

Mid Devon Local Development Framework

# Core Strategy 2026

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## 1.0 SPATIAL PORTRAIT OF MID DEVON

### Location

- 1.1 Mid Devon is an inland area in the South West of England, lying roughly equidistant between the Bristol and English Channel coasts. The significant urban areas of Exeter (population 113,000) and Taunton (61,000) are just beyond the southern and eastern boundaries of the District respectively. Major east – west lines of communication run through the district, including the M5, A361, A30 and the Great Western Mainline Railway.

### Physical Characteristics

- 1.2 The district covers 913 square kilometres. Its landscape is characterised by green rounded hills of pasture and woodland cut through by steep sided river valleys with a maze of high hedged lanes giving rise to occasional panoramic views. The red, fertile soils of much of the area provide a distinctive backdrop. The majority of Mid Devon's settlements are nestled within the folds of this landscape, with many small historic settlements containing thatched cottages and ancient churches. The mild, damp climate is typical of an inland area within the south west.
- 1.3 Most of the district drains southwards, with the Culm, Lowman, Exe, Creedy and Yeo rivers flowing in steep sided valleys with occasionally wide floodplains both agricultural and urban in nature, converging and flowing through Exeter to the English Channel. The river Taw, in contrast, flows north west out of the District, reaching the Bristol Channel at Barnstaple. These valleys provide beautiful, often dramatic features within the landscape, and usually important corridors of movement. With generally good or excellent water quality, they are often important wildlife habitats. However, the flat valley floors are subject to periodic flooding events, which can have costly implications for residents and the local economy and are likely to increase with the effects of climate change. This has implications for the market towns of the district which have typically evolved as riverside settlements.

### Biodiversity

- 1.4 Devon's great variation in geology and landform encourages considerable biodiversity. Of 34 species found only in the UK, 16 are found in Devon. Three of these are believed to be found nowhere else. Biodiversity Habitat Species found within Mid Devon include woodlark, bats and dormice. Within Devon, however, Mid Devon has relatively little land designated as of national importance (11 SSSIs covering 0.3% of the land area) and no designated or candidate European sites. Nevertheless, the district supports a range of important wildlife including over 200 County Wildlife Sites

and Regionally Important Geological Sites. The wider landscape contains a network of species-rich hedgerows, woodlands and river valleys linking up designated and priority habitats..

- 1.5 These habitats are threatened by issues such as lack of active management, undergrazing, fragmentation, recreational pressure and climate change. Hedgerow removal and unsympathetic conversion of rural buildings can impact on important BAP species. The South West Nature Map, referred to in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, provides a strategic approach to habitat protection, enhancement and creation and allowing for adaptation to climate change. Areas suitable for such actions include native woodland, lowland heath, floodplain grazing marsh and purple moorgrass and rush pasture.

## **Heritage**

- 1.6 This environmental richness is enhanced by the historic and built environment, with 2560 listed buildings, 50 Conservation Areas and 49 Scheduled Monuments within its area. In addition, there is a wide range of archaeological remains which are not scheduled.

## **Population and Housing**

- 1.7 The latest 2004 estimate puts the Mid Devon population at 72,400, which gives an average population density of less than one person per hectare. This is one of the most sparsely populated authorities within England and Wales (ranked 30th out of 376 in 2001). The main concentration of people is found in the eastern part of the District where the towns of Tiverton (pop 18,300) and Cullompton (pop 7,800) lie within 6km of each other and similarly close to Junctions 27 and 28 of the M5 and the mainline railway station at Tiverton Parkway. Crediton (pop 6,700) is the largest settlement in the west of the District. However, the majority of residents live outside these three towns, all in settlements below 3,000 population.
- 1.8 Mid Devon's population has grown considerably since 1981, when it was 58,600. Almost all of this growth has arisen because more people are moving into the District than are moving out (Net In – Migration). There is an expectation of continued demand for new housing in Mid Devon in the longer term.
- 1.9 Mid Devon's house prices are at about the English average however, the provision of social rented accommodation is limited. Studies on behalf of the Council have shown that there is a considerable shortage of affordable housing. South West house prices have risen substantially in the last 22 years from about £33,000 in 1983 to almost £195,500 in 2005 (an increase of 490% in 22 years which is a higher rate of growth than England as a whole). However, local incomes have failed to keep pace with this increase. A key consequence of this has been that the South West has become the

least affordable region for housebuyers in the UK. It is likely that a mismatch between the overall supply and demand for housing is the root cause, although shorter term issues such as low interest rates have contributed to recent house price rises. If these trends were to continue, then increasing numbers of local residents trying to enter the housing market for the first time would be unable to afford to purchase or rent houses in the area. The Council has commissioned detailed studies of housing need, the latest of which was in 2003. This indicated a need for 353 additional affordable dwellings each year to meet both the backlog of existing need and the forecast of future need.

Location	Housing completions		Population growth	
	Annual Rate	Proportion	Annual rate	Proportion
Rural areas	159	43%	192	38%
Tiverton	78	21%	85	17%
Cullompton	63	17%	137	27%
Willand	34	9%	60	12%
Crediton	33	9%	27	5%
Total	370	100%	501	100%

1.10 The following table sets out a summary of housing completions and population growth in Mid Devon 1981 – 2001. It will be seen that growth in the rural areas has been considerable (particularly Willand, which has virtually doubled its population in that time), whilst Cullompton has seen a relatively high growth rate for its size.

## Economy

1.11 The nearby City of Exeter exerts an influence over the Mid Devon economy, with Crediton and Cullompton, the most southern rural wards showing high levels of out-commuting to Exeter. Within Mid Devon, Tiverton and Crediton have their own discernible “catchment areas” covering nearby rural wards. On the other hand, Cullompton’s economic influence is less apparent. All three main towns show a reduction in people living and working in the same town over time (1991 to 2001), but with Tiverton remaining the most self-contained. (Tiverton from 77% to 68%; Crediton 52% to 49% and Cullompton 47% to 43%).

1.12 A similar pattern of activity and movement can be discerned for retail activity. Data from the Retail Report carried out for Mid Devon District Council shows that Tiverton has a wide catchment area, with regular customers from throughout the eastern part of the District.

Crediton has a smaller catchment while Cullompton meets fairly local needs only. Again, Exeter provides a shopping destination for many Mid Devon residents, with Taunton also providing a retail pull on the eastern part of the District.

- 1.13 Working at home is increasing in the District. In 1981 and 1991 12% worked at home but this significantly increased to 17% by 2001. It is likely that this trend will continue and may accelerate with the expansion of broadband and increased travel costs. The proportion of home workers in the rural wards is highest, with 20%.
- 1.14 Manufacturing is particularly important in Mid Devon accounting for 22% of jobs compared to 10% in the Exeter sub-region. In the District there continues to be a large number of employees in agriculture and forestry and with the M5 route through Mid Devon, land transport is a major sector. National trends generally show a continued decline in these sectors, a potential threat to employment in Mid Devon.
- 1.15 The proportion of retail employment in Mid Devon has fallen behind the regional average in over the last 10 – 15 years. However, completed and committed retail proposals in Tiverton and Cullompton should reverse this decline and reduce outflow of expenditure to principal urban areas.
- 1.16 Small and very small businesses are important to the local economy, with large and growing numbers of businesses employing less than 10 people, particularly in rural areas. Mid Devon shows a high rate of self-employment.

## **Resources**

- 1.17 The Government's policy is to minimise the development of Greenfield land, and to promote "brownfield" (previously developed land) for redevelopment. Historically, some 25% of Mid Devon's housing development has been on previously developed land, although the Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration seeks to increase this.
- 1.18 Energy is a crucial consideration in the functioning of the economy, and one area of concern is the future of non – renewable sources of energy, particularly oil. Oil is the world's key non-renewable resource, which currently provides 40% of the world energy use and in particular over 90% of world transport energy. Since 1981 oil from existing reserves has been used faster than new sources have been found, meaning that known reserves have been falling. The gap between growing consumption and shrinking discovery continues to widen; oil is now being consumed four times faster than it is being discovered.

- 1.19 Worldwide demand for oil is increasing with economic growth. At some stage, the level of production will fall below the level of demand for oil, leading to increased prices. This could occur within the period of the Local Development Framework (ie before 2026). Travel is the fastest growing energy use sector. Increased prices will make travel increasingly expensive. The implication is that living in more remote areas will become more expensive. Natural gas is another non-renewable energy source which may be increasing in importance. It too is subject to uncertainty of supply.
- 1.20 A continued growth in renewable energy production would both help ameliorate these trends, and also may be encouraged by higher energy prices. Renewable energy is forecast to provide an increased proportion of total energy production. Another trend may be increased energy efficiency.
- 1.21 Public finance will be necessary for more local investment in such non-profit making infrastructure as transport, affordable housing, education and health, unless these resources can be “levered” from private sources through mechanisms such as planning obligations. Forecasting the availability of public finance is subject to uncertainties arising from economic performance and political changes. The Government has recently announced a medium term spending review which proposes real term increases in public expenditure on “frontline services” such as housing, education and health of 3 - 4% per year up to 2008.
- 1.22 Private finance will be necessary for the development of new market housing and employment growth. The availability of private finance will depend crucially on economic performance. It is assumed that the economy will continue to perform as well as in the previous decade or so.

## **Transport**

- 1.23 Car use and ownership in the UK has increased considerably in the past 30 years. In Mid Devon there has been a 6% increase in households who own more than one car from 1991 to 2001. Conversely, 17% of households in Mid Devon do not own a car. Mid Devon is rural in nature and has a high dependency on the car. Most residents do not use public transport frequently. Major rural roads in Devon have seen a 49% increase in traffic between 1986-1999. This is a very high growth rate compared with the 31% growth in England and Wales, and 19% growth in Exeter and Barnstaple. Despite the increase in traffic, the accident record has shown considerable improvement, with a 7% reduction in injurious accidents between 1990-2001. Within Mid Devon, the reduction has been a more dramatic 23%.

- 1.24 Despite the improving technology in energy efficiency, the fast growth of car use on the road will have an impact on air quality and climate change. Increases in traffic volume will also have an indirect effect on human health as air quality deteriorates. More cars on the road also imply a greater likelihood of traffic congestion. Unless cars move to renewable energy sources, demand for non-renewable energy, particularly oil, will continue to rise.
- 1.25 Crediton was declared an Air Quality Management Area in October 2004 as a result of an excess level of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates. This is likely to be caused by traffic volume, congestion and the ‘canyon’ like effects of buildings causing poor dispersion.

### **Safety and Health**

- 1.26 Mid Devon is an area of low crime incidence – data for 2000 – 2001 indicates that the proportion of the population suffering violent crime, sexual violence, robbery, burglary and motor vehicle thefts are all below the national average. However, there will need to be consideration of policy impacts on crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.27 Mid Devon has a healthier population than the national average. 7.7% of the population considered themselves to be in less than good health in 2001 compared with 9.2% in England and Wales. This self-assessment is reflected in other data, where Mid Devon Primary Care Trust (which covers a wider area than Mid Devon District Council) shows lower death rates than the country as a whole (86% of the England figure, after taking account of age differences) and consequently higher life expectancy by about 2 years (77.1 years for men and 82.6 years for women). Death rates from a range of illnesses tend to be lower within Mid Devon.
- 1.28 One issue of current concern is the impact of reduced physical activity and higher sugar and fat intakes. 57.9% of adults in England were classified as being overweight, while the equivalent figure for Mid Devon was 61.8%. Indications are that this is an increasing problem.

### **Business as Usual Forecast**

- 1.29 Taking account of these trends, we can predict what kind of place Mid Devon will be in 2026, and in the years after that. The following picture assumes that the trends set out above are not changed or reversed by deliberate policies including those introduced recently. They can be considered the outcome of “business as usual”.
- 1.30 We can expect Mid Devon’s climate to become warmer overall, with wetter, stormier winters and drier, calmer summers. This trend, noticeable by 2020 will accelerate throughout the remaining parts of this century, with increasing impact on society, economy and the

natural environment. This will pose a series of potential economic, social and environmental challenges in the future. The following aspects may particularly affect the South West:

- **Agriculture and landscape** - The changing heat, rainfall and soil conditions will all affect the growing crop types and their yields. There is also potential for new crop and animal diseases. The changing climate will affect vegetation distribution and may therefore change the landscape. Higher winter windspeeds may lead to increased loss of trees.
- **Utilities and Infrastructure** - Climate will affect both the supply and demand for water and energy. More frequent storms and floods will pose risks to drainage, transport, built environment and housing.
- **Tourism** - A longer, more reliable summer season will probably lead to an increase in visitor numbers and visitor expenditure. This growth may however pose a challenge to water resources, transport and infrastructure provision.
- **Biodiversity** - Vulnerable species and habitats will be affected by changes to temperature, water and soils. The changing patterns of climate will alter the natural distribution limits for species.
- **Economy** - Climate change will affect markets, consumer demand and supplies. Increased consumption of warm weather food and drinks may lead to new markets. Potential overheating of the interior environment in buildings during the summer will require sustainable solutions to cooling. The economic impact of more and greater flooding events will increase, with implications for flood defence expenditure and insurance costs. Similarly, the clear-up costs from the stronger and more frequent storms likely to be experienced will grow.

- 1.31 Technological and economic growth are likely to be highly beneficial to individuals, with growing incomes and more leisure time. However, much of that additional wealth looks set to be swallowed up by increased housing and travel prices, with the former continuing to converge with south east England levels. With new housing still constrained by planning policies, this house price inflation will be fuelled by population growth, falling household size and rising incomes. Population growth will continue to be fuelled by in-migration from other parts of the country, whilst existing residents will stay beyond retirement age. With first time buyers finding entry into the housing market increasingly difficult, increased out – migration of the younger adult age groups may be a consequence.
- 1.32 The health of the population will continue to improve, in that mortality rates will continue to fall. However, particular health issues will become more of a concern, such as obesity with its knock on effects, with trends towards refined, fast foods and a continued reduction

in physical activity in the population at work, in leisure and for short journeys. Climate change will lead to reduced deaths from the cold.

- 1.33 As a result of these health changes, the population will become older, requiring more services for the elderly, including health, transport and social services. The increasing proportion of the elderly may have a political impact, as political parties seek support from this growing section of the population.
- 1.34 Mid Devon, as an area of dispersed population, will see rural services decline, and increased travel from rural areas into the towns for services and employment. The growth in car use is likely to continue, with public transport struggling to compete with the convenience of the car. There may be some growth of walking and cycling within the towns, although increasing congestion and possibly air quality reductions may act to limit this growth. As petrol prices continue to increase, due to shortages in world supply, as well as likely fiscal measures, cars will become more and more fuel efficient, and there may be a switch to other fuel sources. However, such improvements have in the past been swallowed up by increased car mileage and this is likely to continue. The ability to produce alternative fuel sources will depend on technological change, which is difficult to forecast.
- 1.35 The Mid Devon economy is likely to see significant sectoral shifts, with reductions in manufacturing and agricultural employment and a growth in service industries. But with population growth continuing to outstrip employment provision, and the growth in the nearby economies of Exeter and Taunton, the trend towards increased out-commuting is expected to continue.
- 1.36 It is likely that the visual appearance of Mid Devon, in particular its landscape, will be relatively unchanged although the continued development of rural housing will erode some of the traditional character of the villages set within it. However, this is likely to hide a continued reduction in biodiversity and subtle changes arising from climate change, which will become more apparent towards the middle of the century.

## **2.0 NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

### **Sustainable Development**

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act sets the achievement of sustainable development as a legal requirement in the preparation of planning policies by Districts.
- 2.2 The recently published UK Sustainable Development Strategy entitled “Securing the Future” (March 2005) defines sustainable development in the following manner:

*The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.*

*For the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations, that goal will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment; and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal wellbeing. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.*

2.3 This purpose will be achieved by following these five guiding principles:

- **Living Within Environmental Limits** - respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.
- **Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society** - Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity for all.
- **Achieving a Sustainable Economy** - Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays) and efficient resource use is incentivised.
- **Promoting Good Governance** - Actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people's creativity, energy and diversity.
- **Using Sound Science Responsibly** - Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.

### **Planning Policy Statement 1**

2.4 These general principles are reflected in Planning Policy Statement 1 – Delivering Sustainable Development. This states that, in preparing Development Plans, planning authorities should seek to:

*“Promote national, regional, sub-regional and local economies by providing, in support of the Regional Economic Strategy, a positive planning framework for sustainable economic growth to support efficient, competitive and innovative business, commercial and industrial sectors.*

*“Promote urban and rural regeneration to improve the well being of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for the people living in those communities. Policies should promote mixed use developments for locations that allow the creation of linkages between different uses and can thereby create more vibrant places.*

*“Promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free, whilst respecting the diverse needs of communities and the special needs of particular sectors of the community.*

*“Bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing, for industrial development, for the exploitation of raw materials such as minerals, for retail and commercial development, and for leisure and recreation - taking into account issues such as accessibility and sustainable transport needs, the provision of essential infrastructure, including for sustainable waste management, and the need to avoid flood risk and other natural hazards.*

*“Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.*

*“Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development.*

*“Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.*

*“Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use to achieve the targets the Government has set for development on previously developed land.*

*“Enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character.*

*“Address, on the basis of sound science, the causes and impacts of climate change, the management of pollution and natural hazards, the safeguarding of natural resources, and the minimisation of impacts from the management and use of resources.”:*

### **3.0 REGIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

3.1 The Core Strategy (and therefore the Local Development Framework as a whole) must be “in general conformity” with the Regional Spatial Strategy. At present, this consists of RPG10 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West together with the Devon Structure Plan (to 2016). However, the Regional Assembly has submitted a revised Regional Spatial Strategy, which is due to be adopted in 2008, and which will supersede these two documents.

#### **Regional Planning Guidance**

- 3.2 RPG10 sets out the following vision and strategy, with the aim of achieving a sustainable region with quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors:
- Minimise greenfield development, developing previously developed land in urban areas first and ensuring efficient use of developed land.
  - Promote walking, cycling and public transport.
  - Protect the environment, promote good design and minimise flood risk to people.
  - Make adequate provision for all land uses.
  - Concentrate development at 11 “Principal Urban Areas” (including Exeter and Taunton) and other designated centres for growth.
  - Seek a balance of uses in urban areas with a mix of complementary uses.
  - Designate Towns to act as local service centres for rural areas, supporting and enhancing this role with appropriate development.
  - Small towns and villages to provide for local needs.
  - Meet the social and economic need of rural communities, supporting the diversification and restructuring of the rural economy and the provision of jobs and services.

#### **Devon Structure Plan**

3.3 This regional strategy is given more detail in the Devon Structure Plan, which provides for development levels in Mid Devon. It follows the general strategy set out above, tasking Local Plans with defining Area Centres to act as focal points for rural hinterlands, and Local Centres for limited development to meet local needs and promote rural regeneration. In the open countryside development will be strictly controlled. The Structure Plan sets a target of 390 dwellings and 4 hectares of employment land per year up to 2016.

## Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.4 The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2006, continues this broad approach, but with some adjustments in the light of monitoring, changing national policies and further consideration of the region's economic, social and environmental circumstances. The role of Exeter and Taunton is broadly unchanged, although they are now considered to be "Strategically Significant Cities and Towns". The approach to other settlements is broadly similar, with development levels and mix in accordance with their role and function. The submitted RSS sets the following housing development levels for Mid Devon:
- 350 dwellings pa 2006 - 2016
  - 290 dwellings pa 2016 - 2026
  - (320 dwellings pa 2006 - 2026)
- 3.5 Supporting justification to the core policies sets out how the LDF will be in general conformity with these strategies.

## 4.0 LOCAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

### Community Plan for Devon

- 4.1 As part of the Local Government Act 2000 local authorities have a legal duty to prepare a community strategy (often called a community plan) to promote "the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas." These strategies are meant to ensure that the various organisations which provide services to the public:
- Are better co-ordinated
  - Respond to the needs and concerns of local communities
  - Are delivered in suitable ways for the people who depend on them
  - Think about the needs of future generations
- 4.2 The Community Strategy for Devon was approved in 2004. Its aim is that "By 2015 we want Devon to be a County with safe, healthy and inclusive communities, a strong and diverse economy and a cherished environment."
- 4.3 In order to deliver these aspirations, the Plan sets out the following goals to be achieved:
- Protect and improve our outstanding environmental asset, help tackle national and global environmental issues, and make it easier to adopt greener lifestyles and working practices through the conservation of natural resources, recycling, traffic management, enhancing landscape and biodiversity, adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.*

*Ensure that economic prosperity is shared by all parts of the community, whilst also maximising the benefits of Devon's unique quality of life by encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting a skilled and adaptable workforce, raising productivity, building upon environmental assets and providing sustainable transport solutions.*

*Have the right number, type and quality of homes for the people who need them and at an affordable price, whilst minimising the impact on the environment.*

*Create strong, cohesive communities where everyone feels included and has easy access to the services and facilities they need to enjoy a good quality of life by working in partnership with the community to tackle social and economic deprivation.*

*Encourage healthy lifestyles, tackle health inequalities and support vulnerable people in ways that promote their independence, inclusion and well-being through preventing illness, providing effective treatment, supporting carers and finding housing solutions to vulnerable populations.*

*Ensure that all children and young people have a good start in life by supporting families and carers, providing access to high quality education, protecting vulnerable children from harm and helping all children and young people to improve their physical and mental health, engage with the community and fulfil their potential and become responsible adults*

*Continue to build flourishing and safe neighbourhoods reducing the fear of crime and increasing victim confidence in reporting incidents, reducing anti-social behaviour, reducing incidents and effects of prejudice, and managing road speed and safety.*

## **Mid Devon Sustainable Community Plan**

- 4.4 The Sustainable Community Plan for Mid Devon (2006 –2009) is based on the following aim 'We want to create an environment where individuals, families and communities can flourish, whilst preserving those aspects of the area that people love'
- 4.5 Arising from this aim, the plan sets three priorities each with its own set of action plans:
- **Stronger and Healthier Communities** in which people feel safe and secure, get on well together and enjoy sufficient quality of life and opportunities
  - **Improving Access to the services people need**, particularly for those on low incomes and those who are sick or disabled, strengthening community based transport initiatives and improving the distribution of information.

- **Affordable and Decent Houses** through increasing the supply of social housing so that those most in need can have access to high quality homes within their means, preventing homelessness, providing support and promoting independence for the vulnerable and those in wider housing need.

4.6 This vision and these priorities are reflected in the LDF Vision and strategy.

4.7 Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Plans have been prepared for the Crediton Area and The Culm Valley (including Cullompton), and one is currently being produced for the Exe Valley (including Tiverton), which enable the local community to develop and implement a local regeneration plan. These plans, together with Parish Plans, which contain a vision for more localised communities, have also been considered in the preparation of the Core Strategy.

### **Mid Devon District Council's Corporate Plan**

4.8 Mid Devon District Council published its Corporate Plan, setting out the Council's broad objectives for 2005 – 2010. The plan is to be rolled forward each year, and the Council has approved the Corporate Plan for 2006 – 2011. The overall vision and priorities set out in the plan are set out below, and the Core Strategy sets out the spatial planning policies which will help to achieve many of these overarching priorities:

*'To enhance the Mid Devon area and the quality of life of its citizens by working with individuals and public private and voluntary sector groups'*

#### **Corporate Priority A**

##### **Managing the Environment**

- To ensure waste production falls, while more is recycled
- To use our land, energy and resources efficiently and in the best interests of residents
- To minimise our impact on climate change

#### **Corporate Priority B**

##### **Delivering a Well-Managed Council**

- To provide services which address the needs and wants of our residents
- Demonstrate Value for Money in all we do, so as to keep any rises in Council Tax to a minimum

#### **Corporate Priority C**

##### **Decent and Affordable Homes**

- To provide as many affordable homes as possible

- To bring all our Council housing stock up to the 'Decent Homes Standard'
- To be a good landlord to our 3,200 Council homes
- To meet the housing needs of homeless persons in the most cost effective way

### **Corporate Priority D**

#### **Community Well-Being**

- To maintain the high quality of life of residents by ensuring that anti-social behaviour is addressed, healthy living is promoted, and social disadvantage is addressed.
- To support voluntary and statutory organisations which help residents to claim benefits and receive debt advice, and to improve their Quality of Life
- To increase the skills and educational qualifications of young people
- Support sustainable economic success by ensuring
  - Businesses can grow and new businesses can start up.
  - Town centres are attractive, lively and successful.

### **Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration**

4.9 The Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration sets out an overall aim, which seeks to apply the principles of sustainable development in our District. This is: "To provide for a sustainable pattern of land use, development and transport which best protects and enhances the environment, meets the social and economic needs of the community, conserves natural resources and maintains the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

4.10 This aim is supported by a vision, set out in a series of statements covering housing and development, economy, environment and accessibility. Whilst the statements fit well with the definition of sustainable development set out in national policy and quoted in the previous section, together they are not sufficiently locally distinctive and do not provide a robust vision for Mid Devon. A vision for the Core Strategy (and hence the Local Development Framework as a whole) is set out later.

## **5.0 STRATEGY OPTIONS**

### **Local Plan Strategy**

5.1 The Local Plan set out a strategy which sought to achieve its vision. It was endorsed by the Local Plan Inspector and can be summarised as follows:

- Concentrate new development within the towns, protecting their character, with priority given to development of brownfield sites. Support town centre vitality and viability.
- Limit development in rural settlements to that which meets a local social or economic need, supports their general vitality and viability and protects their character.
- Strictly limit development in open countryside, protecting its character, whilst promoting rural diversification.

5.2 Taking account of all these factors, four alternative strategies were set out in the Issues and Options Report, and assessed for sustainability acceptability against the continuation of existing long term trends and forecasts (described as the “Business as Usual Forecast” earlier in this report). These assessments are summarised below.

### **Environmental protection strategy alternative**

5.3 The priority would be given to environmental objectives within this strategy option, including landscape and wildlife protection, resource conservation and building design. Achieving economic and social benefits would be a lower priority.

- Housing and employment development limited to current or reduced levels, concentrated at the Area Centres (particularly Tiverton).
- Little additional retail development promoted.
- Housing to be smaller properties, at a higher density than recently
- Emphasis on low energy development.
- Rural development limited, with a concentration on home working and eco-tourism.
- Car use restricted throughout the area.
- Planning control to concentrate on environmental protection and enhancement.

5.4 The Sustainability Appraisal forecast the impact of this strategy compared with the continuation of current trends. Overall, this strategy is likely to be better or much better in a number of the environmental factors, as a result of reduced overall land take from housing and employment development, and the emphasis on environmental protection and enhancement. Conversely, the limitation on economic development in particular will impact on economic and employment growth, and also lead to greater out-commuting resulting in increased travel.

## **Social gains strategy alternative**

- 5.5 Development would be used to provide for social gains wherever possible, under this strategy alternative, with economic and environmental objectives outweighed where there is a conflict.
- More new housing than previously, with an emphasis on Affordable Housing.
  - Housing sites to be chosen to maximise social infrastructure provision, with Cullompton and Crediton having high levels of growth.
  - Economic development promoted close to existing and proposed housing, and in rural areas close to settlements and existing farms.
  - Additional retail development in Crediton.
  - Car use to be restrained within the Area Centres, but not elsewhere.
- 5.6 The Sustainability Appraisal forecast limited positive or negative impact on the environment from this strategy, compared with continued trends, with the exception of benefits to traffic and climate change arising from greater urban concentration and continued provision of economic development. Social and economic benefits can be expected, including affordable housing, improved health and greater access to employment.

## **Economic growth strategy alternative**

- 5.7 Economic development would be the main priority for this strategy option, with social and environmental objectives set at a lower level of importance.
- High housing and employment growth, with sites chosen largely for economic viability.
  - Limited affordable housing provision.
  - Housing concentrated at Tiverton and Cullompton
  - Employment to be promoted at locations such as motorway junctions.
  - Employment provision in the rural areas strongly encouraged.
  - Efforts to attract major tourist attractions.
  - Retail development promoted in the three Area Centres.
  - No limitations on car use.

5.8 This strategy is in many ways the converse of the environmental protection strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal found that its costs and benefits to sustainability are therefore largely a mirror image. It would involve the greatest use of Greenfield land for development for both housing and employment, with inevitable landscape impacts arising. Notably, the location of development, with its emphasis on car – based access, will lead to greater travel overall than the other strategies, with much worse impact on climate change.

### **Balanced growth strategy alternative**

5.9 The Balanced Growth strategy option would seek to minimise the conflict between social, environmental and economic objectives, and promote the balanced achievement of sustainable development. It was an evolution of the current strategy and policies set out in the Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration.

- Development of new housing concentrated on the Area Centres, particularly Tiverton.
- Housing density generally higher than in the past but based on design – led solutions.
- Smaller dwellings provided, with maximum affordable housing provision.
- Rural housing generally limited to local need.
- Employment close to housing, encouraging town centre provision and homeworking.
- Small scale employment and tourist provision encouraged throughout the rural areas.
- Promotion of a significant retail provision in Crediton.
- Some increased control over design, particularly in historic areas, with targeted environmental enhancements continuing.
- Renewable energy schemes encouraged, together with low energy development.
- Car restraint, and provision of alternatives to the car, to concentrate on the Area Centres.

5.10 This strategy is the most sustainable of the strategies proposed, being positive in the majority of the factors, and negative in none. It would provide for both housing and economic development in locations which minimise traffic generation, allowing for small rural economic diversification. For these reasons, it formed the initial basis for the Core Strategy policies.

## 6.0 VISION AND SPATIAL STRATEGY

6.1 Taking Account of all these considerations, a vision and spatial strategy have been produced, which are set out in full below.

### VISION

Mid Devon will be a prosperous and sustainable rural district, where individuals, families and communities can flourish as a result of access to good quality local employment, housing and services and a clean, green, safe environment. Local communities and private, public and voluntary organisations will work in partnership to meet social and economic needs in ways that enhance the environment and reduce the area’s carbon footprint. High quality development in the right places will bring regeneration, social and economic benefits and enhance towns, villages and countryside while promoting sustainable use of energy and other resources and tackling the causes and effects of climate change. The Council will use planning and related powers to:

<p><b>Promote community well-being:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diverse, inclusive communities with a vibrant mix of accessible uses and local services</li> <li>Sufficient decent homes which people can afford</li> <li>Safe, healthy and crime free neighbourhoods</li> <li>Active, involved, well educated citizens</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support sustainable economic success</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good range of jobs in urban and rural areas</li> <li>Profitable and expanding local businesses</li> <li>Attractive, lively and successful town centres</li> <li>Tourist expenditure which benefits the whole district</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conserve and enhance the area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High quality design in new developments</li> <li>Clean air and water</li> <li>Wildlife, heritage and history is valued and protected</li> <li>Attractive countryside providing for biodiversity and employment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respect environmental limits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social and environmental benefits of development are optimised</li> <li>Developments use land, energy and resources efficiently</li> <li>Waste is minimised and recycling rates are high</li> <li>Public transport, walking and cycling are encouraged</li> <li>Floodplains remain undeveloped</li> </ul>

## SPATIAL STRATEGY

### Overall Strategy

In order to move towards achieving the vision, development will be managed to

- increase the self – sufficiency of the district as a whole and the settlements within it;
- increase growth in economic activity while reducing the provision of new housing;
- guide development to the most sustainable locations, improving the balance of housing, employment, facilities and other uses within towns, villages, neighbourhoods and rural areas;
- reduce the need to travel by car, increasing the potential of public transport, cycling and walking;
- reduce carbon emissions in support of regional and national targets; and
- promote social inclusion and reduce inequalities by enhancing access for all to employment, services and housing.

### Market Towns

The market towns of Tiverton, Cullompton, Crediton and Bampton will be the main focuses of new development, in scale with their individual infrastructures, economies, characters and constraints. Development will be targeted to

- provide a sustainable mix of homes, businesses, shops, leisure, health, education and many other uses, creating a balance that increases self-sufficiency, resolves existing problems where this is feasible and helps to meet rural needs;
- protect and enhance their environmental assets including their character, biodiversity, heritage, setting and air quality;
- develop underused and brownfield sites within the towns in preference to greenfield land or public open spaces; and
- enhance town centres as accessible, vital and viable locations for a vibrant mix of uses, and as public transport hubs.

A network of villages with sufficient employment, services and public transport provision will be locations for limited development, targeted to:

### **Villages**

- provide for local need, with affordable housing, shops, local services, community facilities and low impact businesses;
  - avoid significantly increased travel by car; and
  - protect and enhance their environmental assets, including their character, biodiversity, heritage and setting.
- 

Countryside areas outside market towns and villages, including hamlets and other small settlements, will be subject to strict control over development. The emphasis will be on

### **Countryside**

- meeting agricultural needs;
- promoting environmental enhancement including landscape and biodiversity; and
- encouraging appropriate economic diversification.

6.2 The more detailed application of this vision and strategy is set out in the core strategic policies COR1 – COR18 which follow.

## **7.0 CORE POLICIES**

### **Sustainable Communities**

**COR 1**

Growth will be managed so that development meets sustainability objectives, brings positive benefits, supports the diverse needs of communities and provides vibrant, safe, healthy and inclusive places where existing and future residents want to live and work through:

- a) meeting housing needs of all sectors of the community, including the provision of affordable housing,
- b) providing access to education, training and jobs and supporting the creation of new enterprises to bring economic prosperity and self-sufficiency for the district and its settlements,
- c) enhancing the self-sufficiency and vitality of communities, providing neighbourhoods and settlements with a vibrant mix of flexible and compatible uses, services and community facilities,
- d) compact development forms which make the most efficient use of land appropriate to the local context, delivering net residential densities of 50 – 75 dwellings per hectare in town centre locations, 35 – 55 elsewhere in the towns and 30 – 40 in villages.
- e) providing accessible forms of development that reduce the need to travel by car and are integrated with public transport and other sustainable modes of travel, allow for ease of movement and provide safe environments,
- f) supporting the social, economic and environmental regeneration of disadvantaged areas and communities,
- g) managing flood risk and reducing the potential effects of climate change on future communities,
- h) reducing opportunities for crime and disorder through innovative design and the clear distinction of public and private space, and
- i) the provision and protection of accessible green infrastructure networks; and
- j) supporting improvements to local air quality levels.

- 7.1 It is a legal requirement that Local Development Frameworks contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Council will work in partnership to secure that all new development reinforces and delivers sustainable communities in line with guiding principles set out in COR1, which correspond to the vision and strategy for the district and reflect the aspirations of the Community Plan. The principles aim to deliver compact, varied and vibrant places by concentrating activities and facilities to minimise the need to travel and provide self-sufficient communities that meet needs locally. Accessible Green Infrastructure Networks include public open spaces, open access land, public rights of way, cycleways and other green linkages. Sustainable modes of transport include walking and cycling.
- 7.2 Particular policies of the saved Local Plan support and elaborate upon these general guidelines, and these will be further strengthened when the Development Control policies are reviewed. The Council will monitor development to ensure that the Local Development Framework delivers sustainable growth for the district.
- 7.3 The residential density is expressed as a range, with the lower value acting as a minimum. The upper range is not a maximum density. The appropriate form of development will be conditioned by the commitment to high quality design and the characteristics of the area, including the mix of uses and service provision, level of accessibility to public transport, strategic housing requirements, resource efficiency and minimisation of environmental impacts

## Local Distinctiveness

## COR 2

**Development will sustain the distinctive quality, character and diversity of Mid Devon's environmental assets through:**

- a) high quality sustainable design which reinforces the character and legibility of Mid Devon's built environment and creates attractive places,**
- b) the efficient use and conservation of natural resources of land, water and energy,**
- c) the preservation and enhancement of the distinctive qualities of Mid Devon's natural landscape, supporting opportunities identified within landscape character areas. Within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or adjoining the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks, the primary objective will be to protect the special environmental qualities of that landscape and its setting,**

- d) the protection and enhancement of designated sites of national and local biodiversity and geodiversity importance. Development will support opportunities for protecting and enhancing species populations and the restoration, re-creation, enhancement and linking of habitats to contribute toward the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan targets, and**
- e) the preservation and enhancement of Mid Devon’s cultural and historic environment, and the protection of sites, buildings, areas and features of recognised national and local importance.**

7.4 The environmental qualities of the district are highly valued by the community and the preservation and enhancement of Mid Devon’s distinctive environmental assets is important to the achievement of sustainable development. Changes in land use, agricultural practices and new development are all threats to the quality of Mid Devon’s environment unless properly managed. New development will be located, designed and constructed in ways that reinforce local distinctiveness and provide positive impact on the environment and natural resources, with mitigation and compensation measures where harm can not be avoided. Specific targets are set out in the Devon Biodiversity Action Plan and the Council will work in partnership to achieve these targets, maintaining the existing level as a minimum. The Council will monitor the delivery of such targets and the achievements of the objectives set out above more generally.

7.5 The policy identifies the broad range of issues that will need to be taken into consideration to meet these objectives. Consideration will also be given to the need for natural systems, landscapes, species and habitats to adjust to climate change. The Council will work in partnership to identify opportunities to manage and enhance specific sites and integrate with other local strategies for the environment. The South West Nature Map indicates areas of potential for habitat restoration and creation, and these are indicated on the Core Strategy’s Key Diagram.

7.6 Particular policies of the saved Local Plan elaborate on these general guidelines, and these will be strengthened when the Development Control Policies are reviewed and addressed in future Allocations Policies where appropriate. The policy does not make specific reference to sites and species protected under separate legislation however it will seek to reinforce their protection through the planning process.

**The diverse housing needs of the community will be met through the provision of approximately 6800 dwellings between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2026, including a target of 30% (2000) affordable dwellings and an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes and types. In line with strategic requirements for a long term reduction in the annual rate of new housing development, these will be phased as follows:**

- a) 390 dwellings, including 100 affordable dwellings, per year between 2006 – 2016;**
- b) 290 dwellings, including 100 affordable dwellings, per year between 2016 – 2026.**

7.7 Delivering sufficient, decent and affordable homes for all is a key issue for the district, set out in the Community Plan and Corporate Strategy. The proposed two phases will meet these housing needs whilst being in general conformity with the current and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, as follows:

- **The initial 10 years** of the Core Strategy conform with the current Regional Spatial Strategy requirement of 390 dwellings per annum in the period to 2016.
- **The following 10 years** will be in line with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy which contains a target of 290 dwellings per annum between 2016-2026.
- **The emerging RSS** contains an overall average of 320 dwellings per year over the 20 years from 2006 – 2026, which compares well with the Core Strategy (annual average of 340 dwellings over the same period).

7.8 The emerging RSS was submitted in April 2006 and should be adopted by the Secretary of State in early 2008. Accordingly, it is possible that the housing supply proposed in the RSS will increase from that submitted, after this Core Strategy has been adopted. If this occurs it will be necessary to consider the distribution of additional development over and above that proposed in this Core Strategy. It would be possible to carry out an immediate Core Strategy review, but this would take time and resources that would be better spent on preparing specific allocations for development. The Core Strategy has a clear spatial strategy, set out in COR12 and reflected in policies COR13 – COR17. Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton are the foci of development. Providing for over 80% of the housing allocations, with Bampton playing a much more limited role and the remaining rural areas providing for local needs only. This strategy is robust and would continue to be appropriate with higher rates of development. Accordingly, should the housing requirements

of the RSS increase above those contained within COR12, the additional housing development will be distributed in the same proportions between the main towns of Tiverton (50%), Cullompton (35%) and Crediton (15%).

- 7.9 In such circumstances there will be a requirement to increase associated provision accordingly. For example, 30% of any additional housing provision should be in the form of affordable housing and there will be a need to increase employment development by about 45 sqm floorspace per dwelling.
- 7.10 However, should very much larger changes be proposed by the RSS, then a pro-rata distribution of development may not be appropriate or feasible, having regard to the level of constraints around the towns. In those circumstances the Council would need to look to an early review of the Core Strategy.
- 7.11 In common with many rural districts, the provision of social rented accommodation is limited – 14.1% of households are in dwellings rented from Mid Devon District Council or a Housing Association, compared with 19.2% in England as a whole in 2005. One of the Government’s key objectives for planning is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford. The policy aims to deliver a target of 30% affordable housing for the plan period, in line with the emerging RSS policy on the subject. The Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration, adopted in July 2006, contains policies relating to the provision of affordable housing. Policy H6 sets a target of 40% on sites of 15 dwellings or more in Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton and of sites of 6 dwellings or more on other sites. Policy H7 allows “rural exceptions” sites subject to appropriate criteria. These policies will be reviewed in the light of the need to meet the Core Strategy targets set out above and the results of the Housing Market Assessment for the Exeter Sub-Region. It is proposed to review them in the Area DPDs in parallel with the allocation of housing sites. Until that time they will be the basis for decisions on planning applications.
- 7.12 The Council will monitor the provision of affordable and market housing through the annual monitoring report and in the event that insufficient completions or commitments the Council will seek to bring allocated sites forward.

**The employment needs of the community will be met through**

- a) the development of approximately 300,000 square metres of employment (B1 – B8) floorspace;**
- b) the development of approximately 10,000 square metres of retail (A1) sales floorspace (2006 – 2016);**
- c) measures to diversify the agricultural and rural economy in ways which protect countryside character**
- d) other forms of sustainable employment generating uses.**

- 7.13 Employment floorspace is quoted as “Gross Internal Floorspace” and means the area of floor inside the walls. It covers use classes B1 (business), B2 (general industry) and B8 (storage and distribution). Retail floorspace is quoted as “Net Floorspace” and means the area of a store used for sales. It covers uses class A1. Within retail floorspace, “convenience” means food sales, while “comparison” means anything else.
- 7.14 The importance of an adequate supply of employment sites in addressing local economic need is clear. There appears to be significant unmet demand for small and medium size premises in the market towns.
- 7.15 The aim of the employment provision and its distribution is to enhance the economic self – sufficiency of the district as a whole, and of the towns, villages and areas of countryside within it, in accordance with the vision and strategy. A key element involved in achieving this goal is to provide a sustainable economy, which meets the needs of local communities to reduce the need for residents to travel elsewhere for employment, and therefore the level of commuting traffic generated. In 2001 32% of the working population commuted to workplaces outside Mid Devon, half of which worked in Exeter. The strategy and policies aim to help reduce this proportion.
- 7.16 An integrated approach to employment provision will be taken, having regard to other local plans and strategies, and the Council will work in partnership to deliver and support economic development and regeneration initiatives. There are currently 32,000 jobs in Mid Devon (2003 data from ONS) but an economically active population of 41,600. Allowing for population growth, the aim of self sufficiency implies the need for an additional 17,300 jobs. At 17 square metres of employment floorspace per job (calculated from 2004 ODPM floorspace figures) this means that an additional 295,000 square metres is required by 2026, at 14,700 sqm per year. Policy COR11 distributes this floorspace according to the function and role of each settlement, having regard to the location of proposed housing.

- 7.17 The Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016, which forms part of the current Regional Spatial Strategy, sets a target of 60ha employment land over the 15 year period. The proposed annual allocation of 14,700sqm of employment floorspace implies an equivalent 4 hectares per year. The emerging RSS does not specify levels of employment growth per district but makes clear that local provision should be made to support economic self-sufficiency to compliment the role and function of settlements and respond to local economic circumstances. This accords with the strategy for provision in Mid Devon.
- 7.18 The need for new retail development is based on advice in the retail study, which identifies the levels of new retail floorspace needed for each of the market towns and more generally across the rural areas. The figure of approximately 10,000 square metres net is the total provision required in Mid Devon from 2006 – 2016 and Core Policy COR12 sets out the proposed distribution of retail floorspace in accordance with the findings of the study. Forecasting retail need beyond 2016 is too uncertain to provide the basis for policy guidance at this time. In accordance with the guidance at paragraph 2.32 of PPS6 the assessment of retail need will be updated regularly. The proposed level of development will help to enhance the vitality and viability of each of the market towns.
- 7.19 Mid Devon is a rural district and the Council will promote appropriate agricultural diversification schemes to help support new businesses as traditional agricultural and forestry sectors decline, threatening rural employment levels. The Council will also support other appropriate forms of employment generation, for example tourism, leisure and public services, in sustainable locations to support the economic self sufficiency of the district.
- 7.20 Within the framework of the employment policies of this plan, the principle of the establishment of a Food Park is supported, supporting the agricultural sector of the rural economy, comprising predominantly a mix of B2 and B8 uses and a minority of B1 use associated with the food industry to accommodate the processing, packaging, manufacturing, freezing, storage and distribution of food and drink and office accommodation for research and development and market research.

**Measures will be sought which minimise the impact of development on climate change, and contribute towards national and regional targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including:**

- a) the development of renewable energy capacity will be supported in locations with an acceptable local impact, including visual, on nearby residents and wildlife.**
- b) energy efficiency improvement measures will be supported with an acceptable impact on historic interest.**
- c) it is intended that all new development will be carbon neutral in development and use as soon as a detailed approach can be developed through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on this subject. This is likely to be through appropriate choice of materials, energy efficiency measures, transport management, renewable energy generation and carbon fixing. Until such time as the SPD is adopted all development should take positive measures to reduce carbon emissions to a realistic minimum.**

- 7.21 Tackling climate change is emerging as the key sustainability issue and of increasing urgency. The Government Energy White Paper sets a national target for a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions (from 1990 levels) by 2050, with 30% reduction by 2030. This target is repeated at the regional level. Mid Devon, as a rural district, has a high dependence on the car, contributing to carbon dioxide emissions and climate change.
- 7.22 Addressing this issue requires changes to the location and form of development, as well as new approaches to the use and generation of energy. The emission of carbon (mainly in the form of carbon dioxide) into the atmosphere is the key driver of climate change. Experimental data from the Department of Trade and Industry (2006) reveals high carbon dioxide emissions for Mid Devon based on 2003 data; 11.2 tonnes per person compared to the national figure of 8.6 tonnes. Much of this relates to vehicle use, reflecting the rural nature of the area. Each person uses an average of 1.4 tonnes of vehicle fuel each year, which is considerably above the national average. Given this impact, tackling climate change is an important part of a sustainable strategy. Locational policies set out earlier are designed to reduce the need to travel, and these will be complemented by promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency, travel management and measures to fix carbon in mitigation.

7.23 The Government has set a national target to generate 10% of UK electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010, with the aspiration of doubling that figure to 20% by 2020. The South West region set a challenging target of achieving 11-15 per cent renewable energy generation by 2010. More detailed policy on renewable energy schemes and other relevant issues is contained in the saved Local Plan policies and will be reviewed and updated in the Development Control document.

## Town Centres

**COR 6**

**The vitality and viability of the town centres of Bampton, Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton will be protected and enhanced by positive management so the economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other as follows:**

- a) **positive measures of enhancement and regeneration;**
- b) **promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability;**
- c) **only permitting new retail, leisure, office and other key town centre uses outside town centres where there is a need and they meet the sequential test set out in national policy;**
- d) **traffic management measures to improve their environment and accessibility.**

7.24 The policy seeks to secure the sustainability of Mid Devon's market towns, focusing development within town centres. The Council will work in partnership to deliver these objectives and will integrate other local plans and strategies, such as the Market Towns Initiatives. Investment will be directed to enhance and regenerate areas of environmental, social and economic deprivation. Town centre health checks will be undertaken to monitor the condition of each of the market towns in respect of the objectives set out above.

## Previously Developed Land

**COR 7**

**Development will be guided towards the most sustainable locations available, which maximise social and economic benefits, minimise the loss of greenfield sites to built development, reduce the need to travel and make the best use of land and other resources. A sequential approach to development will seek the early development of previously developed or underused land in settlements before the development of greenfield land, where this would not prevent sufficient development of business, housing (particularly affordable housing) and other uses necessary to achieve the vision and strategy. 30% or more of new dwellings should be on previously developed land.**

- 7.25 One of the key objectives of national planning policy is to promote the reuse of previously developed land. Policy COR2 sets out the general approach to this which will be followed in the preparation of allocations DPDs and in considering planning applications where appropriate.
- 7.26 In some cases the strict application of this approach is likely to result in very limited levels of development. An example is the provision of employment land, where margins for landowners are much lower than for housing. The promotion of additional employment in Mid Devon is a key aspect of the overall strategic vision, in order to increase the self sufficiency of the district (and settlements within it). For such circumstances, a much less restrictive approach to the sequential approach is likely to be necessary. A target of 30% of dwellings on previously developed land has been set, based on the rural nature of the District.

## Infrastructure Provision

## COR 8

**The location, scale and form of development will be guided by the need for community facilities and any existing shortages. The Council will work with providers and developers to ensure that new development is served by necessary infrastructure in a predictable, timely and effective fashion. It will set out key infrastructure and facility requirements for new development, taking account of existing provision and cumulative impact. Developers will be expected to contribute to, or bear the full cost of, new or improved infrastructure and facilities where it is appropriate for them to do so.**

- 7.27 Ensuring that new development is served by appropriate infrastructure is an important role of the planning system. This is achieved by the provision of infrastructure in step with development and by guiding development to places where there is existing capacity. There is also the possibility that new development can be guided to locations where its infrastructure will help to achieve wider planning objectives such as air quality improvements.

## Access

## COR 9

**Development and transport planning will be co-ordinated to improve accessibility for the whole community, reduce the need to travel by car and increase public transport use, cycling and walking as follows:**

- a) **Meeting the social and economic needs of the community and future generations in locations most accessible to those who need to use them, taking account of interactions**

**between uses and the potential for improving non-car accessibility;**

- b) Managing travel demand, reducing air pollution and enhancing road safety through the management of car parking and traffic, investment in transport facilities and services and the control of development;**
- c) Assessing the transport impact of significant developments, seeking Transport Plans and the provision of necessary infrastructure where necessary;**
- d) Creating attractive environments which are accessible to all as far as possible;**

7.28 An integrated approach to transport and land use planning will be taken in order to achieve the aspirations of sustainable development as set out in the vision and strategy, having regard to the strategies set out in the Local Transport Plan. The primary objective will be to reduce the need to travel by car by providing new development in accessible locations, integrated with public transport networks. Proposals should maximise the potential for walking and cycling, integrating with existing networks to provide safe, healthy and sustainable communities as well as increasing the accessibility of the development.

7.29 New development can have an impact on road safety, congestion and amenity, with air quality being a key issue in both Crediton and Cullompton. Significant developments (for instance a development of over 14 dwellings, or employing over 40 people) will require a transport assessment to demonstrate the likely effects through an evaluation of the number, type and destination of trips likely to be generated or attracted to the development. This will reveal the sustainability of the development and will indicate whether contributions toward necessary infrastructure improvements, on or off site, will be necessary, such as contributions toward bus services or local highway infrastructure.

7.30 As a rural district, with high dependency on car travel, the Council will work in partnership to support public transport initiatives for communities in rural areas to achieve more sustainable travel patterns.

## Strategic Transport Networks

**COR 10**

The function of the following strategic transport networks will be protected;

- a) The Great Western, Tarka Line and Dartmoor Railways;
- b) National Cycle Route 3;
- c) The Strategic Road Network consisting of the M5, A30, A361, A377 (south of Crediton) and A38;
- d) Long distance recreational footpaths – Exe Valley Way, Two Moors Way, Devonshire Heartland Way, Tarka Trail and Little Dart Ridge and Valley Walk.

7.31 Certain transport networks provide a strategic resource, and require protection of their function. The policy defines these.

## Flooding

**COR 11**

The impact of flooding, taking account of the likely impact of climate change, will be managed in order to:

- a) reduce the risk of flooding to life and property where possible;
- b) guide development to sustainable locations with the lowest flood risk by applying a sequential test, and locate appropriate development in areas of higher flood risk only where the benefits outweigh the risk of flooding;
- c) ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding of properties elsewhere.

7.32 Flooding is a key issue for Mid Devon with its riverside settlements that are subject to periodic flooding, and likely to increase with the impact of climate change. Whilst the construction of flood defence schemes, for example at Tiverton, have prevented widespread flooding, there is increasing risk that the schemes' design capacities will be exceeded, with climate change. Careful consideration must be given to future development behind such schemes.

7.33 Flooding is a natural process and cannot be wholly prevented, however its impacts can be avoided and reduced through good planning and management to help deliver sustainable communities. New development should be located, constructed and designed in a manner that takes account of its sensitivity to flooding, providing mitigation measures as appropriate. The government sets out a sequential approach to determining the suitability of land for development in flood risk which will be applied at all levels of the planning process. Departures from the sequential approach will only be justified in exceptional circumstances, for example where

it is necessary to meet the wider aims of sustainable development. Consideration will need to be given in each instance to the likely impact of climate change on flood risk.

- 7.34 Policies of the saved Local Plan elaborate on this strategy, and these will be reviewed in the Development Control Policies DPD.

## Development Focus

**COR 12**

**Development will be concentrated at Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton, with a limited role for Bampton, to a scale and mix appropriate to their individual employment opportunities, services, transport choices, infrastructure, strategic role and environmental capacity. Other settlements will have only very limited development that is required to meet local needs and promote rural regeneration. Development rates will be approximately as follows:**

Location	Average Annual Dwellings (of which affordable) 2006 to 2026	Average Annual Sqm Employment 2006 to 2026	Total Sqm Retail Sales 2006 to 2016
Tiverton	145 (43)	6000	3900
Cullompton	95 (28)	4000	2650
Crediton	35 (10)	2000	3450
Bampton	10 (3)	400	
Elsewhere	55 (16)	2300	
<b>MID DEVON</b>	<b>340 (100)</b>	<b>14700</b>	<b>10,000</b>

- 7.35 The distribution proposed seeks to significantly reduce housing development rates in the rural areas, where historic growth rates have been high. The market towns are to be the main focus for development, having a sufficient level of local services and retail which can be sustained, employment provision with opportunities for enhancement, being supported by public transport and accessible to their communities. Growth is distributed according to the social and economic potential and function of each market town to enable them to become more self sufficient, in line with the vision and strategy, and meet with the aims of sustainable development. This approach reflects guidance in the adopted Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

- 7.36 Tiverton is the largest settlement, with the greatest range of services, the largest economy and the greatest potential for additional development. It is therefore appropriate for the greatest focus of development. The Core Strategy promotes balanced housing and economic growth to enhance access to housing, employment and services.
- 7.37 Cullompton is the second largest settlement in the district but is close to and has less economic influence than nearby Tiverton. It has less retail and economic provision, with a limited current catchment area for both. However, economic growth in Cullompton is starting to gather momentum, with additional retail floorspace now committed, and local plan employment allocations coming forward. It has good public transport links to Exeter in particular. The Core Strategy aims to build on these factors, proposing additional housing and employment development to contribute to its regeneration, promote town centre enhancement and deal with air quality concerns.
- 7.38 Crediton is slightly smaller than Cullompton, providing employment for adjoining rural areas despite its proximity to Exeter. Nevertheless, many of the town's residents work and/or shop in nearby Exeter, and potential to enhance local self containment is uncertain, due to physical constraints and air quality issues which are difficult to resolve. A relatively limited provision for housing is proposed, but boosts to economic development and retail growth are targeted
- 7.39 Whilst Bampton is a very small market town, it nevertheless has a good level of local services, employment and retail provision for its size and serves a rural hinterland extending beyond the district boundary. Limited development is proposed, aimed at meeting the needs of this rural area.
- 7.40 There are no other settlements with the facilities and economic base which merit consideration as a location for significant housing or employment. The rural areas, including the villages, are not suitable locations for significant development and allocations are to be limited to developments which support these rural communities such as affordable housing and small scale businesses. Previous experience within the District has shown that allocating market housing in the villages has not produced additional or supported existing services or facilities and therefore does not help to deliver sustainable communities. Accordingly, a total of just 15% of the districts development is expected within this rural remainder, reflecting some continued infilling within settlement limits, affordable housing development and small scale employment developments including conversion proposals. Note that the figure for rural housing overall is not a target.

- 7.41 The distribution of employment provision takes account of the role and function of each settlement and the proposed housing allocations. New employment floorspace is primarily focused in the market towns, close to the local populations and sustainable transport networks to allow for easy access and to support the principle of self-containment. There will be more limited growth of employment across the rural areas of the district, in accordance with the strategy set out in COR16 and COR17, to support appropriate rural diversification and to meet local need.
- 7.42 The need for new retail development is based on advice in the retail study, which showed capacity for the following distribution of floorspace (net square metres). Note that the provision for Crediton is set at a higher level than this, in order to ensure that existing expenditure can be “clawed back” from Exeter (a retail growth strategy). In the case of Cullompton, existing commitments are sufficient to meet these requirements.

Retail Floorspace	Current Provision		2006-2016 total need*		Average Annual need	
	Non-food (Comparison)	Food (Convenience)	Non-food	Food	Non-food	Food
Tiverton	14300	6250	3850	0	385	0
Cullompton	2500	2000	700**	1950**	70**	195**
Crediton	3300	2550	1350	1250	135	125
Rural	1000	3400	0	60	0	6
Mid Devon	21100	14250	5750	2100	575	210

\* Different end date to Core Strategy

\*\* Before completion of current retail commitments (expected after April 2006).

- 7.43 The Area DPDs will be expected to allocate sufficient sites within the four market towns of Tiverton, Cullompton, Crediton and Bampton to provide for these levels of development. The figures are not precise, however, and an Area DPD will be considered to be in conformity with the Core Strategy if it is within plus or minus 5% to 10% of these figures (both by settlement and overall). However, preparation of the area DPDs may indicate that even this flexibility provides for insufficient development to meet the primary Core Strategy objectives for a particular settlement. In such situations, very exceptionally, a case might be made through the relevant Area DPD for additional development proposals which better meet the objectives without undermining the overall distribution strategy. In considering such flexibility, account should be taken of the need to balance housing, employment and other related uses.

- 7.44 The Council has prepared a strategic constraints analysis of each of these towns. These demonstrate that the development levels proposed are feasible. A more detailed analysis of sites and review of settlement limits will be undertaken through the Allocations Development Plan Documents which will guide development to available, viable and sustainable locations.

## **Tiverton**

## **COR 13**

**Tiverton will continue to develop in a balanced way as a medium sized market town serving a rural hinterland in the eastern part of Mid Devon. The strategy will maintain its status as the largest urban area in Mid Devon and increase the self-sufficiency of the town and its area by improving access to housing, employment and services for its population and that of the surrounding rural areas. Proposals will provide for the following average annual development rates:**

- a 102 market dwellings**
- b 43 affordable dwellings**
- c 6000 square metres employment gross floorspace**

**The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**

- d Manage the town centre so that economic success and heritage reinforce each other, promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which contribute to vitality and viability, including an additional 3,900 square metres of comparison net retail floorspace by 2016 in accordance with the sequential and other PPS6 retail policy considerations.**
- e Enhance walking and cycling opportunities and bus services around the town and particularly to access the town centre and enhance public transport access to Tiverton Parkway Station, Exeter and Taunton.**
- f Retain the green setting provided by the steep open hillsides, particularly to the west and south of the town and the historic parkland north of the A361.**
- g Protect the importance of Tidcombe Fen, other areas of biodiversity value and green infrastructure, supporting opportunities for enhancement of river corridors.**
- h Reduce the risk of flooding.**

- 7.45 Tiverton is the largest settlement in Mid Devon, with the largest economic concentration and level of social and commercial services. It is the focus of a reasonable level of public transport provision. Its characteristics lead to it being proposed as the main location for new housing and employment development within the district.
- 7.46 The town has a high percentage of self-containment with 68% of its residents working within the town (based on 2001 Census data), although this fell from 77% in 1991. Travel to work patterns reveal a discernable catchment for the town, extending to the adjoining wards of Canonsleigh, Halberton, Clare and Shuttern and Way (each with over 10% working in Tiverton). Accordingly, a high proportion of the housing and economic development is targeted at this sustainable location. The housing provision implies development rates above those achieved over the previous 20 years (145 per year up from 78). A much higher proportion of these will be affordable. Provision for new employment floorspace will need to support expansion of the local economy and reverse the more recent decline in self-sufficiency of the settlement.
- 7.47 Retail forecasts up to 2016 indicate little quantitative need for additional food retail floorspace, after allowing for the 3700 square metre net Tesco store at Blundells Road, which opened in October 2005. However, this does not prevent the development of additional food sales floorspace within the town centre, where a need does not have to be proved. In contrast, the study indicates a quantitative need for additional comparison goods floorspace. The findings of the study are reflected in the policy.
- 7.48 It is likely that about 70% of new housing will take place on greenfield sites. Likewise employment land is likely to be provided almost exclusively on such land, and particularly on level ground. Given the scale of development proposed and the likely need for significant infrastructure improvements to serve it, development is likely to be in the form of a very large site or sites and in the form of a comprehensive, mixed development, with large numbers of houses helping to achieve the necessary viability threshold. B1 and B2 development are likely to be the main types of employment. Most of the development around Tiverton is likely to take place to the east of the town, where there are large areas of relatively unconstrained land, and given the significant constraints to development in the other directions.
- 7.49 The key role of the town centre in the sustainable development of the town is recognised in the policy. The policy seeks to promote additional uses in the town centre in ways which enhance both its heritage value and economic success.

7.50 The policy sets out a series of other key priorities for the development of Tiverton, including protecting its attractive setting, promoting better public transport links and managing flood risk. The Exe Area Development Plan Document will include appropriate proposals to implement these priorities. This will also be able to take account of current work on the Exe Valley Market and Coastal Towns Initiative.

## **Cullompton**

## **COR 14**

**Cullompton will continue to develop as a small, growing market town with an expanding rural hinterland in the Culm Valley and adjacent areas. The strategy will aim to increase the self – sufficiency of the town and its area by improving access to housing, employment and services for its population and nearby rural areas. Proposals will provide for the following average annual development rates:**

- a 67 market dwellings**
- b 28 affordable dwellings**
- c 4000 square metres employment gross floorspace.**

**The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**

- d Promote the removal of through traffic from the town centre and improve local air quality by enhancing walking and cycling opportunities around the town, completing a relief road system and implementing air quality action plan initiatives.**
- e Ensure developments within, adjoining or affecting the Air Quality Management Area provide measures to meet air quality objectives, taking full account of cumulative development impacts and based on air quality assessments giving realistic “baseline” and “with development” scenarios.**
- f Make any necessary improvements to the motorway junction.**
- g Promote further public transport improvements within Cullompton and to other urban centres (particularly Tiverton and Exeter) and improve access to the rail network.**

- h Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability, including an additional 1,950 square metres of convenience and 700 square metres of comparison net retail floorspace by 2016 in accordance with the sequential and other PPS6 retail policy considerations.**
- i Reduce the risk of flooding.**
- j Enhance the tourism and visitor role of the town and area.**

7.51 Cullompton is the second largest settlement in Mid Devon. However, it has a smaller local economic base than this would imply. As a result, it has relatively low economic self – containment. However, committed employment and retail development, the former now commenced construction, will help to redress this imbalance. The Core Strategy supports this with additional economic development.

7.52 The Culm Valley Community Plan recognises a deficiency in local employment provision and aims to support a vibrant and thriving economy through various proactive projects. Allocated employment land has until recently been constrained by local highway infrastructure, but with these being resolved, additional employment land is now coming forward. This, and current retail commitments in the town indicate that there is strong potential to enhance the local economy and improve self-sufficiency, reducing levels of out-commuting for employment and leakage of retail expenditure. The committed retail site at Station Road (1613 sqm net convenience and 400 sqm net comparison) will not be completed before April 2006 and therefore will count against the figures shown. It will comfortably provide sufficient convenience capacity in the town up to 2016.

7.53 There are particular issues arising from the significant commuting and retail flows between Cullompton and Exeter; 19% of the working population are employed in the city. A key objective of the strategy is to further enhance the public transport links between the two settlements, both through improved bus links and the possibility of re-opening the mainline railway station in the long term. There are also concerns about the capacity of the Motorway junction, which will need to be addressed.

7.54 Cullompton’s air quality problems, arising primarily from traffic flows on Station Road and the High Street, present a strategic issue for the District. The Core Strategy identifies solutions to help resolve the problem such as the completion of a relief road system. This will require careful planning of development in Cullompton to ensure these strategic objectives are met. There is a need

to allocate sufficient development in Cullompton to support the necessary solutions. The Local Plan Inspector made longer term recommendations in this respect which the Core Strategy will allow to be addressed

- 7.55 It is anticipated that about 70% of the new housing will be on greenfield sites, together with the large bulk of the employment provision, most of which is already committed. In view of the importance of the objective of achieving a relief road it is essential that the critical threshold level of development to provide that road is achieved. Thus, a higher provision of housing (and in turn employment land, possibly in the form of a Business Park, to secure a balance of jobs and workers) might be needed to ensure that the desired aims are met for the town. In order to achieve the relief road (which is likely to be either to the north-west or to the east of the town), it is likely that development will be primarily in the form of a single, large mixed use urban extension, possibly to the north west of the town.

## Crediton

## COR 15

**Crediton will continue to develop as a small market town serving a rural hinterland in the western part of Mid Devon, complementing the strategic role played by Exeter. The strategy will aim to increase the self – sufficiency of the town and its area and reduce the need to travel to Exeter by widening and expanding employment opportunities, enhancing retail provision, and improving access to housing and services. Proposals will provide for the following average annual development rates:**

- a 25 market dwellings
- b 10 affordable dwellings
- c 2000 square metres employment gross floorspace

**The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**

- d **Promote a reduction of traffic on congested streets within Crediton and improvements to local air quality by enhancing walking and cycling opportunities around the town and implementing air quality action plan initiatives including the provision of a link road between the A377 and Lords Meadow Industrial Area.**

- e **Ensure developments within, adjoining or affecting the Air Quality Management Area provide measures to meet air quality objectives, taking full account of cumulative development impacts and based on air quality assessments giving realistic “baseline” and “with development” scenarios.**
- f **Promote improved public transport links to Exeter and Tiverton.**
- g **Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability including an additional 2,100 square metres of convenience and 1,350 square metres of comparison net retail floorspace by 2016 in accordance with the sequential and other PPS6 retail policy considerations.**
- h **Retain the setting provided by the open areas of hillside and Historic Parklands.**
- i **Consolidate secondary education provision.**

7.56 Crediton is a medium sized market town, in the west of the district. It has some local employment and service provision, sufficient for there to be a discernible employment catchment area, covering adjacent rural areas. Whilst about half of the resident workforce also work in the town, the proximity of Exeter exerts a considerable influence. As a result, there is considerable travel into Exeter, both for employment and shopping trips. For example, 26% of residents commuted to Exeter for employment in 2001. One physical implication of this is the air quality problem arising from traffic volumes along Exeter Road. The Devon Local Transport Plan 2006-2016 is considering the feasibility of a link road between the Lords Meadow industrial area and the A377, bypassing Exeter Road. In any case, the District Council will explore the potential for development to contribute towards this and other air quality improvement measures.

7.57 There is also scope to enhance the public transport links between Crediton and Exeter, including seeking an improved role for the railway link.

7.58 Crediton is subject to air quality problems within the town centre as well. An Air Quality Management Plan is being prepared, and some of its proposals are likely to be helped by appropriate planning intervention. Further details of this will be included in the Creedy/Taw Area Plan as they become clearer. The physical expansion of the town is fairly constrained and there are limited potential sites for economic development. Because of the economic pull of Exeter it is important to bring forward employment land to increase

self-containment. Constraints to employment growth mean that relatively lower levels of housing growth are proposed for the town in comparison to Cullompton. Accordingly some 10% of the housing and 14% of the employment growth for the district is directed to Crediton.

- 7.59 The retail study identified considerable need for additional floorspace, which is reflected in the retail allocation for Crediton (approximately 3,450 square metres net sales to 2016). Crediton is particularly underprovided for retail floorspace and the policy reflects the need identified in the retail study to increase the town's self sufficiency in meeting the shopping needs of its catchment. This will permit the provision of modern retail floorspace sufficient to reduce the relative attractiveness of shopping in Exeter. The result should be reduced "leakage" of expenditure to Exeter, with reduced travel arising and associated increases in retailing employment.
- 7.60 Given the considerable constraints to development around the town, most of the new housing (around 70%) and employment development are likely to take place on smaller sites adjacent to the edge of the town. Employment development is likely to be primarily aimed at meeting locally generated needs.
- 7.61 The Crediton area MCTI objectives are reflected in the policy. Other key priorities for the town are also included, such as protection of its setting, provision of affordable housing and the physical consolidation of the split site secondary school.

## **Bampton**

## **COR 16**

**Bampton will continue to develop as a small market town serving a rural hinterland extending beyond Mid Devon. Proposals of a limited scale will complement the strategic development role played by Tiverton. Bampton will provide a focal point for housing and employment development and local services and facilities to serve the nearby rural area, encouraging greater local self sufficiency, social provision and economic regeneration. Proposals will provide for the following average annual development rates:**

- a 7 market dwellings**
- b 3 affordable dwellings**
- c 400 square metres employment gross floorspace.**

**The Council will guide high quality development and other investment to:**

- d Enhance the viability, heritage and attractiveness of the town centre;**

- e **Enhance the tourism role of the town and area at the gateway to Exmoor.**
- f **Retain the green setting provided by the steep open hillsides and the undeveloped Bathern valley.**
- g **Reduce the risk of flooding.**
- h **Enhance public transport access to Tiverton.**

7.62 Bampton is a very small town, but nevertheless has a good level of local public facilities, shops and employment. The town also demonstrates good levels of economic self containment, with over half of its employed population working in Bampton (2001 Census). It is one of a number of small centres including Dulverton and Wiveliscombe which together have a role meeting the needs of a large and sparse rural area, including much of Exmoor National Park. The strategy seeks to reinforce this role whilst protecting its character and setting, having regard to its recently expanded Conservation Area. The level of development proposed is limited, reflecting its planning status, but also the needs of the surrounding rural areas where there will be very limited scope for development.

7.63 A low level of housing and employment development is allocated to Bampton (3% of the total allocation respectively), to reflect the fairly local role provided by this smaller market town. Some of the key planning objectives, including flood risk management and enhancing public transport access to Tiverton as the nearest major employment and shopping centre, are reflected in the policy.

## Villages

**COR 17**

**The following rural settlements with some local facilities and employment and access to public transport will be designated as villages: Bow, Bradninch, Burlescombe, Chawleigh, Cheriton Bishop, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Copplestone, Culmstock, Halberton, Hemyock, Kentisbeare, Lapford, Morchard Bishop, Newton St Cyres, Sampford Peverell, Sandford, Silverton, Thorverton, Uffculme, Willand and Yeoford.**

**Development will be limited to minor proposals within their defined settlement limits and to allocations for:**

- a **affordable housing meeting a local need;**
- b **small scale employment and tourism;**
- c **services and facilities serving the locality; and**
- d **other very limited development which enhances community vitality or meets a local social or economic need.**

- 7.64 There are a number of settlements which do not function as market towns, but which provide a limited level of provision, employment and access to public transport. These are locations which are suitable for a very limited level of development meeting local needs. They are not appropriate locations for any more than this.
- 7.65 The 21 settlements set out in the policy are considered to be appropriate, based on their physical characteristics, and the availability of a school, shop, pub and daily public transport service. Their settlement limits are not defined in this Core Strategy, being contained in the saved policies of the Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration. Their exact extent will be reviewed in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

## Countryside

## COR 18

**Development outside the settlements defined by COR13 - COR17 will be strictly controlled, enhancing the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside while promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development control policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to appropriate criteria, as follows:**

- a affordable housing to meet local needs, gypsy accommodation, replacement dwellings, housing essential to accommodate an agricultural or forestry worker and accommodation ancillary to a dwelling;**
  - b appropriately scaled retail, employment, farm diversification and tourism related development (including conversion of existing buildings);**
  - c appropriately scaled and designed extensions and other physical alterations to existing buildings;**
  - d agricultural buildings;**
  - e community facilities, such as educational facilities, buildings associated with public open space, development required to support or enhance biodiversity or geodiversity interests, transportation and infrastructure proposals, horse riding establishments and golf facilities; and**
  - f renewable energy and telecommunications.**
- 7.66 The overall strategy seeks to deliver sustainable development, focusing growth in the market towns to reinforce their social and economic role and enhance self sufficiency. This reflects Government guidance and the aspirations of the vision and spatial strategy. Development in the countryside, land outside of the

settlement limits for the Market Towns (COR13 –16) and villages (COR17), will be restrained to meet local need and help provide appropriate forms of agricultural and rural diversification to support the rural economy and sustain the environmental qualities of the countryside.

- 7.67 This policy is based on the policy to be contained in the adopted Local Plan. It is supplemented by the saved Local Plan policies at present, which will be reviewed by the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document by 2011.

## 8.0 MONITORING

- 8.1 Monitoring is important to understand the characteristics of the local area, assess the impact of policies and whether the strategy is delivering sustainable development so that the policies can be reviewed as appropriate. The Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report to review the progress of Local Development Documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme and assess the extent to which the policies in the documents are being achieved.
- 8.2 The indicators and targets set out below will help to inform this process and will provide the basis for the Report. These integrate with regional and national indicators and targets, applying more localised indicators and targets as appropriate. If national and regional indicators change then the monitoring framework will be amended to adjust to the new indicators. They are intended to measure the key strategic outcomes sought. The Core Strategy is not a site specific document or development control policy document and therefore the monitoring is at a more strategic level. Monitoring frameworks will be established for these future local development documents which will, if necessary, expand on the level of detail monitored in the Core Strategy.

Indicator	Relevant Policies	Target	Impementaion Agencies
Losses of employment land in (i) development / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area (total hectares of B1b, B1c, B2 and B8)	<b>COR1</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, businesses
Amount of employment land lost to residential development (total hectares of B1b, B1c, B2 and B8)	<b>COR1</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, businesses
Percentage of new dwellings completed at (net density): (i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare (ii) between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and (iii) above 50 dwellings per hectare	<b>COR1</b>	(i) 10% maximum (ii) and (iii) 90% minimum	Mid Devon District Council, development industry

Indicator	Relevant Policies	Target	Implementation Agencies
Indices of deprivation 2004 - numbers and proportions of wards within the most deprived 25% nationally	<b>COR1, COR3, COR4</b>	10% improvement in the national position of these wards by March 2010.	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, County Council, Local Education Authority, public transport providers, NHS, Devon Primary Care Trust and other health care providers
Expenditure on public open space from new development	<b>COR1, COR2 COR8</b>	£100,000 per year	Mid Devon District Council, town and parish councils, Sports England, private and voluntary organisations
Resident satisfaction with the standards of streets, parks and public conveniences		75% satisfaction rates	Mid Devon District Council, general users
Number of Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Management Plans approved (Local Indicator)	<b>COR 2</b>	Complete coverage of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans by 2009	Mid Devon District Council
Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including: (i) change in priority habitats and species (by type); and (ii) change in areas designated for their intrinsic environment value including sites of international, national, regional, sub-regional and or significance. (changes arising from development, management and planning agreements, in hectares and numbers of priority species type)	<b>COR 2</b>	Devon Biodiversity Action Plan Targets	Natural England, Mid Devon District Council landowners
Number of TPO's	<b>COR2</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council
Registered and Local parks and gardens	<b>COR2</b>	No loss	Devon Gardens Trust, English Heritage, Mid Devon District Council

Indicator	Relevant Policies	Target	Impementaion Agencies
Housing trajectory showing: (i) net additional dwellings over the previous five year period; (ii) net additional dwellings for the current year; (iii) projected net additional dwellings up to end of the LDF period; (iv) the annual net additional dwelling requirement and (v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performance	<b>COR3</b>	390 per year from 2006 - 2016 290 per year from 2016 - 2026	Development industry, Mid Devon District Council
Affordable housing completions	<b>COR3</b>	100 per year	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, registered social landlords, Communities England
Sizes and types of dwellings completed (Local Indicator)	<b>COR3</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Amount of floorspace developed for employment, by type (sqm Gross internal floorspace of B1, B2 and B8).	<b>COR4</b>	14,700 sqm per year	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development respectively (Types B1a, A1, A2 and D2 gross internal floorspace plus net sales floorspace for retail)	<b>COR4</b>	Office and leisure: no target Retail: 1000 sqm per year	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Number of VAT registered businesses	<b>COR4</b>	Growth each year	Mid Devon District Council, Enterprise South West, Business Link, private sector
Jobs density (number of jobs in Mid Devon divided by the resident working age population)	<b>COR4</b>	Increase jobs density to 1.0 by 2026	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, business sector

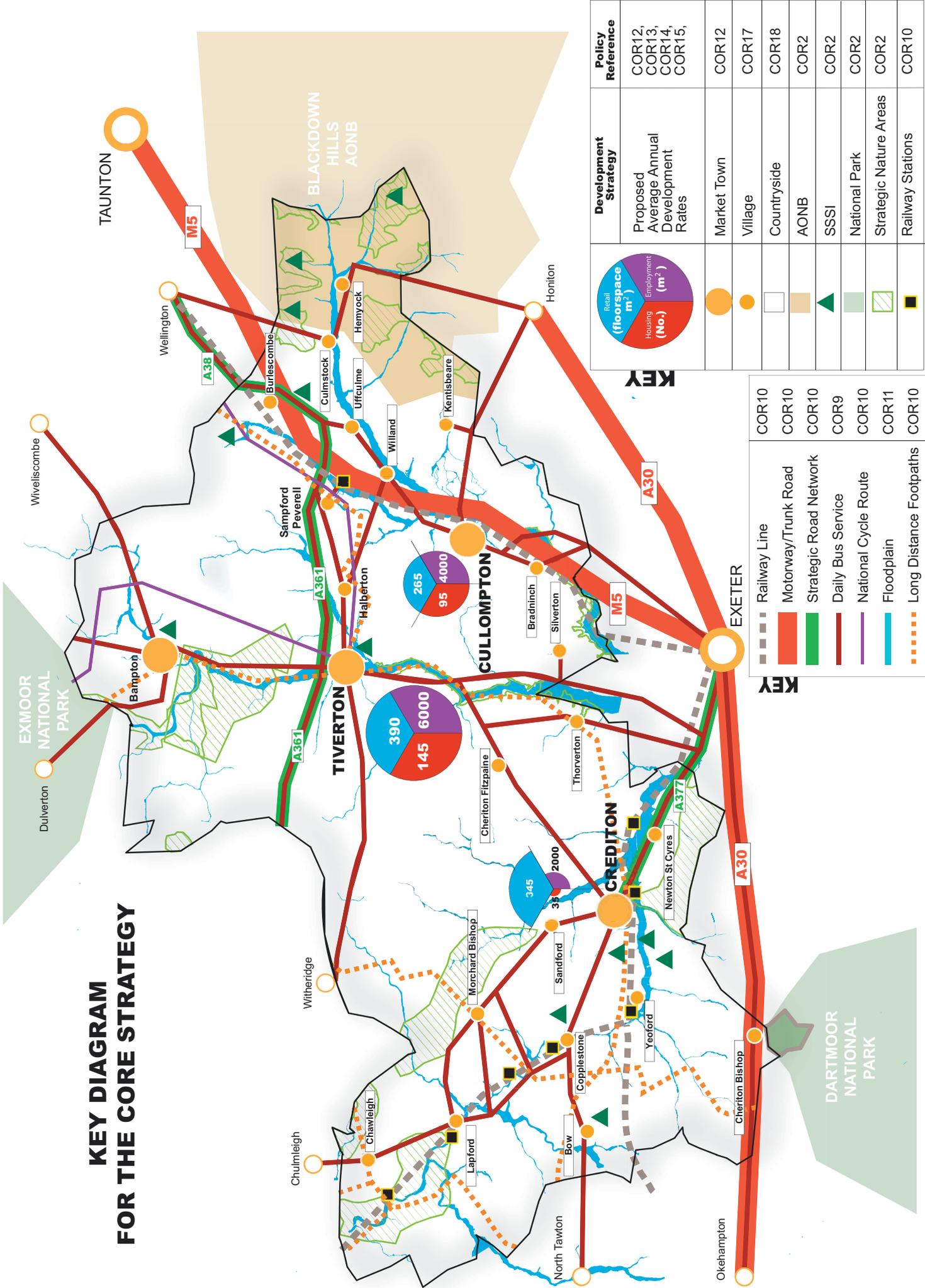
Indicator	Relevant Policies	Target	Impementaion Agencies
Job Seekers Allowance as a proportion of working age population each April	<b>COR4</b>	Remain below regional average	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, business sector
Tourism visitor numbers	<b>COR4</b>	Increase year on year	Mid Devon District Council, tourism industry, South West Tourism, local Tourist Information Centres
Tourist accommodation bedspaces	<b>COR4</b>	Increase year on year	Mid Devon District Council, tourism industry, South West Tourism, local Tourist Information Centres
Percentage of completed retail, office, leisure development respectively in town centres (Measured as above, town centres defined in LDF)	<b>COR4, COR6</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, retail, business sector, leisure industry
Employment land supply by type (hectares available for B1b, B1c, and B8)	<b>COR4</b>	At least 10 hectares allocated or with planning permission at any one time.	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Renewable energy capacity installed by type. (Completed and available in megawatts)	<b>COR5</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, renewable energy providers
Retail indicators (2004 GVA survey)	<b>COR6</b>	Show continuous improvement	Mid Devon District Council, development industry, retailers
Amount and percentage of floorspace, by employment type, which is on previously developed land (as above)	<b>COR7</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land	<b>COR7</b>	30%	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Percentage of residential completions within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre	<b>COR9</b>	90%	Mid Devon District Council, development industry

Indicator	Relevant Policies	Target	Impementaion Agencies
Travel to work mode and distance travelled (2001 Census)	<b>COR9</b>	No target	Mid Devon District Council, public transport providers, development industry
Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of The Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality	<b>COR 11</b>	No approvals	Mid Devon District Council, Environment Agency
Settlement type of employment development (Local Indicator)	<b>COR12,COR13, COR14,COR15, COR16,COR17, COR 18</b>	Per annum figures: Tiverton 6000 sqm Cullompton 4000 sqm Crediton 2000 sqm Bampton 400 sqm Elsewhere 2300 sqm	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Settlement type of new housing development (Local Indicator)	<b>COR12,COR13, COR14,COR15, COR16,COR17, COR18</b>	Per annum figures: Tiverton 145 Cullompton 95 Crediton 35 Bampton 10 Villages 55	Mid Devon District Council, development industry
Services in rural settlements	<b>COR17</b>	No reduction in service availability in defined villages	Mid Devon District Council, service providers

## **9.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LOCAL PLAN AND OTHER LDF DOCUMENTS**

- 9.1 The Mid Devon Local Plan First Alteration was adopted in July 2006 and contains a suite of policies for the control of development within Mid Devon. These policies are fit for purpose and are automatically saved for a period of three years from their adoption. It is open to the Council to seek to extend this saved period for appropriate policies, a course of action proposed in the Local Development Scheme.
- 9.2 The Local Plan policies and proposals will be replaced by those contained in Development Plan Documents, including this Core Strategy, in accordance with the timetable for their production set out in the Local Development Scheme. Following the adoption of this Core Strategy, the current Local Development Scheme indicates that three Area Development Plan Documents will be adopted in 2009, to include allocations for uses and associated infrastructure. Following this, a Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will be adopted in 2011.
- 9.3 This Core Strategy provides the strategic background to all other DPDs and SPDs within the Mid Devon Local Development Framework. These documents must be in conformity with the Core Strategy in order to be sound. A number of the policies contained in the saved Local Plan will be superseded by the adoption of this Core Strategy. The following policies will therefore no longer be saved and will not form part of the Local Development Framework:-
- S1 Area Centres
  - S2 Local Centres
  - S3 Villages for development
  - S4 Countryside development
  - H1 Previously developed land
  - H14 Residential conversion of rural buildings.

# KEY DIAGRAM FOR THE CORE STRATEGY



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