

# STRETE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



## Statement of Consultation

September 2020

**Submitted by the qualifying body:**

**Strete Parish Council**

<http://strete.org.uk/council/>

**for:**

**Strete Neighbourhood Plan**

<http://strete.org.uk/neighbourhood/>

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## **SUMMARY**

*This consultation statement accompanies the Strete Neighbourhood Plan.*

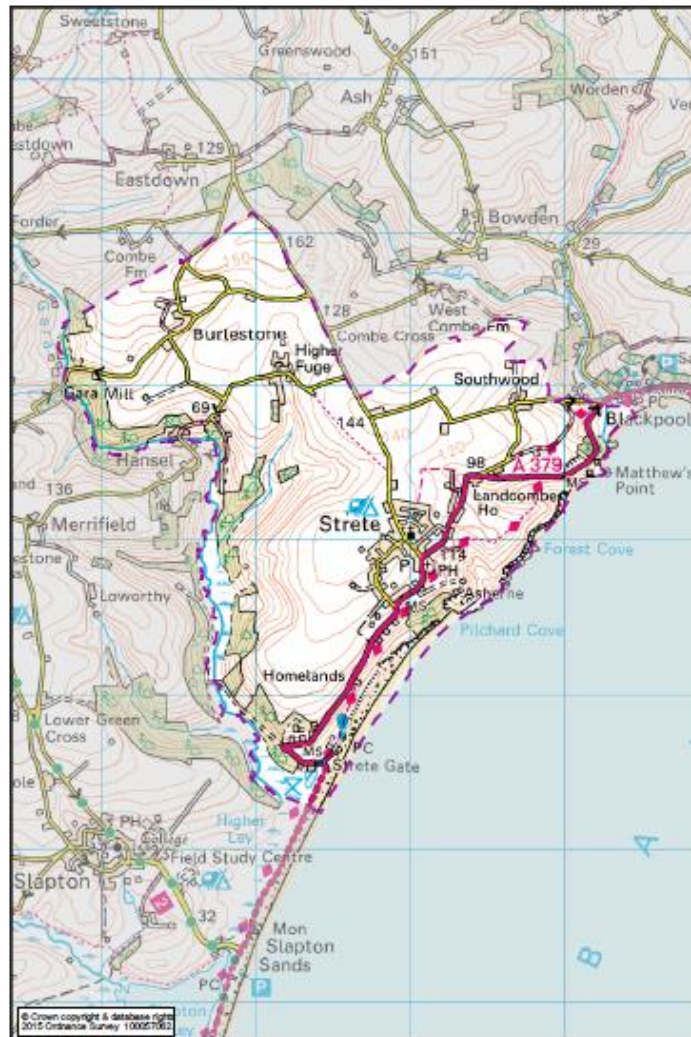
*It meets the requirements laid down in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (hereinafter referred to as “the Regulations”) and sets out:*

- *details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the plan;*
- *an explanation of how consultation was carried out;*
- *a summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation; and*
- *a description of how those issues and concerns have been considered and addressed in the plan.*

*The steering group is grateful to the district council, other bodies and the local community for their help and involvement in shaping the plan.*

## INTRODUCTION

1. This statement sets out the way in which the consultation undertaken as part of the Strete Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of the Regulations.
2. Strete Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for the preparation, consultation and submission of the neighbourhood plan. It has been assisted in the process by a steering group and local consultants. The neighbourhood plan group's Terms of Reference are at [Appendix 1](#).
3. The Strete Neighbourhood Plan area has been designated as the whole of Strete parish.



## LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

4. Part 5, paragraph 15 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for the qualifying body (Strete Parish Council) to submit the plan to the local planning authority, thus:

*15 — (1) Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include –*

*(a) a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;*

- (b) a consultation statement;*
- (c) the proposed neighbourhood development plan; and*
- (d) a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.*

This document fulfils requirement (b).

5. Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a consultation statement (such as this one) should contain:
  1. *details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the plan;*
  2. *an explanation of how consultation was carried out;*
  3. *a summary of main issues and concerns raised through the consultation; and*
  4. *a description of how those issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the plan.*
6. This statement meets those requirements, particularly in that part of the statement at para's 15-50 below.

## **THE CONTEXT FOR THE STRETE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

7. Strete is a high coastal village with outstanding sea views across Start Bay. The parish lies entirely within the South Devon AONB and at the heart of the village is a Conservation Area. The parish is home to about 400 people and the village still provides local facilities including a shop/post office, a pub, a parish hall, a parish church, a chapel, a village green, a community woodland and a children's play park.
8. The area is popular with holidaymakers and the local economy rests primarily on tourism and agriculture. Job opportunities are few and house prices are high which can make it hard for local people, especially the young, to afford to stay in the parish.
9. In February 2014 the community was invited to attend a meeting arranged by a housing developer to discuss proposals for development in the village on a green field site known as Cox's Farm Fields. Following that meeting South Hams District Council refused the proposal on the grounds that the developer had not followed the correct consultation process and the size of the proposed development was based on an out of date Housing Need Survey.
10. Following this Strete Parish Council asked South Hams District Council to organise a new Housing Need Survey for residents of Strete community to complete and return. In the light of the Housing Need Survey results Strete Parish Council resolved in July 2015 to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Strete. The plan aims to address local issues and priorities and to continue to involve the local community in making sure that change and development in future are for the good of the parish.
11. The neighbourhood plan's vision for Strete is:

**to grow slowly and sustainably so that its high coastal character, sea views and natural beauty are preserved while meeting local needs and improving local services.**

12. The plan aims to create a place where the following objectives are achieved:
  1. landscape character setting of the parish is maintained and enhanced;
  2. the sensitivity and prominence of the seaward landscape is suitably protected;
  3. valued local green spaces are maintained and enhanced;

4. local heritage is conserved and enhanced, and new buildings well designed;
  5. local tranquillity and dark skies are conserved;
  6. people are able to move more freely, safely and conveniently in and around the village;
  7. local needs are met through small organic developments, in scale with the locality;
  8. there is economical use of resources, with steady progress towards zero carbon energy and water footprints;
  9. local services are maintained, enhanced and extended; and
  10. community well-being is enhanced and with growing opportunities for people of all ages to contribute to the life of the community.
13. The plan's policies and proposals are laid out under three main headings:
- i. The Environment
  - ii. Development and Homes
  - iii. People and Community
14. The local community has shaped the plan, as is described below, and its policies and priorities respond to the issues and aspirations they have raised.

### **INITIATING THE PROCESS**

15. On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015 Strete Parish Council resolved to prepare a neighbourhood plan following the publication of a Housing Needs Survey undertaken by South Hams District Council on behalf of Strete Parish Council. [Housing Needs Survey 2015](#)  
The parish council is the appropriate “qualifying body” under the Regulations.
16. To begin the process two open public meetings were called in the Parish Hall in August and September 2015. 120 members of the community attended over the two days during which they contributed their comments and views on various issues in the parish including housing development. Please see the attached links:  
[Strete Village Day Newsletter August 2015](#)  
[1st Public Open Day August 2015](#)  
[2nd Public Open Day September 2015](#)
17. An application to register the Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation for Strete together with Terms of Reference was submitted to South Hams District Council on 8th October 2015. This was approved after the regulation consultation period on 19th November 2015.  
[SHDC - Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation](#)  
[Terms of Reference](#)

### **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

18. On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015 community members of Strete Parish attended a meeting in the Parish Hall where volunteers were invited to form a Steering Group. In total 23 residents volunteered – 15 Steering Group members and 8 to assist as Working Group members.
19. During October, November and December 2015, Steering Group and Working Group members categorised and summarised the comments received from the community at the two open meetings in August and September to identify the key issues that could be addressed by a Neighbourhood Plan.
20. These were incorporated into a Household Survey questionnaire together with a range of options detailed in an accompanying handbook aimed to assist each household in the

community to state their preferences on each issue raised.

[Supporting Booklet for Household Questionnaire](#)

[Household Questionnaire Response Form](#)

21. In March 2016 an advertisement was placed in the Dartmouth Chronicle and arrangements were made for the printing and hand delivery of the supporting booklet and household questionnaire response form by volunteers to every household in the parish over the weekend of 12th and 13th March 2016.  
[Dartmouth Chronicle Advert March 2016](#)  
480 Strete Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey & Response Forms together with the accompanying handbook were hand delivered to properties in the parish.  
224 completed Response Forms were returned - representing 47% of the community.
22. All returned survey documents, with contact details included, were redacted using a permanent marker pen to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
23. Steering Group volunteers set about collating and summarising the responses in the survey documents. At the end of each meeting the survey documents were retained in a locked ballot box to protect the transparency of the survey. The box was retained by one person and the keys for the lock by another to ensure no access could be made until the next meeting.
24. From the Household Survey Questionnaire five main preferences were identified:
  1. Housing Development of 5 to 10 homes
  2. Additional parking needs above the requirements for any new housing development
  3. New footpaths to improve safety for an ageing community
  4. Design and construction of new development homes to reflect the character of the village
  5. New housing development to meet energy sustainability and efficiency[Summary of Household Questionnaire Responses April 2016](#)
25. Sub-groups were formed from Steering Group members to answer thirteen questions in relation to the evidence needed to support these community preferences. A Project Timetable was produced setting out the evidence requirements needed to meet the aspirations of the community and a preferred time frame for completion.
26. Objectives were agreed for Steering Group members to provide evidence statements:
  1. Protection of Green areas, Landscape Assessment, AONB and Conservation Area – the effects on tourism, farming methods, wildlife, etc.
  2. Housing Design (replacement dwellings, house extensions) - materials and sustainability
  3. Protection of Shop and Pub – viability & tourism importance
  4. Footpaths (existing and proposed) / Rural Development - effects to the coastline and the countryside. e.g. phone masts, barns, etc.
  5. Strete Village Development Boundary - confirm accuracy with extension proposals
27. A circular to all members of the community was hand delivered to provide a progress update and inform everyone that a 'Call for Sites' advert was arranged. This appeared in the Dartmouth Chronicle on 9 December 2016.  
[Newsletter Update November 2016](#)  
[Dartmouth Chronicle Call for Sites Advert December 2016](#)

28. In March 2017 Plymouth and South West Devon produced a draft Joint Local Plan for consultation. Strete was identified in this plan as a village able to accommodate 10 dwellings over the plan period until 2034. This number met with the housing number preference expressed by the community in the household questionnaire in 2016.
29. A consultant was appointed to assist in preparing draft policies for the plan using the evidence built up during 2016, including the land offered for development, in readiness for the regulation community consultation period.
30. An Outline Structure for the draft plan was discussed by Steering Group members. Some of the policies in the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan reflect the views of Strete community. It was decided that formal support for these policies should be registered with South Hams District Council as part of the consultation process. Reference supporting these policies has been included in the plan.
31. Screening opinions for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) were requested from SHDC to ensure the plan would have no unacceptable environmental impacts (regulation 15). SHDC advised that an SEA report would be needed to assess the potential impact of proposed development on the South Devon AONB. (This has been completed with the assistance of AECOM and finds the plan to have no unacceptable impacts on the AONB.)
32. Discussions took place to resolve where, in the draft plan, the most suitable site available for housing development should be. Each Steering Group member presented their views on the issue. This was followed by a vote where members concluded that Cox's Farm Field offered the best opportunity for housing development in the village. Site assessments were carried out using the matrix system provided by SHDC to determine suitability, availability and achievability for inclusion in the draft plan.
33. Written evidence to show that the proposed local green space designations in the plan are National Planning Policy Framework compliant was produced by SG members.
34. Robust evidence to substantiate the proposed Principal Residence Requirement policy in the draft plan was researched for relevant statistics where this policy has been included and approved on various websites. e.g. Rame Peninsula, Cornwall
35. A meeting was arranged with the landowner of Cox' Farm Fields in August 2017 to discuss housing development ideas being proposed by the community for inclusion in the draft plan. Strete Estate insisted on the removal of the Principal Residency Requirement from the draft plan. SG members advised Strete Estate that this policy was supported by SHDC for inclusion in Neighbourhood Plans and that, without this restriction, the problem of homes for local people in South Hams will become more of a problem. Strete Estate advised they would remove the availability of Cox's Farm Fields for development if this restriction remains in place in the draft plan.
36. This issue was discussed with a member of the Neighbourhood Plan team at SHDC. Although the landowner's stated position was unhelpful it was recommended that the policy be included and noted that the landowner position may change at a later date.
37. The village magazine, Stretewise, has included in each edition the monthly Neighbourhood Plan reports provided to the Parish Council.
38. A summary of the draft plan has been prepared for circulation to every household to

encourage residents to read the full draft plan once the six-week consultation period starts.

## **THE DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

39. The draft neighbourhood plan was published for consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Regulations, from noon on 19<sup>th</sup> February until noon on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018. The plan and supporting documents were made available at the parish council and neighbourhood plan section of the parish website. Hard copies of the draft plan were also made available for inspection by arrangement at Weatherley, Hynetown Road, Strete.
40. Those consultation bodies prescribed in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Regulations were consulted, along with other relevant local groups and organisations. A copy of the consultation letter/email and details of those bodies and organisations to which it was sent are at **Appendix 2**.
41. Extensive local consultation also included:
  1. an advertisement announcing the start of the consultation period was included in an edition of the Dartmouth Chronicle dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018. This was supplemented by posters on public noticeboards, in the village shop and other prominent locations;
  2. a leaflet, which summarised the draft plan, was hand delivered to every household in the parish on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2018. The leaflet is available at <http://www.strete.org.uk/neighbourhood/the-plan/>;
  3. an open meeting to present the draft plan including details of the regulatory requirements and evidence collected by Steering Group members to support the plan took place in the Parish Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 7.30pm. Display panels with maps were used to highlight boundary lines for some of the policies included in the plan; and
  4. a feedback survey of the draft plan was handed out for those attending the open meeting to complete. The feedback was used to help gauge the level of support for the plan.
42. There were a wide range of responses to the plan, both from locals and from statutory consultees. A great deal of support was expressed for the plan and many of its policies. There were also divisions of opinion regarding some of the detailed policies and particularly about the development site proposal at Cox's Farm Fields.
43. Amongst comments made were some constructive suggestions regarding potential changes which could improve the plan. In particular these related to the delineation of the settlement boundary and of some policy areas, and to the Cox's Farm Fields site.
44. The Steering Group deliberated at length about the most appropriate way to proceed and concluded that, although it would involve some cost and delay, a re-consultation on some key changes would enable the plan to be amended and improved to satisfy many of the comments made.
45. A summary of each of the comments made on the draft plan and the Steering Group's responses, together with a description of changes proposed to the plan as a result, is set out in the Response Report which is now submitted along with the plan to SHDC. That report can be found at <http://www.strete.org.uk/neighbourhood/the-plan/>.



## **THE RE-CONSULTATION**

46. Not every change proposed to be made to the plan as a result of representations made on the draft required a further round of consultation. Many changes were minor in nature and are described in the Response Report. However, the following changes were considered to be so substantial as to require a further round of consultation:
1. Retractions of the settlement boundary;
  2. Changes to the Cox's Farm Fields development site proposal; and
  3. Retraction of the low density policy area (to correspond with the retraction of the settlement boundary).
47. Accordingly a paper setting out the relevant proposed changes to those parts of the plan was prepared for the purposes of the re-consultation. It can be found at <http://www.strete.org.uk/neighbourhood/the-plan/>.
48. The scope of the re-consultation and publicity arrangements were the same as those for the initial consultation on the draft plan had been, and the proposed changes were open for comment from 22<sup>nd</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018.
49. Once again the majority of responses received were in support, although there remained some dissension in the local community, particularly about the Cox's Farm Fields development site proposal. The Response Report has been expanded to also include the further representations received during the re-consultation.
50. The Response Report (also at <http://www.strete.org.uk/neighbourhood/the-plan/>) again includes summaries of the comments made, an outline of the Steering Group's response in each case and details of any further minor changes proposed to the plan as a result.

## **THE SUBMISSION AND THE EXAMINATION**

51. The plan and associated documents were submitted to South Hams District Council in January 2019 and an examiner was duly appointed to consider the plan.
52. In March 2019 the JLP was adopted. A number of changes had been made to the plan as a result of its examination. Of significance for Strete were changes to give greater recognition to the importance of the AONB. These changes included the removal from the plan of all villages falling within the AONB which had been listed as "sustainable" and therefore subject to dwelling allocations. The examiners were unconvinced that there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate that those dwelling allocations would not harm the AONB. Any village wishing to advance development in a neighbourhood plan would need to present satisfactory evidence to support the development and demonstrate that the AONB would not be harmed.
53. In order to explore in more depth the proposed development site at Cox's Farm Fields an exploratory meeting took place in June 2019. The examination was then suspended for several months to enable a way to assure delivery of the site could be found. This ultimately proved to be unattainable and so the site has been deleted from the plan.
54. The revised plan and associated documents are now resubmitted to the district council in order that the examination can resume.

## APPENDIX 1

### STRETE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN –TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Strete Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan Group

**Purpose of the Group:** To Prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish, in consultation with the wider community, local groups and interested parties.

**Objectives of the Group:** To facilitate the process of achieving an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan for the future development and sustainability of the Parish of Strete.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be produced with due consideration for the needs of all residents and businesses in the area, now and in the future.

The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and those residing within it.

**Membership & Governance:** The Steering Group shall achieve the following goals in partnership with the Parish Council:

- Manage and co-ordinate the production of a draft Neighbourhood Plan that is representative of local views.
  - Co-ordinate effective engagement with all members of the community on a number of aspects relating to the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - Effectively communicate findings, ideas and approaches for the Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council and the wider community.
  - Identify support, resources and funding needed for stages of the process.
  - Manage the decision making process in an open, transparent and accessible way.
  - Identify areas, or specific sites, to accommodate development, that may be necessary, consistent with the South Hams Policy.
  - Consider growth that is suitable for the Parish of Strete as part of maintaining a balanced and happy community.
  - Produce appropriate timescales and delivery mechanisms for the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - Produce a Neighbourhood Plan that is consistent with national and District policies.
  - To take the Neighbourhood Plan to adoption by the District Council.

Membership of the Steering Group will comprise of six Parish Councillors initially and nine volunteers drawn from the local community who expressed an interest during the initial consultation with a maximum of 15 members at any one time.

The Steering Group shall elect its own officers in accordance with a clear structure to be publicly available.

The Steering Group shall appoint Working Groups to operate on its behalf.

Involvement in the Working Groups shall be drawn from volunteers in the community that live, operate a business, or hold a specific interest in the Parish of Strete and have expressed an interest in taking part.

They will be expected to exercise balanced consideration for the needs of all aspects of the local community.

Members may be excluded from the Steering Group or Working Group for conduct and behaviour that is disruptive and does not promote the aims and objectives of the Steering Group or Working Group.

Exclusion of members will be by a majority vote of the Steering Group.

The Steering Group shall not be affiliated to any political party, but will welcome the involvement of councillors as community representatives.

Declarations of Interest will be dealt with as per the Parish Council's Standing Orders, in that anyone who has a pecuniary interest in the policy/project under discussion will be asked to declare it, and if deemed necessary will not take part in that discussion.

This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of land or a business, or any other matter that may be considered to be relevant.

Such declarations shall be recorded and be publicly available

Members of the Steering Group will debate the issues and policies inherent in the production of the Plan in consultation with the community.

Members with particular expertise in certain areas will head up specific projects / policies.

Organisations and businesses may assist in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and may contribute to the cost of producing it.

Details of any donations or assistance must be made publicly available and must not influence the recommendations of the plan.

When required, members can be replaced or invited to attend to further a project or policy, or if a member is not willing or able to continue as a member of the Steering Group.

The community will be encouraged to share knowledge and contribute during the process. A minimum of seven voting members of The Steering Group will represent a quorum enabling the aims and objectives of the Group to be considered.

Votes are only available for members of The Steering Group.

The Working Groups shall meet as and when necessary for their particular project.

At least 5 clear working days' notice shall be provided for each Working Group meeting with discussion topics circulated at the same time.

Discussion topics and agendas for any meetings that the public may attend should be made publicly available at least 5 clear days prior to the meeting.

**Reporting and Feedback:** The Steering Group shall aim to meet once per calendar month, or as may be required, with a minimum of seven days' notice given prior to a meeting taking place.

Agenda items should be agreed with the chairperson(s) at least seven clear working days and will be circulated at least five clear working days prior to the meeting.

Any meeting of the 'Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group' must be public with the time, date and location of the meeting announced 7 days' prior. Notice of any meeting is to be given by email circulation to SPC councillors and the placing of a notice advising the time/date and location of the meeting on the Public Noticeboard. A nominated individual shall maintain minutes of each meeting to be made reasonably available to the members of the Steering Group within seven days of the meeting and to members of the public within fourteen days of the meeting.

Any matters of disagreement at a meeting may be decided upon by a majority of votes. Voting by Members of the Steering Group will be by a show of hands, and a majority decision adopted, with a quorum of six required for any vote, the Chairman having a casting vote if necessary.

All meetings, minutes and notices will be in the public domain and will be put on the Parish Council's website and Public Notice Boards, copies will be kept by the Parish Clerk for public inspection. Meetings are open to all members of the Parish to attend and all groups and interested parties will be encouraged to participate

Any contentious issue not able to be dealt with by the Steering Group, will be put to the Parish Council for resolution.

**Resources and Finance:** Grant funding applications from the Sustainable Community Locality Fund will be applied for as well as investigating other funding streams. Mentoring and guidance from Officers at South Hams District Council to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcome for the Parish will also be applied for. Subsequent resources required will be determined by the Steering Group.

The Parish Council should oversee the expenditure and programme of work as advised by the Steering Group, in consultation with the community. Any recommendation to amend the numbers of the Steering Group, or change the projects/policies already confirmed, will be referred to the Parish Council for a decision.

**Monitoring & Review:** Monitoring of the plan will be ongoing, with regular reports from the Steering Group, and progress will be monitored by the Parish Council. The adoption of a Neighbourhood Development Plan is vital to ensure a vibrant, sustainable and environmentally healthy Parish for future generations.

## APPENDIX 2

### LIST OF BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED ON THE DRAFT PLAN

REG 14 list of “consultation bodies”	SNP consultee list
(a) where the local planning authority is a London borough council, the Mayor of London;	NA
(b) a local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority;	South Hams District Council Devon County Council Devon County Council Public Health Dartmoor National Park Authority Slapton, Stoke Fleming & Blackawton Parish Councils
(c) the Coal Authority(a);	NA
(d) the Homes and Communities Agency(b);	✓
(e) Natural England(c);	✓
(f) the Environment Agency(d);	✓
(g) the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)(e);	✓
(h) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587);	✓
(i) the Highways Agency;	✓
(j) the Marine Management Organisation(f);	✓
(k) any person— (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003; and (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority;	Mobile Operators Association British Telecom
(l) where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood area— (i) a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(a) or continued in existence by virtue of that section; (ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) and (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(b); (iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(c); (iv) a sewerage undertaker; and (v) a water undertaker;	NHS Devon NEW Devon CCG, Western Locality NHS Devon and Devon PCT Western Power Distribution Wales and West Utilities British Gas Connections South West Water

(m) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area;	South Hams CVS Dartmouth Caring
(o) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area;	Churches together in Devon
(p) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area; and	Local businesses and property owners
(q) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.	DOVE project and Stairways (for people with learning disabilities) South Hams Lifestyles
Other bodies	Sport England Visit England