 'Transport', 'Housing' or 'Facilities and Services'.

PROPOSAL – information about the proposed actions that the community has suggested. These will be the specifics often mentioned in the action plan.

ACTION – information about tasks or actions that have been undertaken and completed or are in the process of being done (not what is proposed).

Reporting

Reports can be produced on the following:

Parish Actions – produces a list of all the actions that a parish is working on and details about them.

Parish Overview report – produces an overview of all the issues, proposals and actions happening in the parish.

District Consolidated Overview – produces an overview of every parish within a district area and summarises the number of issues, proposals and actions happening in those parishes.