



# Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2015 - 2034

Evidence Base



# Contents

1.	Settlement Boundaries Topic Paper	2
2.	Housing Topic Paper	14
3.	Local Economy Topic Paper	30
4.	Wellbeing	39
5.	Heritage	39
6.	Environment	40
7.	Infrastructure	41
8.	Resources	41

# 1. SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES TOPIC PAPER

A settlement boundary is a line drawn around a settlement that demarcates the built form from the surrounding countryside. The purpose of the settlement boundary is to mark the limits of settlements and to define where planning policies apply in order to prevent encroachment into the countryside. Different criteria-based policies apply either side of the line.

## Criteria

The criteria applied in this Plan are based on the Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) [Thriving Towns and Villages Settlement Boundary Topic Paper, Draft – March 2017](#) included in the JLP Evidence Base. Reference was also made to settlement boundary reviews carried out elsewhere in the country.

In reviewing the settlement boundaries, the JLP applied two questions to each settlement and this Plan has done the same:

- 1. What is the physical extent of the settlement?**
- 2. Does the land within the boundary form a functional part of the settlement, or the countryside?**

The table below compares the criteria applied in this Plan (TPNP) and the proposed principles applied in the JLP draft Topic Paper:

TPNP criteria	JLP criteria
Clearly defined physical features were used where appropriate e.g. walls, fences, roads, streams, field boundaries, hedgerows etc.	
Curtilages of dwellings were included, unless: (1) functionally separate to the dwelling, or (2) where the land has the capacity to extend the built form of the settlement.	Include all gardens to the edge of curtilage, as these form part of the functional settlement as an ancillary part of a residential dwelling.
Recreational and amenity open space at the edge of settlement was included only where the land is surrounded by the built form of the settlement.	Include all play and amenity space where the space adjoins the built form.

<p>Freestanding, individual or groups of dwellings, farm buildings or other structures detached or peripheral to the built form of the settlement, were excluded.</p>	<p>Edge of settlement farms form an area of transition, from residential based land-use to agricultural land use. Buildings that are used for residential purposes should form the furthest extent of the settlement boundary.</p>
<p>Existing caravan sites or leisure uses at the edge of the settlement, which are detached from or peripheral to the built form of the settlement, were excluded.</p>	<p>Campsites on the edge of settlement are not included because they do not form part of the functional settlement by meeting the day-to-day needs of the local population.</p>
<p>Edge of settlement employment sites were included unless an incongruous extension into the countryside.</p>	<p>Edge of settlement employment areas are included unless an incongruous extension into the countryside.</p>



## Boundary details for Bantham

### **A - B**

Starts at the bottom of the main street, where there is a steep lane leading down to Coronation Quay and follows the rear property boundaries of Whiddons, Dog Watches and Clock Cottage. Then steps in and cuts across land owned by Carew, White Horses, Sheriffs and Gables End. Only the curtilages of these properties is included within the settlement, not the densely overgrown land beyond that leads down to the river which if developed would inappropriately extend the built form of the settlement and detrimentally harm this sensitive estuarine location.

### **B - C**

East of The Gables, intersects the South West Coast Path and follows this path along the rear boundaries of Riverside, Avon Cottage, Morstones and Quayle, parallel to the estuary. To the north, lies Bantham Copse, which occupies the river bank and is owned by the Woodland Trust.

### **C - D**

Turns east and follows the northern property boundary of 4 Avonside, returning to the lane. To the north of 4 Avonside, there are a number of large detached properties with extensive gardens (including Farthings, Onnalea and Longfield), which if developed would significantly extend the built form of the settlement and result in ribbon development. These properties have therefore been excluded in order to protect the countryside from inappropriate incursion.

### **D - E**

Follows the frontages of properties along the lane (Avonside, Quayle, Morstones, Avon Cottage, Shop Cottage and part of Riverside). Crosses the lane at The Watch cottages (former coastguard station) and continues south, following the field boundary fence and hedge along the eastern boundary of The Watch cottages. This field boundary fence has been in place some 50 years and there is land in agricultural use to the east.

### **E - F**

Turns west along Buckland Lane, crosses the lane at The Old Bakehouse, continues round the edge of the hardstanding, then extends south through the field opposite to join up with the eastern property boundary of Wragmoor.

Included within the settlement is the hardstanding used for parking cars by Cracklefield Cottage and other nearby properties. Also, the allotments, which are leased to residents of The Watch cottages. Both the hardstanding and the allotments are considered to be a functional part of the settlement. Excluded is the land to the east which used to be occupied by allotments but for the last 6-7 years has been left fallow and ploughed from time to time (see photograph below). Beyond that is the open countryside.

**F - G**

Continues round the property boundary of Wragmoor, which occupies the south-east corner of the settlement, up the east side of the public footpath then turns west along the southern boundary of Sloopside.

**G - A**

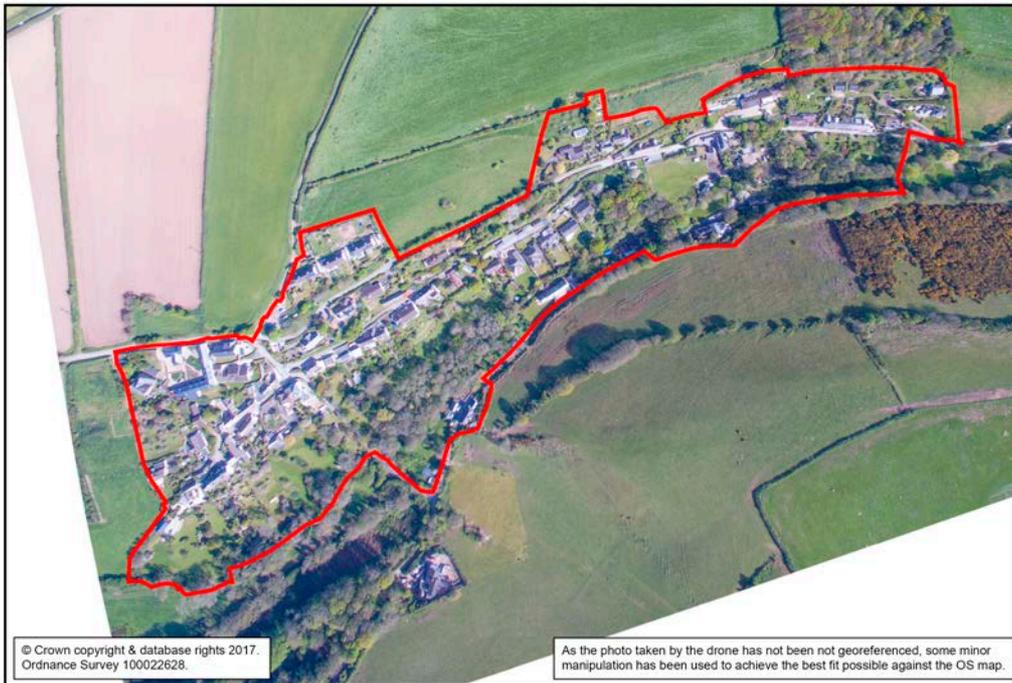
Continues round the curtilage of Sloopside and along the rear property boundaries of the Sloop Cottages back to the main street in Bantham.

Excluded from the settlement is the field behind the Sloop Cottages, which is a paddock that has been used for grazing horses, sheep and donkeys for over 45 years. Also, the agricultural barn and ancillary parking/storage adjoining the southern boundary of the settlement, since it is not a functional part of the settlement and its development would significantly extend the built form of the settlement and encroach upon the countryside.

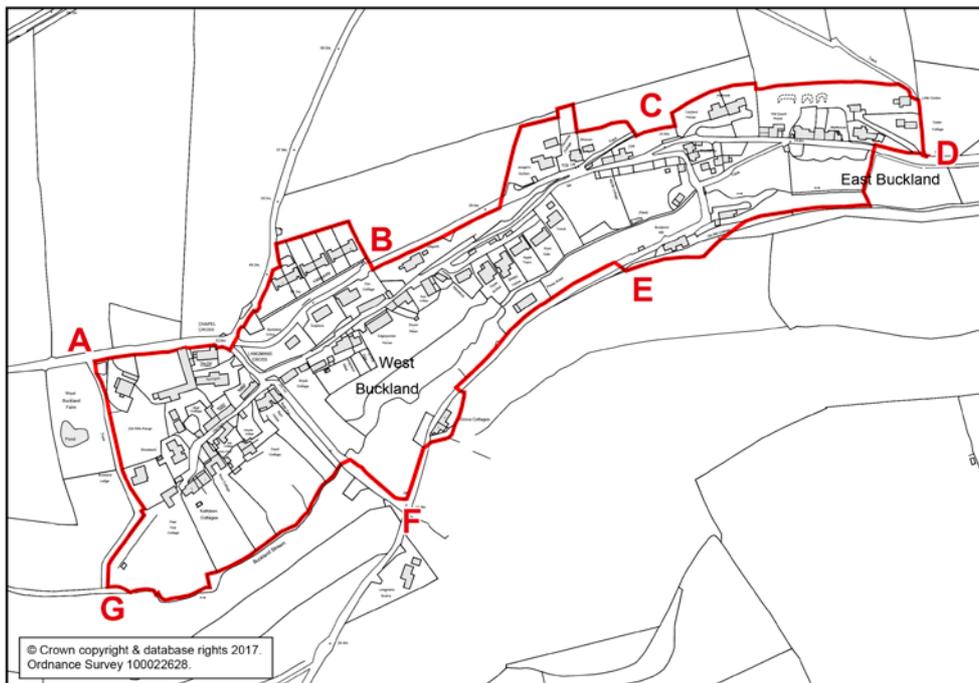
**View of Bantham looking N from Footpath 19 by Thurlestone Golf Course**



## Buckland – Aerial view showing proposed settlement boundary<sup>2</sup>



## Buckland – OS extract showing proposed settlement boundary



<sup>2</sup> An enlarged A4 version of this plan is appended on page 13

## Boundary details for Buckland

### **A - B**

Starts at the entrance to Buckland Farm and follows the south side of the lane to Chapel Cross.

Turns to the north up the hill, following the east side of Chuck-a-Cheese lane, then extending east round the rear gardens of Valleyside and the stock fence/hedge around the remainder of Valleyside, and then back down to the south side of the lane.

### **B - C**

Runs east along the south side of the lane until there is a stock fence dividing Joseph's Garden from the pasture to the north.

Then extends behind Josephs Garden's shed until it meets the boundary with Henrietta Cottage. This area is cultivated garden with a polytunnel. The boundary then runs north until it meets the stock fence and pasture to the north of the built up area.

It then runs south to the top of a steep landscaped bank behind Summer Cottage, then extends back in a southerly direction following the fence line to a wooden gate which crosses the public footpath, separating it from the pasture.

The boundary then continues south to the top of the large retaining wall north of the lane adjacent to Cob Cottage.

### **C - D**

Runs east along the old Devon hedge/wall behind Canford House and Holbrook, then follows the northern edge of the terrace, which is occupied by garages belonging to Wisteria Cottage, Meadow Cottage and the Bulb Store Studio.

Then turns south along a stock fence behind Cedar Cottage until it meets with the south side of the lane.

### **D - E**

Continues west along the south side of the lane in front of Hawks Rise, then south along the side of the Buckland Stream.

The Buckland Stream then forms the boundary along the southern side of the gardens of Malthouse, Meadow and Wisteria Cottages, before extending to the south of Mill Barn and along the stock fence separating Old Mill Cottage and Buckland Mill.

### **E - F**

Follows the north side of the lane until it reaches Grove Cottages.

Extends round Grove Cottages following the line of the stock fence and the lane to Grove Corner.

**F - G**

Continues along the eastern side of the lane leading from Grove Corner over the bridge, where the lane intersects the Buckland Stream.

Then follows the northern bank of the Buckland stream west along the southern boundary of the West Buckland Conservation Area, up to and including the garden of Pear Tree Cottage.

**G - A**

Extends north along the western boundary of Buckland Lodge and follows the east side of the track providing access to West Buckland Farm from the lane leading to Bantham. West Buckland Farm is a residential farmhouse. To the west is open countryside.

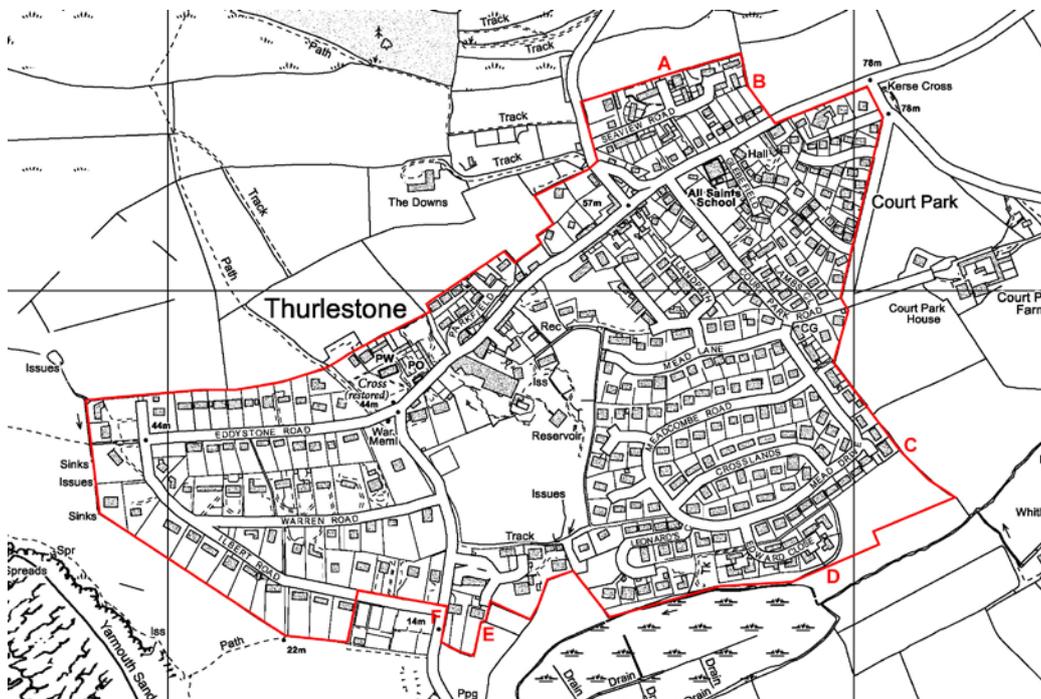
**View of Buckland looking NNE from Footpath 5 near The Downs, Thurlestone**



**Thurlestone – OS extract showing existing settlement boundary**



**Thurlestone – OS extract showing proposed settlement boundary**



## Boundary details for Thurlestone

### **A - B**

To include dwellings at the end of Sea View Road built in the 1990s after the existing settlement boundary was drawn.

### **B - C**

To remain 'as drawn'.

### **C - D**

To include Phase 3 of the development on land adjoining the southern boundary of The Mead, granted outline consent as part of The Mead development in 1960 (ref. WX/1193). This land was included within the Council's existing settlement boundary, but is excluded in the JLP Settlement Boundary Topic Paper. The development of eight 4 and 5-bedroom houses known as [Trenemans](#) is presently under construction (ref. 2911/15/RM).

### **D - E**

To remain 'as drawn'.

### **E - F**

To include the curtilages of properties located along the southern perimeter of the settlement.

### **F - A**

To remain 'as drawn'.

## Sources

Click on the links below to see source material used to prepare this topic paper:

[Herefordshire Council's Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20: Guide to Settlement Boundaries, April 2013 – Revised January 2014](#)

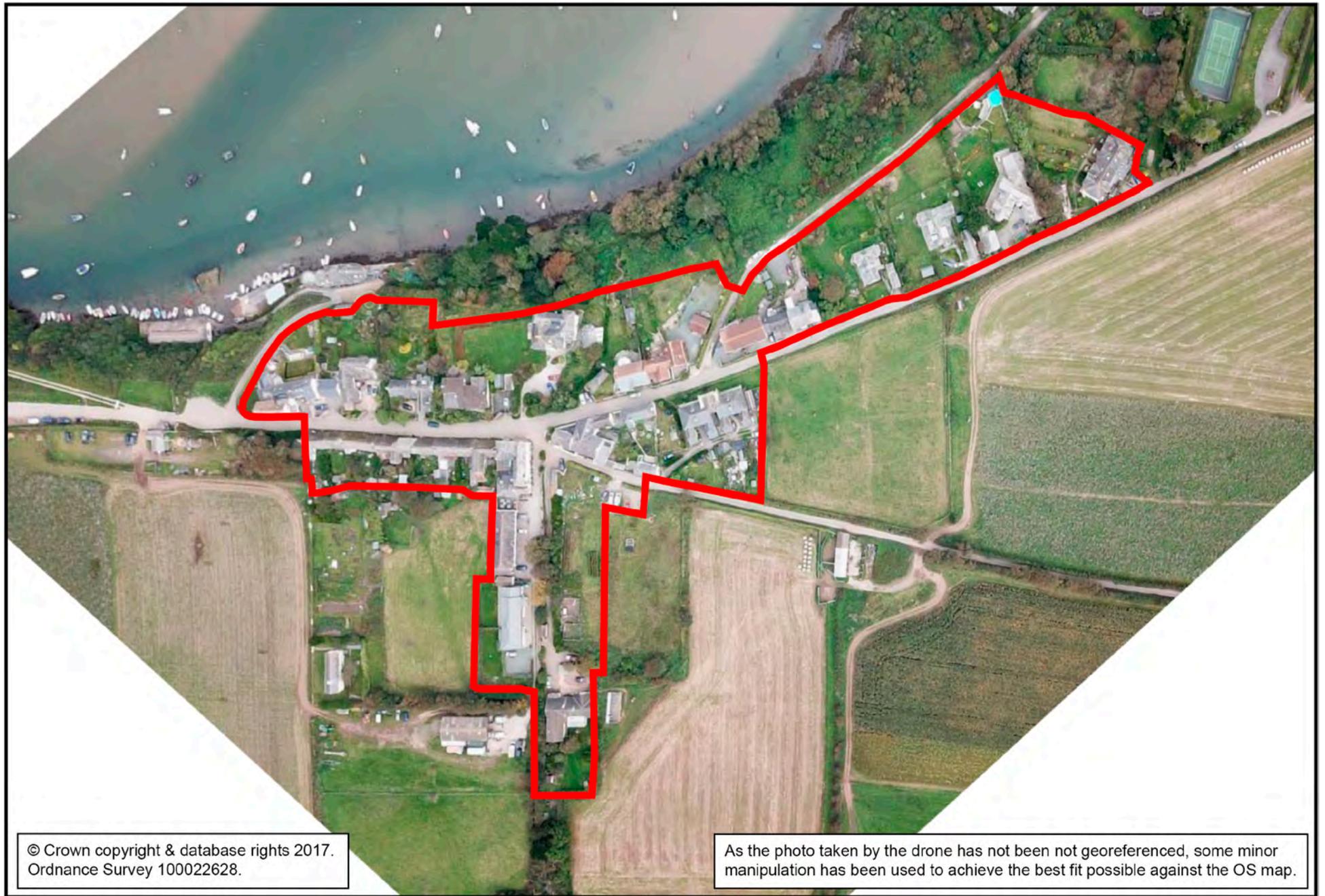
[Briantspuddle Settlement Boundary Review, January 2015](#)

[Wiltshire Council's Draft Proposals for Revised Settlement Boundaries, 2014](#)

<http://www.roselandplan.org/appendix-1---settlement-boundary-maps.html>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/15703956/st-eval-neighbourhood-development-plan-may-2014-2.pdf> (See para 2.3 Defining the Village Boundary for Trevisker St Eval)

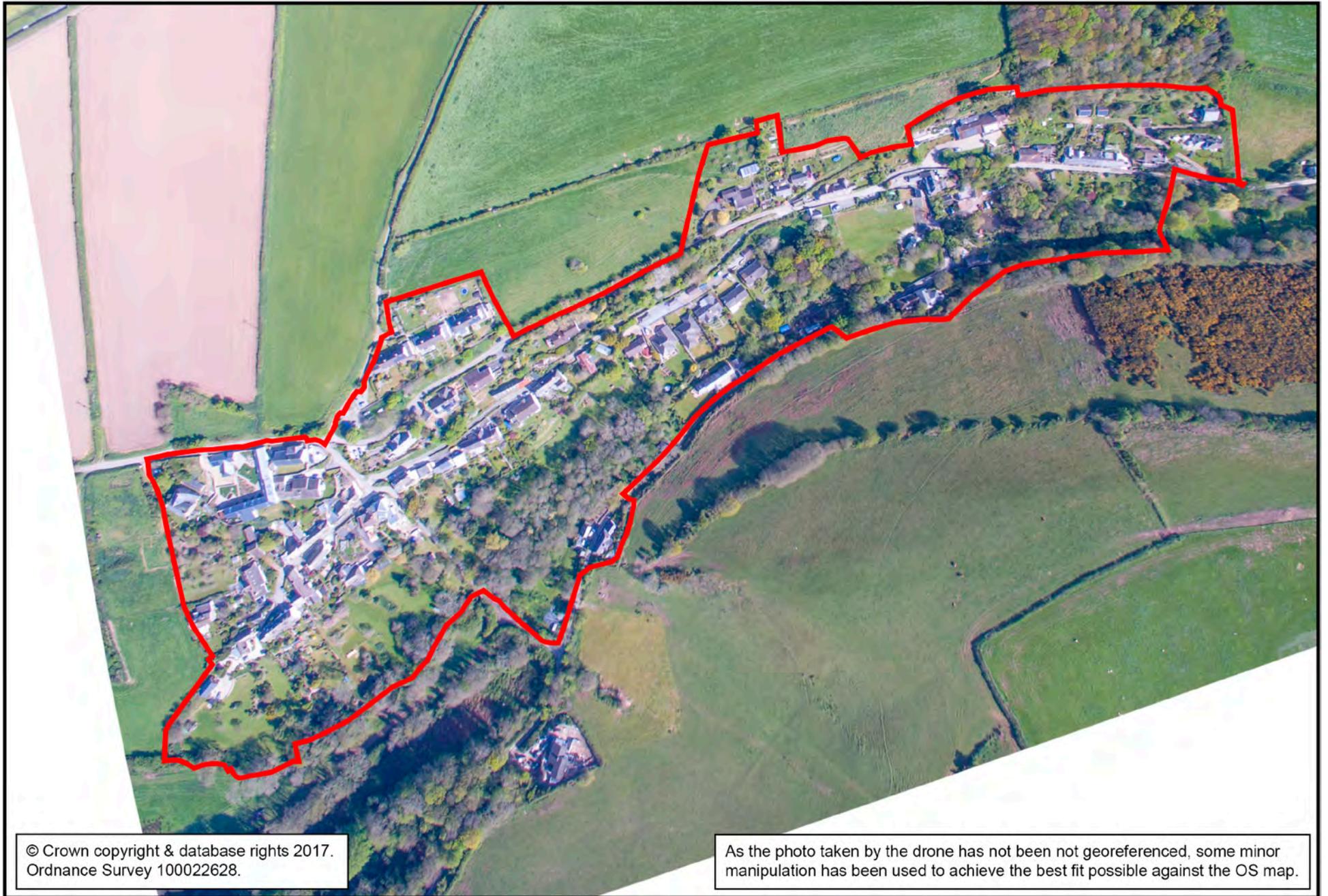
Bantham – Aerial view showing proposed settlement boundary (enlarged version)



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Ordnance Survey 100022628.

As the photo taken by the drone has not been georeferenced, some minor manipulation has been used to achieve the best fit possible against the OS map.

Buckland – Aerial view showing proposed settlement boundary (enlarged version)



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Ordnance Survey 100022628.

As the photo taken by the drone has not been georeferenced, some minor manipulation has been used to achieve the best fit possible against the OS map.

## 2. HOUSING TOPIC PAPER

### A. Background

The population of the parish at the time of the last census in 2011 was 863. The demographic spread shows a marked under-representation of the 16 - 29 age group, a lower proportion in the 30 - 64 age group and a substantially higher proportion of over 65s, compared to the South Hams and South West region averages.<sup>1</sup>

Age structure	Thurlestone Parish 2011		South Hams	South West Region	Thurlestone Parish 2001	
Age 0 to 15	83	10%	16%	17%	59	7%
Age 16 to 29	54	6%	13%	17%	72	9%
Age 30 to 64	354	41%	47%	46%	335	40%
Age 65 and Over	372	43%	24%	20%	361	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>863</b>				<b>827</b>	

Age structure, 2011 (KS102EW), 2001 (KS02)

In terms of second homes and holiday lets, there is a high proportion of second homes and/or holiday lets in the parish compared to the average figure for the South Hams (15%). In 2011, the number of second home and/or holiday lets in the parish was 268, which represents 39% of all dwellings in the parish. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of second homes and/or holiday lets had risen by 8.5% from 247 in 2001 to 268 in 2011.

	Thurlestone Parish 2011		South Hams 2011	Thurlestone Parish 2001		South Hams 2001
Total Dwellings	685			635		
With residents	417	61%	85%	388	61%	86%
No residents, vacant (2001 only)	268	39%	15%	7	1%	3%
No residents, 2nd home/ holiday accommodation				240	38%	11%

Household spaces, 2011 (KS401EW), 2001 (KS016)

In terms of tenure, owner-occupation is particularly high in the parish. In 2001 and 2011, over 77% of dwellings occupied year round were owner-occupied. This high owner-occupation is a likely reflection of the parish's demographic profile, with 43% of the population being over 65.

<sup>1</sup> All figures in this paper have been rounded to the nearest whole number

	Thurlestone Parish 2011		South Hams 2011	Thurlestone Parish 2001		South Hams 2001
All households	417	100%	100%	517	100%	100%
Owned	323	77%	72%	401	77%	78%
Shared ownership (part owned and part rented)	1	0%	1%	1	0%	1%
Social rented	47	11%	11%	58	11%	10%
Private rented	41	10%	14%	51	10%	10%
Living rent free	5	1%	2%	6	1%	2%

Tenure, 2011 (KS402EW), 2001 (UV043)

## B. Policy development

### 1. Working Group

The group comprised five members: four volunteers who live in the parish and our district councillor, who is on the South Hams District Development Management Committee and one of only two councillors on the Plymouth & SW Devon Joint Local Plan Working Party. The volunteers included the vice-chairman of the parish council, who worked in the electricity industry for 40 years, a retired planning solicitor, a former press officer and a teacher.

### 2. Tasks

The group met at frequent intervals between the Community Engagement Meeting (CEM) in September 2015 and end of April 2016, when the Parish Questionnaire was compiled. Its initial tasks were to decide on a set of Objectives that would address the findings of the CEM of 29 September 2015 and to gather evidence in order to build up a robust evidence base to inform the Questionnaire and ultimately, the policies in the neighbourhood plan.

#### (i) Objectives

The CEM responses helped to identify the following issues that the neighbourhood plan would need to address:

- more affordable housing to redress the age profile and support local working people
- better availability of houses in all price ranges and particularly to rent
- considerable support for assisted living and warden-controlled/sheltered housing or bungalows at affordable prices for the elderly/disabled to buy or rent, enabling the elderly to downsize and free up larger houses for families
- opposition to more second homes and holiday lets
- concerns about planning policy generally: location, replacement buildings and design
- concerns about future plans on the Bantham Estate

As a consequence, the Working Group identified the following draft Housing Objectives:

*To identify any housing needs within the parish; to explore the type and range of any new housing needed; and to consider where any new housing could be built that would be viable and deliverable, whilst protecting and enhancing the area's unique natural beauty and heritage.*

**(ii) Evidence gathering**

**(a) Housing proforma**

The first task was to compile data about the existing housing stock within the parish. The parish was sub-divided into six geographic areas: Yarmer Estate, The Mead and adjoining land, the main street in Thurlestone and adjoining streets, Bantham, Buckland and Outlying rural areas. The characteristics of each area are summarised below and the individual proforma can be seen by clicking on the name of the area:

<a href="#">Yarmer Estate</a>	80 dwellings - 75% second homes/holiday lets Mainly retired residents £1 -2m property prices
<a href="#">The Mead</a> and <a href="#">Land Adjoining</a>	<b>The Mead:</b> 116 dwellings - 52% bungalows £450- 550k average (but up to £775k) 80% dwellings owner-occupied year round 90% residents over 65 <b>Land adj The Mead:</b> 17 dwellings - £790k – 1.1m 53% occupied year round 8 new dwellings under construction - £1.1m+
<a href="#">Main street in Thurlestone</a> and <a href="#">Adjoining streets</a>	Mainly second homes/holiday lets, including Homefield and Church Farm redevelopment sites 47 affordable homes owned by housing associations: 15 x over 55s & 32 x general needs
<a href="#">Bantham</a>	57 dwellings: only 2 owner-occupied 58% second homes/holiday lets £700k -2m property prices c 19 x Bantham Estate rental properties Almost 50% residents aged 20s/30s At least 5 households with children
<a href="#">Buckland</a>	71 dwellings 42% dwellings second homes/holiday lets 11 households with dependent children & 4 with adult children living at home
<a href="#">Outlying rural areas</a>	45 dwellings including 3 static caravans 33% second homes/holiday lets Mainly working couples aged 40s/50s

### **(b) Affordable Housing**

A paper about [Affordable Housing](#) in the parish was prepared and made available on the parish website explaining the terminology and setting out the existing housing stock and types of tenure available, as well as government reforms underway and what they could mean for the parish.

### **(c) Local landowners**

Meetings were held with local landowners both on and off the record, for reasons of commercial confidentiality. The two principal landowners were invited to address our Steering Group meetings to talk about their vision of how they would like the Parish to look over the next 15-20 years and specifically, any housing proposals they may have. These meetings were recorded in the Minutes of [10 November 2015](#) and [1 December 2015](#) and made available on the Parish website.

### **(d) Housing Needs Survey**

The group worked in conjunction with Council's Housing Department on a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) to assess existing affordable housing to buy or rent in the area and to consider whether there are local people who are unable to meet their housing needs in the community and/or have moved away because they have been unable to meet their housing needs. This survey was circulated at peak holiday time (Easter) so as to ensure the views of second homeowners were also obtained. The survey was aimed primarily at affordable housing needs within the parish, but also (atypically) obtained data relating to the private sector as it was recognised that this was a valuable opportunity to obtain that data too. The survey concluded:

*"It is clear that there is a disproportion between those over the age of 65 and those in other age groups living in the parish. If the community wishes to address its unbalanced age demographic in their Neighbourhood Plan, then the provision of additional affordable and rental housing for young families/couples and more reasonably priced 2 and 3-bedroom open market housing of mixed type and tenure and/or self build plots is needed. By encouraging younger people to the area, this will ensure the sustainability of the parish all year round and not just during the peak holiday period. The NPSG should also consider the needs of its ageing population and, in particular, the feasibility of providing sheltered/assisted living accommodation in the parish and/or retention of a reasonable proportion of bungalows which are more suited to adaptation for disability."*

See the following link for the full HNS results:

[http://www.thurlestoneparish.co.uk/uploads/4/8/9/6/48967079/housing\\_needs\\_survey\\_report.pdf](http://www.thurlestoneparish.co.uk/uploads/4/8/9/6/48967079/housing_needs_survey_report.pdf)

### **(e) Housing Market Survey**

The group compiled and circulated a Housing Market Survey (HMS) to 8 local estate agents in residential sales and lettings to ascertain housing demand and requirements in the area. Three estate agents responded and their responses included the following:

- The greatest demand for buyers living outside the South Hams is for larger 3-4 bedroom detached houses and bungalows with sea views and larger gardens at prices in excess of £600,000
- Young families tend not to ask about properties in the parish *“as they feel they have not got a chance at a price they could ever afford.”*
- *“Thurlestone is a very popular coastal village where prices are generally higher than the surrounding area and is popular with buyers seeking a second home or early retired buyers seeking to enjoy the facilities in the village such as golf and access to the coastal walks.”*
- *“ ..... a high proportion of young families move from out of the area and have a significant budget to buy the higher price properties although there are other more local families who would like to buy in the Parish at c. £300/£400,000.”*

To see the full HMS responses click on [Residential Sales](#) and [Residential Lettings](#)

All the evidence gathering (in (a) - (e) above) was used to inform the parish Questionnaire and the following revised draft Housing Objectives:

*“To support small-scale housing development that will contribute towards making the parish more sustainable for the future: affordable housing for local people who cannot afford to buy or rent housing on the open market and open market housing for young people on lower and middle incomes to be able to afford to buy or rent.”*

### 3. Parish Questionnaire<sup>2</sup>

The Questionnaire was conducted by the DR Company, a not for profit Community Interest Company who specialise in community surveys. The DR Company devised the questions, based on the evidence gathered by the Working Groups, and independently analysed the responses. Paper copies of the Questionnaire were distributed by hand to 698 households and 258 responses were received, which represented a return rate of 37%.

The housing questions in the Questionnaire focused on whether more housing was needed and if so, what type and where should it be built, whether there was support for settlement boundaries, policies to restrict second homes and to control the replacement and extension of dwellings.

The results are summarised below:

#### **More housing across the parish:**

50% supported a few more homes in Thurlestone and 6% a lot more;  
45% supported a few more homes in Buckland and 5% a lot more; and  
44% supported a few more homes in Bantam and 6% a lot more homes.

#### **More housing by individual settlement:**

50% of Thurlestone respondents supported a few more homes in Thurlestone and 5% thought a lot more;

<sup>2</sup> Click [HERE](#) to see a copy of the Questionnaire – Housing on pages 5-7

48% of Buckland respondents supported a few more homes in Buckland and no respondents thought a lot more; and  
53% of Bantham respondents supported a few more homes in Bantham and no respondents thought a lot more.

55% of respondents thought that new homes should be **houses**, 45% thought **bungalows** and 30% thought **flats** (respondents were able to support more than one type).

Overall, 35% thought **1 bed housing** was needed, 73% thought **2/3 bed housing** was needed and 19% thought **4 bed housing** was needed. This preference was consistent regardless of the place of residence of the respondent. Amongst those under 65 the type of house most frequently supported was 2/3 bed houses and this was significantly higher for households with children (90%).

There was strong support for **privately owned homes** for middle/lower income families (68%), **privately rented homes** for middle/lower income families (58%) and for **social housing to rent** (58%). **Social housing to buy** had 51% support and **self/custom build plots** 35%. Households with children showed significantly greater support for privately owned homes (89%) and the strongest support for self/custom build plots, with 68% support.

33% of respondents thought there should be **no new housing**.

There was support for any new housing needed to be built as **infill** (82%), on a number of **smaller sites** (76%) and on **individual plots** (68%). However, 78% of respondents were against new housing on **one site** and 62% against **adjoining existing villages** on greenfield/farmland. In the case of households with children, 70% were against new housing on one site and 48% supported new housing adjoining existing villages.

Outside the villages there was strong support for the **conversion of rural buildings** (83%) and for **adding to existing clusters** of houses (64%).

65% of respondents were supportive of reviewing **settlement boundaries** through the neighbourhood plan.

94% of respondents supported a policy to control the development of **replacement dwellings and extensions**.

There was overall support from 67% of respondents to a policy requiring all new open market houses to be subject to a **principal occupancy restriction**. 78% of principal homeowners supported this proposal, whilst 68% of existing second homeowners were not supportive.

The full **Housing results** can be found at pages 4-14 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

The Housing **cross-tabulations** can be found at pages 1-23 of Appendix A and pages 1-14 of Appendix B.

#### 4. Focus Group Meeting

Following the Questionnaire Results presentation by the DR Company, a Housing Focus Group Meeting was held on 1 November 2016 which 44 people attended. The leader of the Working Group gave a presentation supported by slides about the findings and possible draft policies based on them. The feedback mainly focused on concerns about the amount and delivery of housing including:

- What was the meaning of sustainable development?
- Had any land been identified for self-build, a community land project, or as part of a deal to allow expensive open market housing?
- Would a Call for Sites increase the pressure to allow housing development?
- What amount of additional housing development would be regarded as proportionate and could the parish be overwhelmed by new development?
- Did the new Joint Local Plan indicate how much new housing has to be provided in the parish?
- Could the neighbourhood plan control the pace of this development over the duration of the Plan?
- What weight would be given to neighbourhood plan policies when the planners consider planning applications?

#### 5. Call for Sites

At different stages both before and after the Questionnaire results, consideration was given to whether or not to hold a Call for Sites inviting landowners, agents or potential developers to put forward possible sites for consideration.

The last Call for Sites by SHDC was held in 2014/2016 and is referred to as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The purpose of this assessment was to help identify potential development sites for housing or employment. Of particular interest to the Council were: *"...sites within or close to settlements or sites that are well related to public transport routes, footpaths, cycleways and local facilities. It is important that development takes place in the right places with minimal impact on our environment."*<sup>3</sup> The SHLAA and other sources generated 552 sites primarily for housing; which equated to 7748 dwellings, subject to possible landscape or availability constraints. No sites were put forward for the parish.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding that NPs are not obliged to hold a Call for Sites, nor to allocate a site for housing, it was agreed that local circumstances did not justify a Call for Sites for the following reasons:

- The community did not support housing development on one site: 78% of Questionnaire respondents were against the development of one site.

<sup>3</sup> *Our Plan: South Hams* Latest News Issue no 7, January 2016

<sup>4</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Final Report, March 2017

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/StrategicHousingLandAvailabilityAssessmentFinalReport.pdf>

- Conventional delivery of affordable housing through registered providers would require a minimum of 18 dwellings in order to generate 5 affordable housings (based on the emerging JLP's 30% affordable housing quota). This may well be considered "major development" under para 116 of the NPPF, given the parish's three landscape designations, and aside from its possible environmental impact, would only exacerbate existing traffic issues, particularly over peak holiday periods.
- One site would not contribute to the sustainable development of the parish, particularly if the open market housing was too expensive to meet local housing need and was purchased by second homeowners or retirees (as already demonstrated elsewhere in the parish).
- Since there are only two landowners with land that may be considered suitable for a site of this scale, i.e. adjoining Thurlestone (identified as a Sustainable Village in the JLP), it would be more productive to approach them direct.

## 6. Affordable Housing

With affordable housing for local working people being a priority, the two main landowners in the Parish were again approached by the group with a view to identifying possible land for the provision of affordable housing. The outcome of these discussions was recorded in the Minutes of [7 December 2016](#) which were made available on the parish website. The difficulty was that affordable housing would come at a price, i.e. more open market housing that would be unlikely to meet local housing needs.

The group has also had on-going discussions with the SHDC Lead Housing Specialist regarding the opportunities available for a [Village Housing Initiative](#) on a rural exception site and about mechanisms for ensuring that any new housing would remain affordable to local working families in perpetuity, i.e. the application of Local Connection criteria and/or main residence [Devon Covenant](#) – style restriction which presently applies to former local authority housing.

In May 2017, two Steering Group members attended a workshop organised by SHDC about [Community-led Housing](#). The background to this workshop was that the government, in an effort to help Councils affected by high levels of second home ownership in their communities, had produced a Community Housing Fund (CHF). This fund is to be used by Councils to help them deliver housing that is affordable to local people in order to tackle the problem second homes can cause in reducing housing supply. The allocation of the fund to SHDC is £1.881 million, reflecting the high number of second homes in South Hams and lack of affordable housing for local people: the average house price in the SHDC area being over £350,000, whereas the average income is under £20,000.

Six months on, there is now a group of individuals interested in progressing a small-scale Community-led Housing project in the parish. The success of a project will, however, depend on finding a local landowner willing to sell land at less than market value, typically around £10,000 per plot, in a location where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of the village community and the parish as a whole. To be eligible, participants must meet local eligibility criteria.

## C. Policies

The Plan's housing policies are based on the above evidence-gathering, the results of the Parish Questionnaire and the feedback from the Focus Group Meeting. They are all subject to specific planning criteria that take into account local circumstances, principally, the three landscape designations. The detailed reasons for each of the policies are set out below:

### **TP2 introduces settlement boundaries for Bantham and Buckland<sup>5</sup> :**

- (i) To help develop a shared vision for the parish and deliver the sustainable development it needs, in accordance with planning guidance:  
*"Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next 10, 15, 20 years in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people. They can put in place planning policies that will help deliver that vision or grant planning permission for the development they want to see."*<sup>6</sup>
  
- (ii) To take local circumstances into account and respond to the opportunities they offer for achieving sustainable development in the parish by locating housing within (infill) or close to all 3 settlements (rural exception sites), where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of all three settlements. This is consistent with the findings of Lord Taylor's Review 'Living, Working Countryside':  
  
*"Planning must not determine the future development of rural communities against a narrow tick-box approach to sustainable development, assessing communities as they are now and not what they could be. In too many places this approach writes off rural communities in a 'sustainability trap' where development can only occur in places already considered to be in narrow terms 'sustainable'. The question planners must address is "how will development add to or diminish the sustainability of this community?" taking a better balance of social, economic, and environmental factors together to form a long term vision for all scales of communities."*<sup>7</sup>
  
- (iii) To support services in Thurlestone, i.e. the pre-school, the primary school, shop, pub and garage, and to support the shop and pub in Bantham, by providing housing for young working people in or close to all three settlements. There at least 5 households with children in Bantham, 11 households with children in Buckland and another 4 households with adult children living at home. Given the proximity of Thurlestone and recently improved connectivity, this Plan supports development in all three settlements where it can support services in Thurlestone and Bantham (in accordance with para 55 of the NPPF). This flexible approach is recognised in Lord Taylor's Review and endorsed in the emerging JLP Village sustainability assessment framework (Feb 2017), under the heading 'Village networks':

<sup>5</sup> The amended settlement boundary for Thurlestone includes some minor amendments to include areas that have been or are in the course of being built out since the existing boundary was designated some 20 years ago. The settlement boundary criteria are set out in the Settlement Boundary Topic Paper.

<sup>6</sup> Planning Policy Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning, 2014. Para 003.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.wensumalliance.org.uk/publications/Taylor\\_Review\\_Livingworkingcountryside.pdf](http://www.wensumalliance.org.uk/publications/Taylor_Review_Livingworkingcountryside.pdf)

*“As is often the case in planning matters, it depends on the balance of impacts and benefits unique to the local circumstances.... It is agreed therefore that there can be some flexibility applied in how housing is delivered, providing that the overall housing figure identified can be met, and that there is a clear relationship between the settlements in questions.”<sup>8</sup>*

- (iv) To ensure the housing that is provided on land adjoining and outside settlements is used for affordable housing (a village housing initiative and/or community-led housing) and not for overpriced open market housing that is left unoccupied for much of the year, or exacerbates the parish’s existing demographic age imbalance.
- (v) To add an extra layer of protection for the countryside/AONB/Heritage Coast/Undeveloped Coast to prevent inappropriate development and encroachment into the countryside, rather than relying on adopted and emerging local plan countryside policies that are applied on a case-by-case basis and determined on their merits. TP2 provides clarity and certainty for the future development of the area and ensures that the right homes are built in the right places, based on local circumstances.

**TP3 supports new affordable housing provision:**

- (i) To prevent the further migration of local people out of the parish in search of cheaper housing and to attract young working people to the parish in order to address its demographic age imbalance and ensure the sustainability of the parish, i.e. its schools, shops, clubs and organisations, services and facilities. The Plan supports the Council’s recommended level of new affordable housing provision in the HNS report which is 5 affordable homes over the next five years and subject to review thereafter.<sup>9</sup> There are cases of young working people having had to move out of the parish, in one recent case, after almost 50 years - see [Bantham](#) proforma; young working people with family connections unable to afford to live in the area (but have children at the school) – see the HNS report; and adult children living with their parents - at least 5 households – see HNS report and [Buckland](#) proforma.
- (ii) Given limited infill site availability and high land prices, it is envisaged that affordable housing will be delivered by way of a village housing initiative and/or community-led housing on a rural exception site, i.e. on land that might not otherwise be allocated for housing or is unlikely to be of interest to mainstream housebuilders. An alternative option would be to trade off one part of the countryside for open market housing in order to enable the delivery of affordable housing elsewhere, but the community does not consider this to be an appropriate option in an area subject to three landscape designations.
- (iii) To meet the requirements of the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP), which has evidenced the need for Thurlestone (identified as a Sustainable Village) to be able to accommodate around 10 dwellings, by contributing towards making the parish more sustainable and prioritising identified local housing need, i.e. housing that is affordable for working people.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SustainableVillagesAssessment.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.thurlestoneparish.co.uk/uploads/4/8/9/6/48967079/housing\\_needs\\_survey\\_report.pdf](http://www.thurlestoneparish.co.uk/uploads/4/8/9/6/48967079/housing_needs_survey_report.pdf)

As stated above, aside from those people on the Devon Home Choice register, there is a group of families interested in progressing Community-led Housing taking shape in the parish. In the case of a village housing initiative, the open market housing would be subject to a principal occupancy or main residence [Devon Covenant](#)-style restriction to ensure this housing also remains available and affordable for young working families.

- (iv) To take advantage of the opportunities offered by Community-led Housing, to which the government is committed, as evidenced by Housing Minister Alok Sharma’s speech to the Community–Led Housing Conference on 27 November 2017:

*“You are sustaining local economies by giving young home-grown talent affordable places to live and a reason to stay.*

*You’re not just building better homes.*

*You’re building better communities.”<sup>10</sup>*

#### **TP4 supports small-scale open market housing provision:**

- (i) Property prices in the parish are prohibitively high for local working people who are forced to move out of the parish and for young working people who cannot afford to live in the parish.

In April 2017, the following properties were for sale in the parish:

		£
Thurlestone	5-bedroom detached house	1,025,000
	4-bedroom detached bungalow	675,000
	3-bedroom detached bungalow	475,000
	3-bedroom bungalow	450,000
	3-bedroom bungalow	349,950
	2-bedroom flat	425,000
	1-bedroom apartment	250,000
	1-bedroom apartment	200,000
	Land for sale with outline permission for 1 detached house	1,350,000
Buckland	4-bedroom cottage (including annex)	550,000
Bantham	3-bedroom terraced house	549,950

Source: Rightmove and Zoopla, April 2017

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/community-led-housing>

In October 2017, the following properties were for sale in the parish:

Thurlestone	6-bedroom detached house	£ 2,000,000
	5-bedroom detached house (1 of 8)*	1,100,000
	5-bedroom detached house	1,000,000
	5-bedroom detached house	860,000
	5-bedroom detached house	800,000
	4-bedroom detached house	600,000
	3-bedroom detached house	595,000
	3-bedroom bungalow	670,000
	3-bedroom bungalow	465,000
	2-bedroom detached house	1,000,000 +
Buckland	2-bedroom semi-detached cottage	295,000
	2/3-bedroom semi-detached house	469,000
Bantham	-	-

Source: Rightmove, October 2017

\* [Trenemans](#) – On the Edge of Spectacular: An exclusive development of eight luxury detached houses: each home has its own identity designed specifically to complement the individual site.

More details of property prices and turnover can be seen by clicking on the individual area proforma listed in the above policy development section.

- (ii) According to the emerging JLP evidence base and up to date data from the South Hams planning website, there have been 5 new dwellings in the parish since 2014. A further 10 are under construction and 2 more have extant planning permission, but have not yet been implemented. Of these 17 properties, at least 12 are 4/5 bedroom houses that are or are likely to be valued at over £1m. There are an additional 2 plots in Thurlestone within the settlement boundary that have outline planning permission.
- (iii) The HNS report identified a potential need for more 2 and 3-bedroom properties for young working people to buy in the £125,000 - £350,000 price range, self build/custom build plots for young working people to buy at a discounted price, and more rental properties for young working people to rent for £500-650 pcm. Support for provision of open market housing is therefore limited in size, type and tenure to reflect the clearly identified local housing needs of the parish, i.e. more reasonably priced housing for local people and to attract young working people to the parish to help address its demographic age imbalance and ensure its sustainability.
- (iv) Support for provision of open market housing is also limited to infill (including re-use of previously developed land) in order to ensure that any housing provided on land adjoining the settlement boundaries is affordable housing (including Community-led Housing) and falls under TP3. All of the land adjoining the three settlements is classified as Grade 3 agricultural quality and is or could be in beneficial agricultural use.<sup>11</sup> The community

<sup>11</sup> See [MAFF's Agricultural Land Classification, Oct 1988 \(see description of grades, pp 9-10\)](#)

considers that only if the parish is to receive the maximum possible benefit should this land be built on, i.e. for housing which contributes to the sustainable development of the parish.

- (v) The principal occupancy restriction is necessary in order to increase the sustainability of the parish which has particular concentrations of second homes: [Bantham](#) (58% second homes) and [Yarmer Estate](#) (75% second homes). See TP6 below.

**TP5 supports reuse of farm and rural buildings for housing:**

- (i) To bring disused farm and buildings back into use.<sup>12</sup>
- (ii) To provide housing but only if it can be demonstrated that the use of the premises is no longer viable for agricultural or any other use and meets the requirements of TP1.

**TP6 introduces a principal residence requirement:**

- (i) In 1980 the [Parish of Thurlestone Appraisal Report](#) produced by the Parish Council reported:

*“There are a significant number of holiday homes which cause extensive dead areas in all three settlements during the winter months and a population explosion in the summer...*

*There has been a tendency since the discovery of Thurlestone by the wealthy at the beginning of the century for housing in the district to be of the luxury class: this has mushroomed since the end of the second World War and has aggravated the problems of the imbalance in the community, the population being dominated by luxury housed retired people from other parts of the country. Added to this is the inexhaustible requirements of the wealthy of the Midlands and London for a seaside/country second home, this results in all houses which come on the market in the parish being priced out of the reach of local working people with too low an income to contemplate a house in their native village. Thus the young leave the district and bring up their families in places where they can afford to both live and work and so deprive Thurlestone of the youth which is so necessary to its continuing as a viable living village.”*

- (ii) At the time of the last census in 2011, 39% of all dwellings in the parish were second homes and/or holiday lets. The average figure across the South Hams was 15%. The number of second homes and/or holiday lets had risen by 8.5% from 247 in 2001 to 268 in 2011. A further increase in the proportion of second homes would be detrimental to the viability of the area, its services and facilities.
- (iii) The social and economic impact of second homes upon rural sustainability has been highlighted in a number of recent publications, including:

<sup>12</sup> Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings. Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse, Sept 2017 <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-traditional-farm-buildings/heag158-adapting-traditional-farm-buildings.pdf/>

- **Rural Housing, Countryside in Crisis**  
National Housing Federation, 30 June 2014<sup>13</sup>  
*“The number of second homes as a percentage of the overall housing in a local authority area is having huge impact on rural areas. In desirable coastal and national park areas with a high number of second homes the impact can be far-reaching. With second homes inhabited for only part of the year the local services can suffer with village shops, schools and bus services left struggling to survive.”*
- **Home Truths 2016/17: The housing market in the South West** - National Housing Federation<sup>14</sup>  
*“The South West faces a combination of high house prices and low wages resulting in an acute housing crisis. With cities, historical towns, many rural communities and long stretches of coast this is a diverse region with pockets of deprivation..... More than one in five second homes in England are found in the South West.”*  
Rural affordable housing specialist Hastoe’s chief executive, Sue Chalkley, said of the findings: *“This is having a disastrous impact on rural housing markets and is leaving young families across the rural south west with fewer housing options. As they move out of their communities to find somewhere more affordable, schools and other vital local facilities close and then families will never return – leading to our villages becoming seasonal ghost towns.”*
- **A place in the country: the contribution of second homes to North Devon communities**<sup>15</sup> a PhD thesis by Jenny Barnett, University of Exeter (2013) which explored the positive and negative contributions of second homes on local communities. *“..... the positive contributions second homes bring include income, potential employment and patronage of local services. The negatives include fewer permanent residents, the perception of impact on increasing house prices and the notion of a gap between those individuals who can afford multiple properties and those who can’t afford even one.”*

Whilst second homes do provide employment for local people, these are low paid jobs, e.g. gardening, property maintenance and house cleaning. Similarly, the local shops benefit from occasional purchases but not the weekly shop. To safeguard the social and economic future of the parish, the key issues for the parish are therefore to ensure:

- there are local children living in the parish to feed the primary and pre-schools;
- there is local housing available for those employed the schools, the care home (who work outside normal hours and cannot rely on public transport) and the tourism-related businesses (including the hotel and shops, leisure and recreational facilities); and
- there are local year-round volunteers to run community facilities/organisations.

<sup>13</sup> [http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Rural\\_housing\\_-\\_Countryside\\_in\\_crisis.pdf](http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Rural_housing_-_Countryside_in_crisis.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Home\\_Truths\\_2017\\_South\\_West.pdf](http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/Home_Truths_2017_South_West.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/centreforsportleisureandtourism/pdf/londonshowcase/Jenny\\_Barnett.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/centreforsportleisureandtourism/pdf/londonshowcase/Jenny_Barnett.pdf)  
<https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10871/14821/BarnettJ.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

- (iv) Historically, new 2 or 3 bedroom open market homes that would be well suited to young working people are snapped up as second homes and/or holiday lets by people from outside the existing community. See <http://www.red-earth.org/thurlestone/> and the proformas for [Thurlestone above Hotel](#) and [Thurlestone below Hotel](#), which include details of the Homefield and Church Farm redevelopment sites: 19 properties built in 1999, none of which are occupied year round; and Whimbrels Edge, on [Land Adjoining the Mead](#) where only 1 of the six 5-bedroom detached houses is occupied year round.
- (v) The purpose of the principal occupancy condition is therefore twofold: to safeguard the sustainability of the parish by delivering the types of homes identified as being needed within the community; and to address the existing demographic age imbalance by providing new opportunities for people to live and work in the parish. The opposing arguments to such a condition were rehearsed in [R.\(on the application of RLT Built Environment\) v Cornwall Council and St Ives Town Council \[2016\] EWHC 2817 \(Admin\)](#), where Hickinbottom LJ found at para 102 that: *“ Policy H2 [the principal residence requirement] is in pursuit of legitimate public interests identified in article 8(2) [of the European Convention on Human Rights], namely the interest of the economic well-being of the country, and for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others ... The Council considered that further development was unsustainable without the restriction in Policy H2; the Examiner concluded that that policy contributed to sustainable development; the Council were entitled to adopt that conclusion .....”*
- (vi) The condition has now been adopted in a number of neighbourhood plans (including The Lyn Plan, St Ives, St Minver, Coniston and Rame Peninsula NPs) and has been successfully upheld in the High Court (above) and on appeal in St Ives – see [Decision Letter, Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/16/3160559](#) - Tremedda, Wheal Venture Road, St Ives, 28 April 2017.

**TP7 introduces a policy to control replacement dwellings and extensions:**

- (i) To protect visual amenity in Thurlestone, particularly on the [Yarmer Estate](#) and [The Mead](#) which were built to optimise sea views that are an integral part of their residential amenity. This is particularly relevant where the visual amenity of a principal residence is harmed by a replacement dwelling or extension which is not occupied for most of the year.
- (ii) To prevent overdevelopment that is out of keeping with the character of the immediate area. See proforma for the [Yarmer Estate](#) and [The Mead](#) where there has been concern about several recently consented proposals.
- (iii) To help retain a reasonable proportion of bungalows which, as recognised in the HNS report, are well suited to adaptation for disability and will go some way to serving the needs of those wishing to downsize. Alex Gosling, chief executive of online estate agent HouseSimple recently commented:

*“There is a lack of suitable housing for the older generation, and with fewer bungalows being built and the existing stock declining or off the market indefinitely, there is a crisis brewing that could put a terrific strain on the care home system and NHS in the next decade.*

*We have an ageing population but there isn't the housing infrastructure in place to meet the needs of this demographic..."*<sup>16</sup>

A number of charities, including Age UK and Papworth, concurred with these comments<sup>17</sup>. The provision of specialist housing for older people is a County matter and for the long term, Devon County Council has a Strategy for Extra-Care Housing involving existing residential care homes in or near market towns.<sup>18</sup> For the short term, the Plan supports restrictions on ridge height, bulk and scale of all replacement dwellings and extensions in accordance with Policy TP7 of the Plan.

## D. Sources

Click on the links below to see additional Plymouth and South West Devon JLP Housing evidence upon which the Housing section of the neighbourhood plan is based:

Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area Housing Trajectory, Oct 2017:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/TTVTrajectory2016MonitoringPoint.pdf>

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/StrategyTopicPaper.pdf>

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ThrivingTownsAndVillagesSettlementBoundaries.pdf>

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/HousingTopicPaperProvisionSupply.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> [Housesimple survey: Demise of the bungalow, Sept 2017](#)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-4958682/Fears-bungalow-level.html>

<sup>18</sup> Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Housing - Devon County Council, March 2010 Version  
[http://www.devon.gov.uk/comm\\_strategy\\_for\\_extra\\_care\\_housing.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/comm_strategy_for_extra_care_housing.pdf)

### 3. LOCAL ECONOMY TOPIC PAPER

#### A. Background

The population of the parish at the time of the last census in 2011 was 863. The demographic spread shows a marked under-representation of the 16 - 29 age group, a lower proportion in the 30 - 64 age group and a substantially higher proportion of over 65s, compared to the South Hams and South West region averages.<sup>1</sup>

Age structure	Thurlestone Parish 2011		South Hams	South West Region	Thurlestone Parish 2001	
Age 0 to 15	83	10%	16%	17%	59	7%
Age 16 to 29	54	6%	13%	17%	72	9%
Age 30 to 64	354	41%	47%	46%	335	40%
Age 65 and Over	372	43%	24%	20%	361	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>863</b>				<b>827</b>	

Age structure, 2011 (KS102EW), 2001 (KS02)

In terms of economic activity, the area's population has significant variances from the South Hams district and South West region averages, notably, the parish has a higher proportion of people who are self employed and who are retired:

Economic activity: % population aged 16 to 74	Thurlestone Parish		South Hams	South West Region
Full time employee	128	22%	31%	37%
Self employed	123	21%	17%	11%
Retired	210	36%	20%	16%
Economically active but unemployed	9	2%	2%	3%
<b>All economically active</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>70%</b>

Economic Activity, 2011 (KS601EW)

The sectors employing the most people in Thurlestone parish are shown below. Compared to South Hams district and the South West region there is a higher proportion of people employed in accommodation and food service activities (i.e. tourism-related businesses) and construction and a lower proportion in manufacturing.

<sup>1</sup> All figures in this paper have been rounded to the nearest whole number

Industry	Thurlestone Parish		South Hams	South West Region
Agriculture	12	4%	3%	2%
Manufacturing	15	5%	7%	9%
Construction	37	11%	9%	8%
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles & Motor Cycles	43	13%	15%	16%
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	37	11%	8%	6%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	35	11%	13%	13%
Education	32	10%	11%	10%

Industry, 2011 (KS605EW)

It is difficult to quantify the exact number of residents employed in **tourism** in the parish. However, in addition to the above 37 people employed in accommodation and food service activities, under the Census Quick Statistics - Occupation (Minor Groups) QS606EW 2011: there are 6 people employed as managers and proprietors in the hospitality and leisure service; and 9 people employed in leisure, travel and related personal service (e.g. housekeeping). This brings the total to an estimated 52, which as a percentage of 336 (All economically active in 2011) is 15.5%.

There is no official source of recorded **businesses** at parish level. The Business Rates Register lists all rated properties, but is not searchable by parish. Searching by Thurlestone address only produces 6 premises which are not holiday lets. A list of businesses prepared by the Local Economy Working Group has 25 local businesses, 17 self-employed, 5 holiday letting companies and 10 farms/landowners. The highest number of **occupations** in the parish is in skilled trades occupations, professional occupations and managers, directors and senior officials. Compared with the proportions at district and regional levels, there are significant variances in manager, director and senior official occupations, administrative and secretarial occupations, sales and customer service occupations and process, plant and machine operatives.

Occupation	Thurlestone Parish		South Hams	South West Region
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	55	17%	14%	11%
Professional Occupations	54	17%	19%	17%
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	22	7%	9%	11%
Skilled Trades Occupations	59	18%	16%	13%
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	16	5%	7%	8%
Process, Plant/Machine Operatives	9	3%	5%	7%

Occupation, 2011 (KS608EW)

There is a far higher incidence of **home working** in Thurlestone Parish. Data for South Hams show that the self employed are twice as likely to work from home as employees. This is significant given the high level of self-employment in the parish.

Home working amongst economically active	Thurlestone Parish		South Hams	South West Region
Work mainly at or from home	65	19%	11%	7%

Travel to work, 2011 (QS701EW)

The mean annual wage across jobs in South Hams District (£20,386) is 82% that of the South West Region (£24,907) (ASHE, 2016).

The low average wage and high levels of in migration and second home ownership have helped create a serious housing affordability gap, adding to the difficulties of attracting and retaining employees. The table below uses house price (HMLR) and rental (VOA) data to understand the levels of income required to enter different tenures. The figures are for the whole of South Hams District. Data in South Hams District Council’s Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment shows that house prices are higher than the district average in the coastal areas, such as Thurlestone parish.

Affordability Benchmarks – Annual Income Required	To purchase Lower Quartile House (3.5 x income – 10% deposit)	Private Rented Lower Quartile 1-bed Dwelling (25% income)	Private Rented Lower Quartile 2-bed Dwelling (25% income)	Private Rented Lower Quartile 3-bed Dwelling (25% income)
South Hams 2013	£45,771	Not available	£25,200	£30,144
South Hams 2016	£50,142	£21,600	£28,128	£34,800
% increase	9.5%	-	11.5%	15.5%

Additional data relating to house prices in the parish is included in the evidence base for the Housing section of the neighbourhood plan.

## B. Policy development

### 1. Working Group

The group comprised five members, all volunteers who live in the parish: a retired company director, school teacher, company sales development manager, retired accountant and retired builder. The retired builder (since deceased) was born in the parish, lived and worked in the parish his entire life and was on the Parish Council for 41 years and Chairman for 21 years.

### 2. Tasks

The group met at frequent intervals between the Community Engagement Meeting in September 2015 and end of April 2016, when the Parish Questionnaire was compiled. Its initial tasks were to decide on a set of Objectives that would address the findings of the Community Engagement

Meeting (CEM) of 29 September 2015 and to gather evidence in order to build up a robust evidence base to inform the Questionnaire and ultimately, the policies in the neighbourhood plan.

### **(i) Objectives**

The CEM responses helped to identify the following issues that the neighbourhood plan would need to address:

- how to help extend the tourist season and encourage a more vibrant year-round working community;
- how to help existing businesses, their sustainable growth and expansion;
- how to support home working by improving connectivity; and
- how to support sustainable growth given our limited infrastructure

The group's discussions focused on being positive and constructive about contributing to sustainable development yet realistic in terms of viability and deliverability, given that the entire parish is located in the AONB and infrastructure is limited. As a consequence, the Working Group identified the following Local Economy Objectives:

*To support existing businesses and provide new employment opportunities for local people; and to promote sustainable growth in the local economy which is appropriate to the parish's location within the South Devon AONB.*

### **(ii) Evidence gathering**

At a meeting in January 2016, the working group agreed:

- To identify all the commercial entities which operate within the parish
- To establish the nature and scope of such enterprises
- To meet with or communicate with as many commercial operators as possible
  - to gauge the future intents of current commercial operators short and long term
  - to identify any hard plans which might be being considered in the immediate/near future
  - to identify any buildings that might be used in the future as appropriate commercial properties, given planning permission and the consent of owners
  - to establish with landowners and current commercial operators, any appropriate, potential areas that could be developed for commercial purposes
- To try to identify any possible, appropriate, new commercial entrepreneurs or new ventures which might be developed in future.
- To identify areas where commercial or entrepreneurial ventures would **not** be appropriate.
- To try to assess the likely employment numbers of any potential new ventures.
- To assess future needs.
- To assess results of the overall findings to establish propositions, issues and questions, so as to inform the Parish Questionnaire to be conducted in due course.

A list of 57 potential interviewees was prepared comprising 26 local businesses, 17 self-employed people, 5 holiday letting companies and 10 farms/landowners.

Members were tasked with contacting interviewees and reporting on outcomes. To facilitate the process, a **Business Survey** was devised to ensure consistency of approach. It was impressed upon members that the questions were to be used flexibly and used as a guide only, but that it was important to probe future plans and also, to check matters of confidentiality.

The Business Survey covered the history of the business, number of employees and nature of their employment, access and parking, broadband and mobile phone coverage, availability of any rural buildings/barns that may be reused, any interest in a business hub, more storage space, any difficulties running the business and what would they like to see happen to benefit their business in the near future. Click [HERE](#) to see a copy of the Business Survey.

The final number of interviewees was almost 30 and comprised the main employers in the parish: Thurlestone Hotel, Thurlestone Golf Club, Thurlestone Court Care Home, the Sloop Inn, All Saints' Primary School, the Bantham Estate, Pearson Pre-school, the garage in Thurlestone, the Thurlestone and Bantham shops, 8 farms/landowners; self-employed and homeworkers, ranging from outdoor events and corporate training to a music recording and audio post production studio. The issues raised by interviewees are summarised below:

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Landowner	Considered there to be business opportunities around boating activities, including boat building, maintenance and storage.
Tourism business	Lack of mobile phone service.
Tourism business/land owner	Lack of mobile phone and broadband coverage. High demand for outbuildings for use as workspace.
Service business	Lack of successor to take on business beyond retirement of current owner, lack of mobile phone reception, traffic congestion from school parking.
Tourism business	Lack of mobile phone connectivity and traffic congestion in high season. Support for business hub for self-employed.
Food and drink business	Lack of suitable parking, summer traffic congestion.
Watersports business	Lack of broadband and mobile phone connectivity, summer traffic congestion. Looking for storage space. May support a new shop.
Watersports business	Recruitment difficulties. Lack of small business units with good broadband and mobile phone service. Looking for storage space.
Education	Parking and mobile phone reception problems.
Social Services	Lack of public transport and accommodation in the parish for staff working nights and outside of normal working hours.

Retail	Need more parking.
Retail	Need for public conveniences. Would support business hub. Traffic congestion at peak times.
Self employed	Poor internet speed. Need more storage space.

Consideration of the responses to the Business Survey, meetings with businesses based in the parish and work undertaken by the South Devon Coastal Local Action Group (which covers Thurlestone Parish) have informed the following **SWOT** analysis:

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Stunning natural environment  High levels of entrepreneurship  Established tourism businesses  Favourable (mild) climate</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Poor connectivity (physical and virtual)  Reliance on private transportation (mainly cars)  Imbalance in age demographic  Seasonal employment  Low average wage  High ratio of house prices to average earnings  Difficulty in attracting key staff  Lack of provision for new businesses</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Technological advances to allow smarter working  Community initiatives  Collaboration in promoting tourism  Developing links between natural environment/heritage/ community activity and rural economy  Increase level of tourist spend  Tourism season shoulder months  Development of community Wi-Fi network</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Unresolved broadband and mobile phone issues  Young people leaving to seek higher value employment elsewhere  Loss of existing business premises for higher value redevelopment  Sea water quality and marine litter  Erosion of farm incomes</p>

Many of the issues identified in the above SWOT analysis cannot be addressed through a neighbourhood plan but would be appropriate for tackling at the local level if leadership and some resource were to be provided. Issues which the neighbourhood plan can help tackle are:

- preserving and enhancing the natural environment
- supporting the development of existing businesses
- improving the mobile phone and broadband infrastructure
- making provision for appropriate new businesses
- retaining business premises in business use
- enabling affordable housing

The Parish Questionnaire sought views on all these issues.

Click [HERE](#) to see a copy of a report of the Working Group's evidence-gathering. The questions arising from the evidence-gathering that were used to inform the Questionnaire were as follows:

- Is there scope for small-scale industrial/commercial operations in the Thurlestone Parish?
- Is there a need in the parish for boat storage?
- Is there a need in the parish for boat building/boat repairs/outboard engine servicing and storage?
- Is there a need in the parish for a farm shop (e.g. a mini Dart Park)?
- Is there a need in the parish for a spa facility/yoga/pilates/fitness studio facility, with parking?
- What improvements could be developed for holidaymakers and tourist in the parish - or - Would you like to see more facilities for holidaymakers and tourists? If so - what?
- Is there a need in the parish for a surf and watersports retail centre with parking?
- Is there a need for a centre or complex that people working from home can use?

### (iii) Parish Questionnaire<sup>2</sup>

The Questionnaire was conducted by the DR Company, a not for profit Community Interest Company who specialise in community surveys. The DR Company devised the questions, based on the evidence gathered by the Working Groups, and independently analysed the responses. Paper copies of the Questionnaire were distributed by hand to 698 households and 258 responses were received, which represented a return rate of 37%. The results are summarised below:

72% of respondents believed that there should be **more employment** within the parish. This support was from all household types, but notably from households with children (86%).

The following types of **business expansion** were supported:

82% supported expansion of B&Bs.

64% supported expansion of cafes/restaurants.

59% supported the expansion of shops

However, there was less support for some types of expansion:

48% supported expansion of pubs.

43% supported expansion of hotels.

25% supported expansion of caravan/campsites.

The following **new businesses** were supported:

54% supported new cafes/restaurants

72% supported art and crafts workshops

82% supported a **farmshop**

The highest levels of support for these new businesses were from households with children and second homeowners (as high as 86%, in the case of arts and crafts workshops), apart

<sup>2</sup> Click [HERE](#) to see a copy of the Questionnaire – Local Economy on pages 8-10

from the farm shop, which had the most support from households without children (88%) and second homeowners (95%).

However, respondents were strongly opposed to **new caravan and campsites** (78%) and there was a 50/50 split on support for a **new surf/watersports shop**. Whilst 51% of households with children were in support of new caravan and campsites, 71% households without children and 91% of those aged 65+ were not. In the case of a new surf/watersports shop too, there was a high level of support from households with children (61%) and also, from second homeowners (72%).

57% supported the development of a **new business hub**. There was 89% support from households with children and 57% support from households without children.

66% supported the development of **new small-scale workshops** e.g. for boat building, boat repairs, outboard engine servicing. This support was evenly spread across all households: 84% support from households with children, 69% support from households without children and 59% support from those aged 65+.

There was a 50/50 split on support for **more storage space** for local business or commercial use, but strong support for the **change of use of rural/farm buildings** to create opportunities for local business, commercial or storage purposes (77%).

There was almost unanimous support for **keeping existing business and commercial premises**, including shops and pubs, in uses which support employment (97%).

74% of respondents were dissatisfied with **mobile phone coverage** at home.  
83% of respondents were dissatisfied with mobile phone coverage around the parish.

Amongst those that reported that they either worked from home or within the parish only 50% of respondents were satisfied with **broadband** for work.

81% of respondents were supportive of developing a **community Wifi** network

The full **Local Economy** results can be found at pages 15-22 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

The Local Economy **cross-tabulations** can be found at pages 24-31 of Appendix A and Page 15 of Appendix B.

#### **(iv) Focus Group Meeting**

Following the Questionnaire Results presentation by the DR Company, a Local Economy Focus Group Meeting was held on 18 October 2016, which over 30 people attended. The leader of the Economy Working Group gave a presentation supported by slides about the Economy Working Group about the findings of the Questionnaire and possible draft policies emerging from them. The feedback obtained was instructive and included the following:

- Local businesses trying to expand are finding they cannot get people to work for them because of the lack of housing in the parish that they can afford.

- The external environment is moving very fast. The neighbourhood plan may be setting things in stone and not be flexible enough for the future, so that opportunities for investment will be lost. The plan needs to be kept under review.
- Local businesses, e.g. shops and restaurants, need customers and visitors are important in supporting such businesses. We may need a boutique hotel in the future.
- There should be flexibility regarding the expansion of existing camping and caravan sites that can produce a lot of income.
- 'Glamping' is fashionable and may bring in more and younger visitors.
- B & B is a thing of the past.

The Local Economy Policies were subsequently drafted and agreed by Steering Group members based on the above evidence-gathering, the results of the Parish Questionnaire and feedback from the Focus Group Meeting.

### C. Sources

Click on the links below to see source material upon which the Local Economy section of the neighbourhood plan is based:

[The Ownership of Farms and Farmlands in Thurlestone and the South Hams in recent times - Neville C. Oswald, The Devon Historian, October 1994](#)

[Visitor Attraction Trends in England 2016 Full Report - Visit England, July 2017](#)

[Visitor South Devon Marketing Strategy 2013/14 – Visit South Devon, November 2012](#)

[List of holiday lets in Thurlestone Parish prepared by NP Working Group](#)

[MAFF's Agricultural Land Classification, Oct 1988 \(see description of grades, pp 9-10\)](#)

[Facilitating Economic Growth in South Hams and West Devon - JOHT Resources Ltd, May 2014](#)

[Employment Topic Paper by Plymouth CC, SHDC and WDBC - July 2017](#)

Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings. Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse, Sept 2017  
<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-traditional-farm-buildings/heag158-adapting-traditional-farm-buildings.pdf/>

## 4. Wellbeing

Click on the links below to see source material upon which the Wellbeing section of the Plan is based:

The full **Wellbeing results** can be found at pages 23 -27 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

The Wellbeing **cross-tabulations** can be found at pages 32 -38 of Appendix A and pages 16 - 21 of Appendix B.

[Wellbeing Inventory](#) of the existing community facilities and services in the parish

[Family Events](#)

[http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/walks/walks%20with%20audio/Avon\\_esturay\\_web\\_walk.pdf](http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/walks/walks%20with%20audio/Avon_esturay_web_walk.pdf)

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/3179/planning-for-sport-development-management-guide-july-2014.pdf>

## 5. Heritage

Source material on which the Heritage section of the Plan is based included:

*“Memories of a Country Boy’s Life in Buckland”* by Peter Hurrell (2016).

*“The Story of Thurlestone, Bantham and West Buckland”* by Kendall McDonald (1993).

*“Life in Thurlestone in the past hundred years”* by Neville C Oswald. Extract from Rep Trans Devon Ass Advmt Sci 119, 101-115, December 1987.

Click on the links below to see additional source material:

[Listed Buildings in Thurlestone Parish – Historic England](#)

[School Heritage Trails \(Extracts from Village Voice\) – Thurlestone](#)  
[School Heritage Trails \(Extracts from Village Voice\) - Bantham and Buckland](#)

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag018-local-heritage-listing.pdf/>

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/planning/neighbourhood-planning-information-aug14.pdf>

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/rczas-dba-sw-england-south-devon-coast/sw-rczas-south-devon-dba-report.pdf/>

The full **Heritage results** can be found at pages 28 - 29 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

## 6. Environment

Click on the links below to see source material upon which the Environment section of the Plan is based:

The full **Environment results** can be found at pages 30 -32 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

[http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/files/mp2014/AONB\\_Management\\_Plan\\_2014\\_2019.pdf](http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/files/mp2014/AONB_Management_Plan_2014_2019.pdf)

[http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/files/AONB\\_Planning\\_Guidance\\_version\\_1.pdf](http://www.southdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/files/AONB_Planning_Guidance_version_1.pdf)

ILP Guidance Notes Light Pollution 2011:

<http://www.planapps.torfaen.gov.uk/Llanfrechfa/Documents/Part1web/EIAV2/Appendix%2014.pdf>

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LandscapeCharacterAssessmentSouthHamsAndWestDevon.pdf>

see pages 26,85& 86

[Natural England: National Character Area profile – South Devon](#)

[Wildlife Site resource map](#) - Devon Biodiversity Research Establishment

[Ornithological report of Thurlestone area](#) - The majority of the data in this report has been submitted to the British Trust for Ornithology and the Devon Birdwatching Preservation Society. It also includes additional records from local active ornithologists

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/at-home-and-abroad/england/cirlbuntings/cirl-bunting-factfile/>

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/at-home-and-abroad/england/cirlbuntings/the-story-so-far/>

[Biodiversity of Thurlestone Parish by Cllr Pearce \(2016\)](#)

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/UndevelopedCoastIdentificationProcess.pdf](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/UndevelopedCoastIdentificationProcess.pdf)

Shoreline Management Plan:

[http://www.sdadcag.org/docs/SMP/SDAD\\_SMP2\\_parts1to5\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.sdadcag.org/docs/SMP/SDAD_SMP2_parts1to5_FINAL.pdf)  
and [extract for Bolt Head to Avon Estuary \(East\)](#)

[Coastal Communities Funding: Thurlestone Golf Course – 2014 storm damage](#)

## 7. Infrastructure

Click on the links below to see source material upon which the Infrastructure section of the Plan is based:

The full **Infrastructure results** can be found at pages 33 - 38 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

The Infrastructure cross tabulations can be found at pages 39 - 40 of Appendix A.

[Night landing site/community helipad](#) – Devon Air Ambulance Trust

## 8. Resources

Click on the links below to see source material upon which the Resources section of the Plan is based:

The full **Resources results** can be found at pages 39 - 41 of the [Questionnaire Results](#).

[Community heating scheme](#) – Devon Association for Renewable Energy

<http://www.swdcep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SWDCEP-Strategic-Energy-Study-Evidence-Base-Main-Report.pdf>

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-guidance-v6-june-2013-final-report.pdf>

<https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/community-energy/energy-advice/planning/renewables/low-carbon-neighbourhood-planning-guidebook.pdf>

[Decision Letter - Land at Winslade Farm, Frogmore, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 2PA. Appeal Ref: APP/K1128/V/15/3136298 \(19 January 2017\)](#) and [Written Ministerial Statement](#)