

# Yarcombe and Marsh Neighbourhood Plan

**2014-2031**

**Referendum Version**



[www.yarcombe.net](http://www.yarcombe.net)  
[yarcombe.clerk@yahoo.com](mailto:yarcombe.clerk@yahoo.com)

Yarcombe & Marsh Parish Council  
07/05/17

<b>Date of versions</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> draft</b>	<b>31/08/2015</b>
<b>Pre-submission version</b>	<b>27/02/2016</b>
<b>Submission version</b>	<b>27/09/2016</b>
<b>Referendum version</b>	<b>7/05/ 2017</b>
<b>Approved version (made)</b>	

**Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

- Cllr. Nick Randle (Chairman)
- Cllr. Lesley Pidgeon
- Cllr. Tony Long
- Graham Wadey
- Lesley Sutton
- Wendy Randle (Secretary)

## Contents

1 Introduction .....	4
The Community’s Plan.....	4
The plan area.....	4
How have we got here?.....	7
The plan’s status.....	7
Sustainable development.....	9
The structure of our plan.....	9
2 Vision, Aims and Objectives .....	11
3 Natural Environment.....	14
Protect and enhance the natural beauty of our parish .....	17
Preserving Tranquility and Our Dark Skies.....	20
4 Built and Historic Environment.....	23
Maintain the Built Character of our Parish through High Quality Design .....	25
5 Population and Housing .....	28
Facilitating small scale housing development which includes affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing.....	29
6 Community Facilities and Services .....	31
Improvement to local facilities and amenities .....	31
Encourage new retail units, such as a shop.....	33
7 Transport and Accessibility.....	35
To support measures to reduce traffic speeds through the village.....	36
To maintain and if possible enhance the network of footpaths.....	36
8 Economy and Employment.....	39
To support appropriate building conversion to sustain local businesses .....	39
To support the provision of high speed internet connectivity .....	42
9 Energy and Low Carbon Alternatives .....	43
To support Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes .....	43
Monitoring and Review .....	46
Appendix 1 Summary Table of Aims, Objectives, Policies and Community Actions .....	47
Appendix 2 Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide for Houses .....	55

### **Acknowledgements**

**Yarcombe & Marsh Parish Council would like to thank the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups well as residents, local groups and organisations for their hard work and input during the development of this Plan.**

**We also thank Matthew Tomkinson and Peter Tarrant for use of the photographs in the Plan.**

# 1 Introduction

## *The Community's Plan*

- 1.1 This neighbourhood plan is *the community's plan*. It represents the community's vision and priorities for how they would like to see the local area change in the coming years, and in doing so it sets out our local planning policies which will be taken into account as and when any proposals for development come forward in the parish.
- 1.2 The plan cannot cover every issue identified as being important to the community: it has a focus on responding to proposals for development and the appropriate use of land. It puts us, as a community, in the driving seat when it comes to having a say over what, how and where development should take place where it requires planning permission. The plan and its policies reflect our parish's own characteristics while recognising that it has a lot in common with other rural parishes in East Devon which share the landscape of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



- 1.3 The plan covers the period between 2014 and 2031.

## *The plan area*

- 1.4 The Parish of Yarcombe is situated in the heart of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty and is an Environmentally Sensitive Area. Yarcombe consists of two main areas of population and is equidistant from both Honiton and Chard, straddling the A30 whilst the hamlet of Marsh lies beside the A303 to the North. *Throughout this document the parish is often referred to simply as Yarcombe, but the intention is to include both villages in all references.*
- 1.5 The centre of Yarcombe Village is situated around the parish church of St John the Baptist, the former Yarcombe Inn currently the subject of a disputed change of use application, and the Belfry Hotel (formerly the village school) with the well located and much used Jubilee Hall and Drakes Meadow Estate a few hundred yards away. Marsh is a ribbon village with the Flintlock Inn in the centre.

- 1.6 The 2011 census states that the parish has a population of 500 residents in 203 households. The village has a long agricultural history and the field patterns are the result of centuries of management, the hedgerows a fundamental feature of the local landscape and vital for the wellbeing of wildlife. There is a definitive description of all footpaths and bridleways in the Footpath Guide.



- 1.7 There is an extraordinary sense of community illustrated by the winning of the 2005 Devon Calor Village of the Year competition. The surprisingly large numbers of small businesses carried off the Regional Award in the 'Business of the Year' category and a directory of businesses has been published. The Good Neighbours scheme is available to anyone in need and there is a Pastoral Team who keep in touch with parishioners on a regular basis. The monthly magazine 'Yarcombe Voices' is distributed to nearly all dwellings and keeps all up to date with local issues and the many events which take place throughout the year.
- 1.8 The neighbourhood plan area (the whole parish) was approved by East Devon District Council following consultation. Figure 1 shows the extent of the area.

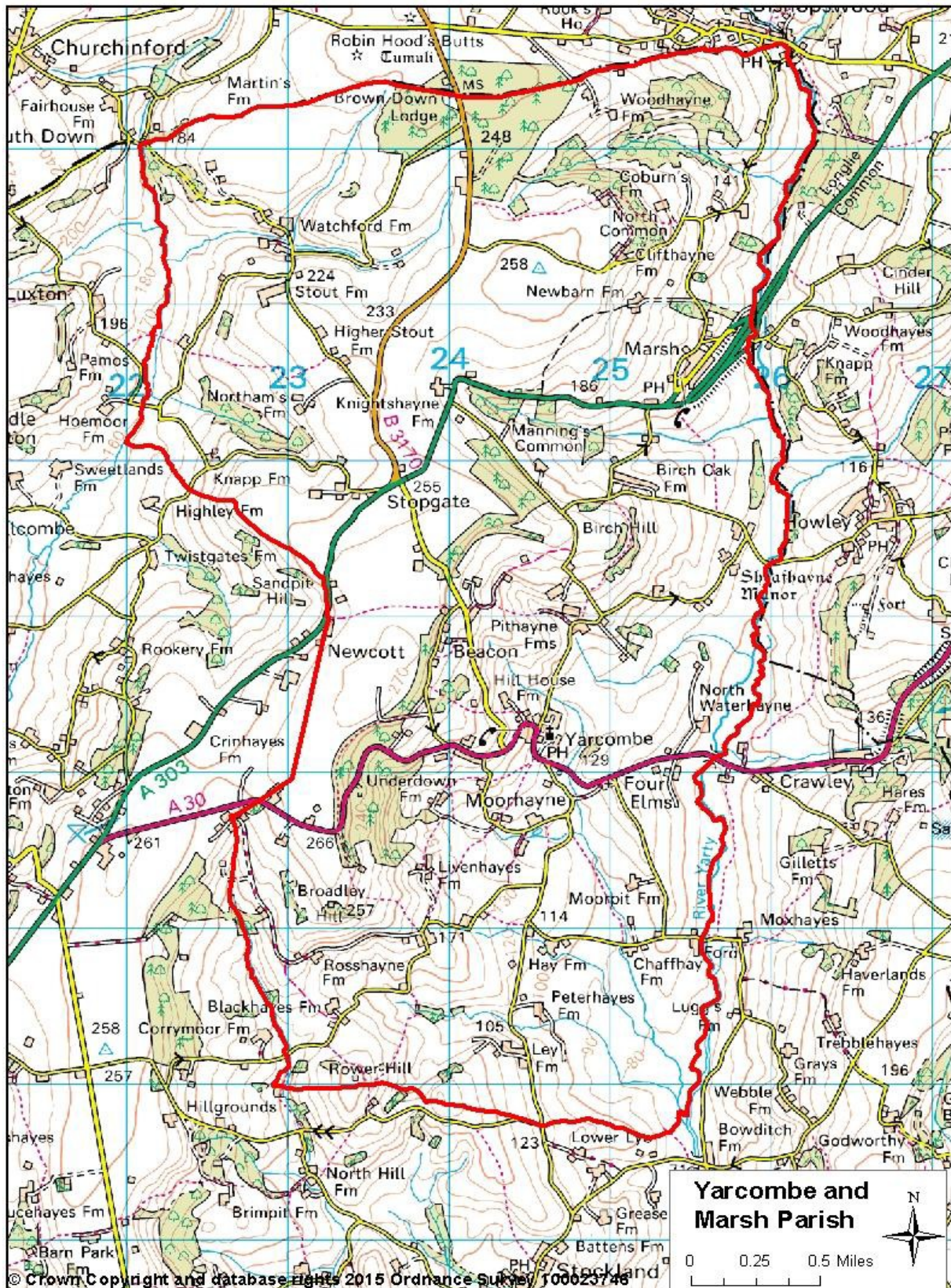


Figure 1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area Source: East Devon District Council

## ***How have we got here?***

- 1.9 In order to produce the plan, its development has been driven by a steering group, comprised of residents and parish councillors. It was recognised at an early stage that for the plan to be truly representative of the planning issues of relevance in the parish and to be *the community's Plan*, we would need to conduct thorough engagement with those who live and work in the parish. We also recognised that the Plan could not be properly developed without the input of organisations and agencies with a district, county, sub-regional or national remit.
- 1.10 The process and types of consultation and discussion that we have gone through is documented in detail in our Consultation Statement which accompanies this plan. However, the key methods we have used have included:
- Public exhibitions, meetings and events;
  - A community questionnaire sent to all households;
  - Information and updates on the village website;
  - Contact with local businesses and groups;
  - Directly contacting wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an interest in planning issues in the parish; and,
  - Consultation 'windows' during which comments have been invited on draft documents.
- 1.11 Our development of the plan was based on a desire to be open and to encourage comments and contributions from all quarters with the aim being to achieve consensus, but also to have debates about issues where the community was divided in its views.
- 1.12 Having developed the Plan through this interactive approach, this first draft of the plan was shared with the community and other stakeholders and was revised to reflect comments before progressing through the regulatory framework which included consultation on the pre-submission (next) version of the plan, formal submission to the local authority and public examination of the Plan before an independent Inspector. After that point, assuming that the plan passes through the Examination successfully, it will be subject to a public referendum where residents on the electoral register will be asked if they support the final plan. If the referendum answer is a "yes" from a majority of voters, the Plan will be "made" (or adopted) by the local authority.

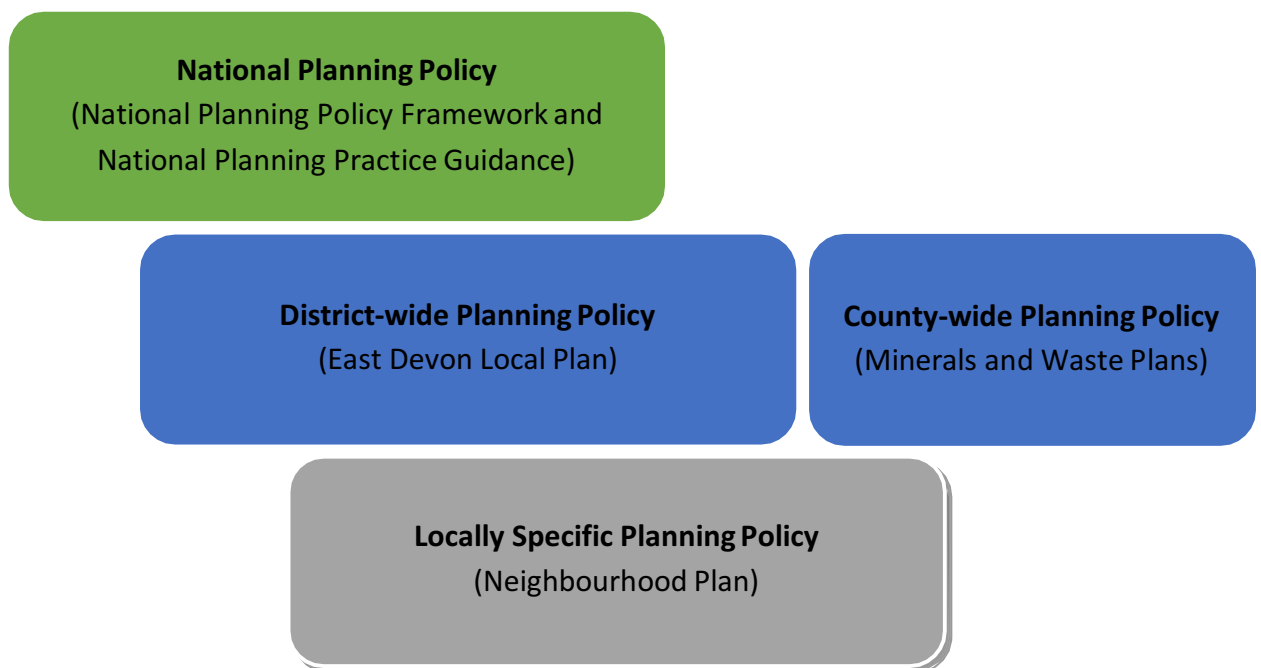
## ***The plan's status***

- 1.13 This neighbourhood plan, once made, will be part of the statutory development plan. That means that its policies will have significant weight when it comes to being used by the local authority to help determine proposals for development submitted through planning applications. It will form the local tier of planning policy in our parish. It sits with the District-wide Local Plan, produced by East Devon District Council (also part of the statutory development plan) and underneath the umbrella of national planning policy in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), as the main planning policy documents relevant to our area. Other important planning documents which govern specific issues are the Minerals and Waste Plans produced at county-wide level.

1.14 The relationship between our neighbourhood plan and other planning policy documents is shown below.

1.15 However, this plan should not be treated as a blueprint. When this plan is made (adopted) policies will need to be used by the local planning authority when it considers decisions that need to be made about development proposals submitted through the planning application process. The plan's policies, however, cannot guarantee that a proposal will be refused nor be granted permission, but the policies will carry significant weight, alongside policies of the NPPF, NPPG and Local Plan when weighing up the appropriateness of the proposal in question.

**Figure 2 Planning Documents with Statutory Weight**





## ***Sustainable development***

- 1.16 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) set out the Government’s planning policy to which all plans and proposals for development should comply. The NPPF includes, at its heart, a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. It is important to understand what that means for our plan as it sets the parameters within which we can make proposals and set policies.
- 1.17 When taking decisions on proposals for development this means that proposals should be approved where they accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that development should be restricted. Translating this to what it means for our neighbourhood plan, it states that plans should “...support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development...” and “...plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan”. The NPPF goes on to say that “The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.” We are also advised that neighbourhood plans should reflect these Local Plan policies and plan positively to support them, while not promoting less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermining its strategic policies. Outside of strategic policies, we are encouraged to shape and direct sustainable development in our area through our neighbourhood plan.

## ***The structure of our plan***

- 1.18 Our plan sets out the Vision, Aims and Objectives for our area, which have been developed based on our extensive dialogue with the community and shaped by existing planning policies, plans and contributions of key organisations and agencies.
- 1.19 Having explained our rationale for these, the plan sets out our local planning policies on a topic by topic basis. Our topics have been derived by pulling together common aims and common key issues arising from consultation.
- 1.20 Within each topic we set out which Aims and Objectives the theme’s policies are seeking to respond to and a summary of the characteristics of that theme and the key issues which have arisen. Then, for each policy we set out:
- our justification for why we need the policy;
  - the policy;
  - the other planning policies in national and District-wide planning documents which relate to that policy; and links to key supporting evidence (most of which are summarised in our Written Evidence Base Report which accompanies the Plan)
- 1.21 It is important to note that, while we have packaged policies under topic headings, when

development proposals are being assessed, the whole plan (i.e. all policies) should be considered as policies in one topic may apply to proposals which naturally fit under another.

1.22 Our plan finishes with an explanation of how we will monitor and review the plan.

## 2 Vision, Aims and Objectives

### **Yarcombe & Marsh Neighbourhood Plan Vision Statement**

**Our Community is in an area with an exceptional natural environment and a beautiful landscape, accessible to all who live and visit here. Our built environment is traditional but varied. We wish to preserve and enhance these qualities while improving the sustainability of our community with well designed small scale development in our village centres, appropriate improvements to existing properties and improved infrastructure such as superfast broadband and additional local amenities.**

- 2.1 Our vision for the parish represents our view of what we would like the parish to be like in the future by the time that the plan reaches its end date. The vision is a representation of the aims of our plan, the things we would like to achieve, which have been derived from local community consultation and other evidence.
- 2.2 The Aims of our Plan have been set following extensive community consultation and discussion. They are set out under a set of topic areas. These topics are:
- Natural Environment;
  - Built and Historic Environment;
  - Housing and Population;
  - Community Facilities and Services;
  - Transport and Access;
  - Economy and Employment;
  - Energy and Low Carbon
- 2.3 Our Objectives (how we are going to achieve the Aims) are set out in each topic section in the Plan and it is from these Objectives that our policies and community actions have been developed. **Appendix 1 sets out a summary table of our Aims, Objectives, Policies and Community Actions.**

<b>Natural Environment</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Protect and enhance the natural environment, including the distinctive landscape and ecology.	a) Retain and enhance the existing beauty of the parish by encouraging the planting of native trees and hedges, along with the preservation of existing Devon banks.
2. Protect the tranquillity of the environment and maintain the dark skies.	a) Resist any development likely to have a significant adverse effect on tranquillity or dark skies and seek ways to reduce any existing impact.
<b>Built and Historic Environment</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Ensure that all new development of domestic and agricultural buildings is sympathetic to the traditional character of the area.	a) Work with EDDC and applicants to ensure that any new development, alteration or extension is constructed according to the Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide.
	b) Ensure that the size, scale, location and materials used, minimise the visual impact on the essential character of the village and neighbouring properties.
<b>Population and Housing</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Support local needs small scale housing development, to include affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing.	a) Facilitate small scale housing development which supports the needs of the ageing population as well as that of young people and families.
	b) Ensure that any new build housing is in keeping with its surroundings.
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Endeavour to maintain and improve local facilities and amenities such as the village hall and pub.	a) Support any necessary and sensitive improvement of local facilities and amenities, and enable and support entertainment and leisure activities for all sections of the community.
2. Encourage small scale retail units such as a village shop or café.	a) Support proposals for new or improved retail or social amenities that are in keeping with the character of the area and which meet local needs.
<b>Transport and Accessibility</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Support measures to reduce traffic speed through Yarcombe.	a) Support appropriate physical measures to help reduce traffic speeds when necessary.
2. Maintain, and if possible enhance a network of footpaths.	a) Maintain good public access to footpaths and woodlands.

	b) Support small scale improvement projects for footpaths and bridleways.
	c) Support schemes that extend the footpath network where needed.
<b>Economy and Employment</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Support and sustain local businesses.	a) Support the appropriate conversion of agricultural and other buildings where it is necessary to maintain viability of farm business.
2. Aim for provision of high speed internet connectivity to all parts of the parish.	a) Support the provision of high speed internet connectivity to all residential properties and business premises.
<b>Energy and Low Carbon Alternatives</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1. Encourage small scale and unobtrusive renewable energy providing it is sensitively sited.	a) Ensure that any renewable energy schemes are sensitively sited and appropriately landscaped to protect the essential qualities of the AONB.
	b) Resist large scale and obtrusive renewable energy schemes that are likely to have an impact on the enjoyment of the natural and built environment and are contrary to our Vision.

### 3 Natural Environment

Natural Environment	
Aims	Objectives
1. Protect and enhance the natural environment, including the distinctive landscape and ecology.	a) Retain and enhance the existing beauty of the parish by encouraging the planting of native trees and hedges, along with the preservation of existing Devon banks.
2. Protect the tranquility of the environment and maintain the dark skies.	a) Resist any development likely to have a significant adverse effect on tranquility or dark skies and seek ways to reduce any existing impact.

#### Introduction

- 3.1 The parish of Yarcombe and Marsh lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is bounded by the River Otter to the northwest, by the headwaters of the Corry Brook to the southwest and by the River Yarty along its eastern boundary. Yarcombe village is bisected by the A30 and to the north, Marsh is underscored by the A303. Both roads meet just outside the western parish boundary.
- 3.2 With its long agricultural history, the natural features of the landscape are the result of centuries of considered management. We are proud of our woodland, field patterns and hedge banks which support wildlife and provide a now typical feature of our local landscape.



- 3.3 This distinctive quality of the parish is a characteristic highly valued by the people who live here. The well documented features and the quality of our natural environment as an asset to people, wildlife and biodiversity has been supported by the responses to our Neighbourhood Plan local consultation and community questionnaire.

### **Yarcombe and Marsh Biodiversity Sites**

Broadley Hill – Spring line mire

Collyforches farm – Unimproved marsh

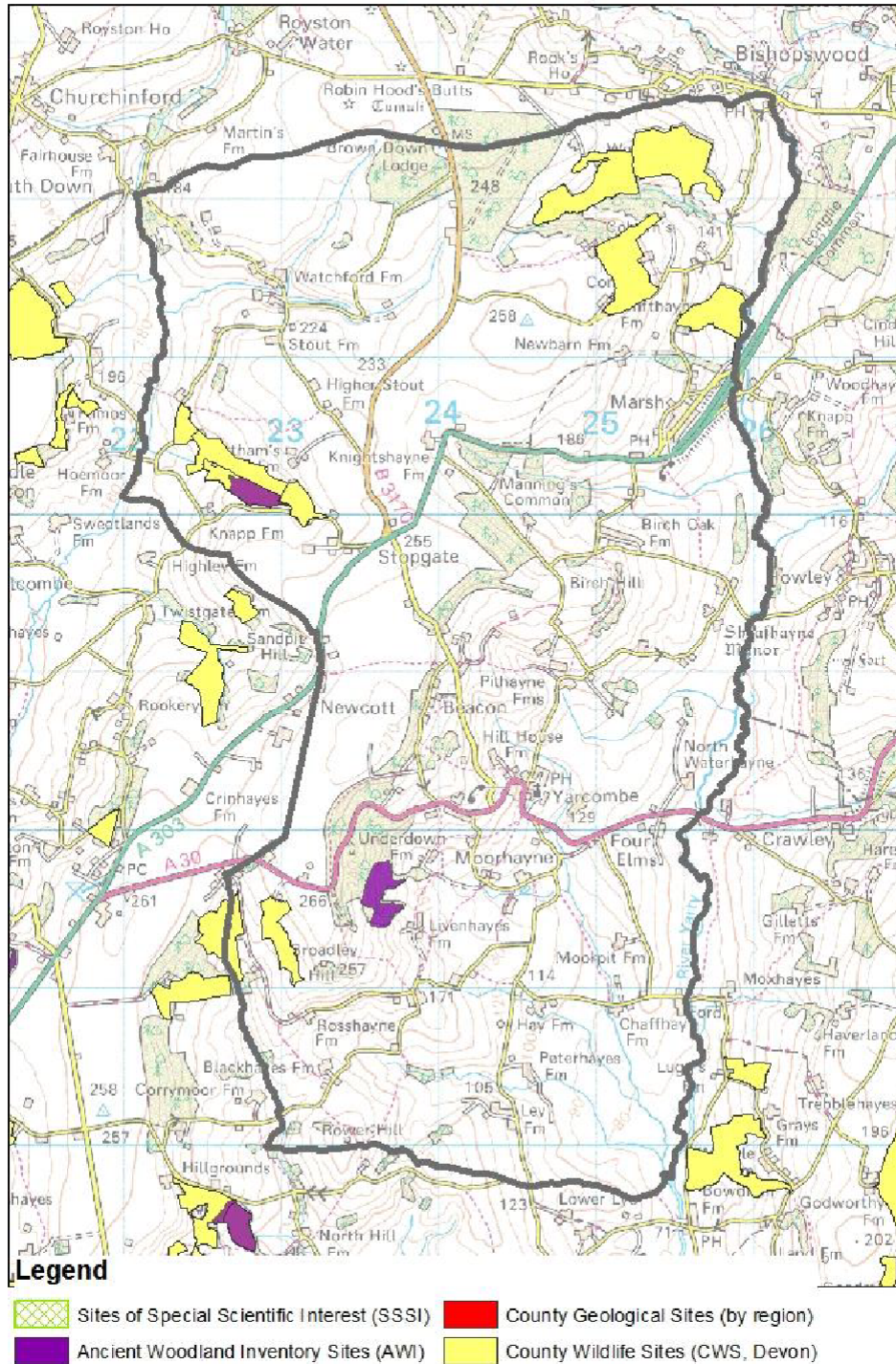
Moorwood – Spring line mire

North Common – Spring line mire

Underdown Moor – Ancient woodland

Woodhayne – Unimproved natural grassland and former quarry

## Yarcombe biodiversity sites



© Crown copyright and database rights [2014] Ordnance Survey [0100055135 EUL]. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions.



## ***Protect and enhance the natural beauty of our parish***

### **Justification for our policy**

- 3.4 We have already identified the importance of the high quality of the landscape, and of the biodiversity in the parish as part of that landscape, to both the people who live in Yarcombe and the wildlife which inhabits the natural environment.



3.5 While there are other policies at national and district levels which afford some protection of our natural environment (see the related policies box below), there are a number of locally specific issues which we deem of sufficient importance to the community to require additional policy protection and guidance. We are also conscious that while the approved AONB Management Plan provides principles which should be applied to the natural

environment in Yarcombe, they do not have statutory weight in the decision making process even though they should be considered as a “material consideration” when planning proposals are considered by the local planning authority.

- 3.6 We feel a strong sense of need for our Plan to adequately reinforce some of the overarching principles of protection for the environment to give us both the certainty that such policy coverage will remain and also to ensure that our Plan represents fully the weight of the issues raised by our community. In doing so, it can fulfil its Aims and Objectives without relying solely on other policy set out elsewhere. Our Aims and Objectives, identified as important by the community, also show synergy with many of the agreed AONB Management Plan principles and policies.
- 3.7 We are clear that it is not the role of the Neighbourhood Plan to prevent development from taking place. However, we are equally clear that any development which is proposed within the parish, as part of the AONB, requires special consideration to ensure that its impact does not have adverse or negative impacts on our valued natural environment. We therefore require development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have any adverse impact on the existing state of the natural environment.
- 3.8 Our preference is for appropriate development to fit within the landscape without having adverse impacts on its surrounding landscape and the natural and built character of the area within which the proposal is located. However, in some cases, it may be acceptable for appropriate landscaping to play a role as part of the solution to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the setting of the proposal. Where the use of planting is considered to be an appropriate part of that solution, native local species of plants should be used, such as hawthorn, blackthorn, ash, oak or beech.



- 3.9 Devon hedges (commonly also referred to as “Devon banks”) are a common feature of the landscape in Yarcombe. They are usually formed of an earth bank which is faced with either stone or turf and is often topped with bushes or shrubs. They are often very old, biodiverse and very attractive. They play an important role as stock-proof barriers and shelter for livestock and crops. Our farming community and other local landowners have a key role in maintaining the integrity of these important features. The successful conservation of these hedges is critical to maintaining the special character of Yarcombe’s natural, farmed and historic landscape.

**Policy NE1 – To promote measures which protect and enhance the natural environment**

- i) Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity and that they will enhance the natural environment where there is an opportunity to do so.**
- ii) Where mitigating measures are unavoidably required for development to be acceptable within its landscape setting, appropriate landscaping should be employed to mitigate the impact of the development and protect biodiversity. Such measures should include the use of native species of trees and hedges where planting is required.**
- iii) Proposals for development that would affect existing traditional Devon Hedges should demonstrate that all other options have been assessed and that it is the least damaging option to the hedge, its setting in the landscape, biodiversity and habitats.**

### **Key supporting evidence**

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19

“What makes a view?”, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013

Devon Landscape Character Assessment, Devon County Council, 2008-12

Conservation and Management Online Information Pack, Devon County Council, 1998  
([http://www.devon.gov.uk/the\\_devon\\_hedge](http://www.devon.gov.uk/the_devon_hedge))

Protocol for Protected Landscapes, Devon County Council (Highways), 2011  
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/landscape-policy-guidance>

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014

Yarcombe Parish Plan, Yarcombe Parish Council, 2005

(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)

### **Community Actions and Projects**

**CA1**- The Parish Council will work with partners such as the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB and EDDC to encourage the planting of native species of hedge and trees.

**CA2** - The Parish Council will work with partners such as the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB, Devon County Council and EDDC to encourage the positive management and preservation of our Devon banks.

**CA3** - The Parish Council will work with the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB, EDDC and DCC to identify particular hedgerows and Devon banks at risk in the parish.

### **Main related national, district and AONB policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 109

East Devon Adopted Local Plan 2013-2031 - Strategy 5, Strategy 46

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies LC 1/A, LC 2/B, FLM 1/C, FLM 2/A, FLM 2/B, FLM 2/C, PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, TH 1/A

### ***Preserving Tranquility and Our Dark Skies***

#### **Justification for our policy**

- 3.10 We have already identified the importance of the tranquility of our parish in relation to the characteristics of the natural environment and landscape. Much of the coverage in policy terms which relates to preserving the tranquility of our environment is contained within AONB guidance (which is advisory and not statutory). The adopted Local Plan has no policies specifically referencing or considering the implications of potential change to the tranquility of our parish. National planning policy allows for planning policies and decisions to aim to identify and protect areas of tranquility which *“have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason”*.<sup>1</sup> It is a locally specific issue to our parish and therefore, given its importance to the community, merits some reinforcement through policy in our Plan.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 123, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government

3.11 There is a significant body of evidence which demonstrates the presence of dark skies above the parish and their value. Protecting them as an asset through the control of light pollution is important locally. Even small changes to lighting can have



an impact when added together cumulatively. National planning policy states that *“By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”*<sup>2</sup> The adopted Local Plan sets out a policy which identifies light pollution as District-wide criteria for consideration of development proposals. The focus of this policy is on local amenity and surroundings rather than on the impact on dark skies per se. However, the AONB Management Plan sets out an objective which relates, very clearly to the tranquility and value of the dark skies stating that *“The tranquility of the Blackdown Hills AONB is conserved and enhanced by restricting or reducing noise and light pollution and major developments within or affecting the AONB.”*<sup>3</sup>

3.12 Given this context, the importance to the community, and its identification in the AONB Management Plan objectives and policies as an important issue, we have introduced a policy which specifically refers to maintaining tranquility and maintaining our dark skies through the control of light pollution.

---

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 125, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government

<sup>3</sup> P 56, objective PD5, Blackdown Hills Management Plan, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013

### **Policy NE2 – To protect tranquility and maintain dark skies**

To ensure that the tranquility of the parish and our dark skies are maintained, development should demonstrate that it:

- i) will have no significant adverse effect on the tranquility, through increasing levels and frequency of noise, of the parish:
- ii) will have no significant adverse effect, through light pollution (during any part of the year), on our valued dark skies observable from the parish.

### **Key supporting evidence**

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims & Objectives Consultation, October 2014

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

“What makes a view?”, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013

Light Pollution in the Blackdown Hills, Blackdown Hills AONB

<http://www.blackdownhillsaonb.org.uk/Light-pollution.html>

(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence report)

### **Main related national, district and AONB policies**

National Planning Policy Framework – Paragraphs 123 & 125

East Devon Adopted Local Plan, 2013-2031– Strategy 46

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-2019 – Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, LC3/B

## 4 Built and Historic Environment

Built and Historic Environment	
Aims	Objectives
1. Ensure that all new development of domestic and agricultural buildings is sympathetic to the traditional character of the area.	a) Work with East Devon District Council and applicants to ensure that any new development, alteration or extension is constructed according to the Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide.
	b) Ensure that the size, scale, location and materials used, minimise the visual impact on the essential character of the village and neighbouring properties.

### Introduction

- 4.1 The built character and form of Yarcombe and Marsh villages and of our hamlets of Sheafhayne, Four Elms and Beacon contribute significantly to the sense of place and the parish's identity. The village and hamlets have a history to them which has shaped the look and feel of where we live today. The landscape setting of our village and hamlets is as important as the built form, as it is the special landscape of the AONB which frames our settlements. These factors come together to make up the character of our village and hamlets.
- 4.2 National and district policies and designations afford significant degrees of protection of existing built heritage and historic assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments. The AONB Management Plan, although advisory in nature, also sets out objectives and policies relating to the importance of ensuring that any new development is of high quality design and conserves the historic character of the AONB, stating that, *"All development in the AONB is of the highest quality, is in keeping with the landscape and conserves its wildlife, historic character and other special qualities."*<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> P56, Objective PD1, Blackdown Hills Management Plan, Blackdown Hills AONB 2013



- 4.3 Within this context, our local evidence suggests a need to introduce more local, specific policies, to reflect local distinctiveness and ensure that any development proposals respect the importance of our local historic and heritage assets and the traditional built form of our settlements. Importantly, our policies are intended to help guide development proposals on how best to integrate new development into our existing built and natural environments, steering away from blandness in design and towards innovation and respect.

#### **Hamlets in Yarcombe:**

**Sheafhayne :** The historic listed Manor was once owned by Sir Francis Drake is approximately 1.5 miles from the village centre. The Manor is still owned by the descendants of sir Francis Drake. There is a Kitchen Garden House and other cottages opposite the main building.

**Four Elms:** Fronting the A30 is a small group of cottages situated near to the Baptist Chapel which was built in the early Victorian period.

**Beacon:** Previously owned by the Yarcombe Estate, these properties were sold off in the 1930s to pay death duties. Beacon is a collection of thatched and slate roofed dwellings, with one new build of approximately 20 years. Many were small family farms.

- 4.4 Most of the housing in the parish was built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century of local chert stone with a slate roof, with a few remaining earlier builds having been made of cob. There is a strong presence of properties with thatched roofs.
- 4.5 Post World War Two, the Local Authority built two clusters of housing at Tilery and Hillside. There was little development between the 1950s and 1980s when Drakes Meadow was built as a mixed development of two bedroomed starter homes and four bedroomed family houses and large bungalows.



## ***Maintain the Built Character of our Parish through High Quality Design***

### **Justification for our policy**

- 4.6 Our policies are intended to help guide development proposals to best integrate small scale new development into our existing built and natural environment. Given the quality of our built environment in some parts of the parish and the varied quality in other parts, together with the need for existing and future developments that respect the beauty of our natural landscape in the AONB, we consider it important to protect and conserve the character of our existing built environment. We recognise that where change does take place, it does so in a sympathetic and sensitive way for our parish and its setting within the AONB landscape. Therefore, the design and materials of any new development should take this into account.
- 4.7 The Blackdown Hills AONB has developed design guidance for housing and we endorse its content and advice through this Plan. The Design Guide for Houses should be taken into account in addition to the local character and setting of the proposed development site when making proposals for development in Yarcombe. The guidance sets out a number of general design principles<sup>5</sup> which are:
- Whether new build or alterations, good detailing, appropriate materials and sensitive treatment of the spaces around buildings are essential elements in achieving a successful and sympathetic scheme.
  - Locations for new buildings and development should follow the traditional settlement pattern and respect the integrity of historical settlement forms.
  - Layouts for new development sites should reflect the road patterns and plot forms of the surrounding traditional settlement. It is important to create the same sense of enclosure, traditional proportions and massing of buildings, for example continuing a distinct building line along a street.
  - Building forms and materials should reflect the local traditions.

---

<sup>5</sup> P 12, Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide for Houses 2012

**Policy BHE1 – To maintain the Built Character of our parish through High Quality Design**

To ensure that new development is sympathetic to the traditional built character of the parish:

- i) proposals for residential development should be of a high quality design and take account of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses.
- ii) proposals for any development should enhance the visual amenity of the setting and minimise any adverse visual impact on the essential character of Yarcombe, and on neighbouring properties to the proposed development site. Particular attention should be paid to:
  - a) ensuring that the size, scale and location of the development is appropriate to the form, scale and setting of the surrounding built environment;
  - b) ensuring that materials and design of the development are in-keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment;
  - c) ensuring that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the biodiversity and geodiversity.

**Community Actions and Projects**

**CA1** - The Parish Council will encourage use of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses for residential development which does not require planning permission or fall under Permitted Development Rights.

**Key supporting evidence**

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19

Design Guide for Houses, Blackdown Hills AONB

“What makes a view?”, Blackdown Hills AONB, 2013

Yarcombe Village Design Statement

(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)

**Main related national, district and AONB policies**

National Planning Policy Framework – Sections 7 and 12

East Devon Adopted Local Plan, 2013- 2031 - Strategy 48

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C, PD2/A

## 5 Population and Housing

Population and Housing	
Aims	Objectives
1. Support local needs small scale housing development, to include affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing.	a) Facilitate small scale housing development which supports the needs of the ageing population as well as that of young people and families.
	b) Ensure that any new build housing is in keeping with its surroundings.



### Introduction

- 5.1 National planning policy advises that it is important to recognise the particular issues facing rural areas in terms of housing supply and affordability, and the role of housing in supporting the broader sustainability and vitality of villages and smaller settlements. It suggests that a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities and that rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities. It also states that assessing housing need and allocating sites should be considered at a strategic level and through the Local Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 5.2 Current adopted local planning policy requires special care to be taken when development takes place within the AONB, as do AONB policies, and the Local Plan takes a similar stance as set out in earlier sections of this Plan, with development proposals being required to conserve or enhance the character of the landscape and protect the traditional local built form.
- 5.3 Yarcombe village is the main settlement in the parish with the small village of Marsh along with dispersed rural dwellings and farmsteads making up the remainder. The parish comprises of 500 people in 203 households.



- 5.4 There is very limited public transport available, the people of the village provide a good neighbour scheme, such as providing transport for doctors' appointments, runs to the train station etc. The village benefits from a Village Hall, Church, Baptist Chapel, The Belfry Hotel (once Yarcombe School), Sheafhayne Manor (once owned by Sir Francis Drake) and the Flintlock Inn, a popular traditional Pub in Marsh. Much of the local employment in the village is naturally concerned with farming. The A30 winds through the middle of Yarcombe and joins the A303 which separates Yarcombe from Marsh, the joining side roads are narrow, often single width lanes, many of which are made up with traditional Devon style banks and/or hedges. It is important to understand the characteristics of the village as they inform the suitability or not of locating new development there, to what scale and of what type.

***Facilitating small scale housing development which includes affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing***

**Justification of our policy**

- 5.5 A housing need survey was completed in 2012 which identified a need for 7 affordable homes within the next 5 years. The survey also found older person households needing alternative accommodation who had sufficient resources to meet their need in the open market. The households in need meet the East Devon District Council local connection requirement. 89% of those replying said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people.
- 5.6 Yarcombe and Marsh villages will be the focus for any new development in the parish to provide homes that will meet the need of the local population and encourage those wishing to down size to be able to stay living in the village in accordance with the East Devon Local Plan.
- 5.7 We have established that Yarcombe is a rural parish with few facilities and is set in a sensitive environment and landscape which needs to be protected for its beauty and biodiversity and its status within the AONB reflects this. We have also set out our policies, in the Yarcombe and Marsh Village Design Statement, which govern how any new development should look respecting its rural and built surroundings.

**Policy PH1 – To facilitate small scale housing development which includes affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing**

**Development proposals on appropriate exception sites within or physically well related to the villages which meet one or more of Yarcombe’s identified housing needs will be supported providing that:**

- a) the development is small scale and is in keeping with its surroundings;**
- b) The Blackdown Hills Design Guide for houses is taken into account.**
- c) Any development does not otherwise compromise the character of the village centres in which they are located.**

**Key Supporting Evidence**

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014

Yarcombe Village Design Statement

Yarcombe Parish Plan 2005

(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)

**Main related national, district and AONB policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 55

East Devon Adopted Local Plan, 2013 – 2031 -Strategy 35

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 1/C

## 6 Community Facilities and Services

Aims	Objectives
1. Endeavour to maintain and improve local facilities and amenities such as the village hall	1a) Support any necessary and sensitive improvement of local facilities and amenities; 1b) Enable and support entertainment and leisure activities for all sections of the community
2. Encourage small scale retail units such as a village shop	2a) Support proposals for new or improved retail or social amenities that are in keeping with the character of the area and which meet local needs

### Introduction

- 6.1 Yarcombe regards itself as a thriving village community. There are many and varied community organisations and a range of regular community activities that take place, mainly in the Jubilee Hall. A well frequented pub ‘The Flintlock Inn’ is central to the community in Marsh.



6.2 However, missing from the heart of the community in Yarcombe is a village shop and the pub (The Yarcombe Inn has been closed since 2014). A Post Office franchise operates in the village every Tuesday morning.

6.3 It has been made clear in the consultations carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan that the pub is valued by local people and that more local retail outlets such as a village shop, which

meet local demands, would be welcomed. These requirements were particularly prominent in the consultation event with young parishioners in November 2014. The Neighbourhood Plan’s Objectives reflect a desire to encourage forms of local retail development to enhance access to top up shopping needs and to help sustain our local rural economy.

### *Improvement to local facilities and amenities*

### Justification for our policy

- 6.4 To ensure that we remain a proper community, we feel strongly that we should protect the existing local facilities, which contribute to our way of life and its quality. Consultation events have demonstrated a desire amongst the local community to ensure that there is no loss of community facilities and what we

have remains fit for purpose. We acknowledge that changes may have to be made to help our community facilities and amenities to remain relevant, viable and able to meet future needs and demands in an appropriate way.

- 6.5 Changes or improvements that require modification, alteration or extension of existing land or buildings however should not be detrimental to the character of the area or our natural assets. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF recognises their value and states that neighbourhood plans should *“promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship”*<sup>6</sup>
- 6.6 This is echoed in Policy CC4/A of the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 which advocates *“support the retention or enhancement of community facilities, services and amenities where compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB.”*<sup>7</sup>

#### **Policy CFS1 – Improvements to local facilities and amenities**

Development proposals which seek to improve Yarcombe’s existing local community facilities and amenities will be supported where:

- i) they directly serve the community in Yarcombe
  
- ii) it can be demonstrated that the community benefit outweighs the impact of development
  
- iii) they do not have a significant adverse impact on the special character of the area’s natural and built environments.

#### **Key Supporting Evidence**

Blackdown Hills Management Plan 2014-2019

Blackdown Hills Community Plan 2011

Yarcombe Parish Plan 2005

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014

(More relevant evidence is summarized in the Yarcombe Written Evidence Report)

---

<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 28, National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government

<sup>7</sup> Policy CC4/A, Blackdown Hills Management Plan, Blackdown Hills AONB 2013



### **Related national and district policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policy CC4/A

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013 – 2031 – Strategy 4

### ***Encourage new retail units, such as a shop***

#### **Justification for our policy**

- 6.7 Paragraph 28 of the NPPF recognises that the development of local services serves to strengthen the local economy. Within that policy context, we would welcome a shop at the heart of our parish within the village of Yarcombe. New retail businesses that are easily accessible and serve the local community will help to make us more sustainable as a community. They would reduce the need to travel and our dependency on the car for every-day activities and supplies. They would help strengthen the sense of community and neighbourliness we have in Yarcombe.
- 6.8 Any new retail or commercial development must be of an appropriate scale and not adversely affect the character and visual appearance of the neighbourhood. Development proposals must also conform to the Neighbourhood Plan policies for the natural and built environment. We are also conscious that new additional retail and commercial premises (and the businesses that they accommodate) should improve the local economy and services we have in our community.



**Policy CFS2 – Encourage new retail outlets, such as a shop**

**The provision of premises for new small scale retail and commercial business within Yarcombe village will be supported where it:**

- i) meets a local demand;**
- ii) can be provided preferably through the conversion or extension of an existing building, or if that is not viable, the development of a new building, without having a significant adverse impact on the special character of the area's natural and built environments.**

**Key supporting evidence**

Blackdown Hills Management Plan 2014-19

Blackdown Hills Community Plan 2011

Yarcombe Parish Plan 2005

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation, November 2014

(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)

**Related national and district policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013 - 2031- Strategy 4

## 7 Transport and Accessibility



Transport and Accessibility	
Aims	Objectives
1. Support measures to reduce traffic speed through Yarcombe.	a) Support appropriate physical measures to help reduce traffic speeds when necessary.
2. Maintain, and if possible enhance a network of footpaths.	a) Maintain good public access to footpaths and woodlands.
	b) Support small scale improvement projects for footpaths and bridleways.

### Introduction

- 7.1 Yarcombe village sits astride the A30, the former trunk road to London. Whilst this has been superseded by the A303, the road is well used and remains the main route between the market towns of Chard and Honiton. The road is a relatively wide A road with steep inclines and sharp bends, particularly in Yarcombe village itself.
- 7.2 Evidence from the Community Consultation of 2014 shows that the community would like traffic speeds to be further controlled, particularly on the A30, since traffic speeds often exceed speed limits in the built up area.

7.3 As a community we are very car-dependent. The parish is served by one bus route, a once- a-week service on a Tuesday morning which runs to and from Honiton. Car ownership is high – only 5% of households do not have regular access to a motor vehicle. Fortunately the parish is also served by the Fare Car (community transport) service and a Good Neighbours scheme.



7.4 Recent consultation shows that travel and traffic issues are few and most people accept and enjoy their relative seclusion. It is pleasing to record that many local people enjoy walking, although cycling is less popular. Our intent is to further reduce the impact of the motor car and make walking, riding and cycling safer and more appealing.

***To support measures to reduce traffic speeds through the village***

**Justification for our community action**

7.5 A number of solutions have been considered, ranging from the introduction of rumble strips or psychological influencers such as a gateway to Yarcombe, but to date, the visual environmental consequences have always outweighed the perceived benefit of speed reduction. However, new technology is constantly emerging and our plan recognises that some priority should be given to achieving reductions in traffic speeds through our community.

**Community Action & Projects**

**CA1**– Consider implementing new technologies as they become available, that are designed to manage vehicle speeds.

***To maintain and if possible enhance the network of footpaths***

**Justification for our policy**

7.6 As a community we enjoy walking and wish to enjoy the natural environment in our parish in a way that is safe, beneficial for health and not detrimental to the countryside or those that inhabit or work within it. We shall continue to support the Highway Authority to maintain and improve the existing network of rights of way and encourage sustainable access within our parish. We would like to see an increase in the number of footpaths and bridleways, particularly those that link us to the wider network of routes and with other settlements and communities.



7.7 We welcome proposals that help make our off-road routes more appealing and accessible for all users whilst protecting the essential character of the route and our sensitive natural environment. We will investigate and assess potential route extensions where these will significantly enhance the network and can be achieved without an impact on our other policy areas.

7.8 The Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan has a number of policies under the heading of 'Access and Enjoyment' that seek to:

- *Achieve an accessible, connected and above-minimum-standard network of Public Rights of Way across boundaries throughout the AONB, whilst conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB (Policy AE 1/A)*
- *Seek an appropriate balance between providing and promoting access and the conservation of the landscape and tranquillity of the AONB (Policy AE 1/B)*
- *Ensure a wide range of sensitive and sustainable access opportunities for users of all abilities to enjoy the special qualities of the AONB (Policy AE 1/C)*

7.9 Our Neighbourhood Plan policy is aimed at realising the above policies so as to increase and improve public access to the countryside in the interests of peaceful and healthy enjoyment of the natural environment in safety and free from interference or disturbance.

**Policy TRA1 – To maintain and if possible enhance the network of public rights of way.**

- i) Development proposals which affect public rights of way should demonstrate how they would protect the existing network of public rights of way and where possible, enhance the local network by the provision of new or extended routes, and prevention of their use by mechanically propelled vehicles where such rights do not exist.

**Key supporting evidence**

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-19

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation October 2014

*(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)*

**Related national and district policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 35

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013 - 2031 – Strategy 5b

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies AE/1A, AE/1B, AE/1C

## 8 Economy and Employment

Economy and Employment	
Aims	Objectives
1. Support and sustain local businesses.	a) Support the appropriate conversion of agricultural and other buildings where it is necessary to maintain viability of farm business.
2. Aim for provision of high speed internet connectivity to all parts of the parish.	a) Support the provision of high speed internet connectivity to all residential properties and business premises.

### Introduction

8.1 Yarcombe and Marsh is a rural community with a significant part of its economy and employment based on agriculture. There are also a number of home or converted premises based businesses mainly operating in small scale tourism or office based enterprises and some significant workshop based enterprises.

8.2 Many of those of working age that do not work within the local economy commute out of the parish. The Community Survey (Aug 2014) showed that further working from home would be a significant alternative preference for some of these people. In addition the Survey demonstrated support for encouraging small scale local retail and hospitality outlets, particularly within the village centre. The latter requirement was particularly pronounced among younger people.



8.3 Increasingly, the availability of access to communications technology such as superfast broadband is a major determinant of quality of life issues such as the ability to work from home, to fulfil the administrative requirements of public bodies, and to shop without having to physically travel to do so. Yarcombe and Marsh sits on the A30 and A303 corridors where existing infrastructure for access to the current leading edge technology is in place, but neither public nor private sector actors have been able or willing to provide much of our community with access to this infrastructure.

### ***To support appropriate building conversion to sustain local businesses***

#### **Justification of our policy**

8.4 Farming is a vital component of our parish and its economy. We will help ensure that farming businesses can remain viable by permitting the conversion or redevelopment of existing farm buildings where it can be shown that it will make a difference to the business but have little or no impact on the character of its surroundings. Likewise we will encourage the diverse re-use of other buildings where appropriate within the developed area.

8.5 The NPPF (paragraph 28) calls for policies that support a prosperous rural economy. It states that

planning policies should “*support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings*”.

- 8.6 In the spirit of this national policy we will not oppose the careful and sensitive conversion and alteration of existing agricultural buildings for business-related purposes. Any development however must conform to other policies in the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan that are aimed at protecting the character, tranquility and visual appearance of the area.



- 8.7 The AONB Management Plan recognises the need to:
- *Support rural diversification which contributes to business viability, develops local markets and adds value to local products without compromising the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB (Policy RET 1/A)*
  - *Encourage the development of sustainable employment opportunities that are compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB, and encourage people to continue to live and work within their communities (Policy RET 1/B)*
  - *Support the development of sustainable tourism activities that are compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty and the special qualities of the AONB, and encourage people to continue to live and work within their communities (Policy RET 1/C)*
- 8.8 Our policy is intended to facilitate the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings in the interests of increasing the viability of the farm business whilst ensuring the conversion and re-use is compatible with its setting and the special character of the AONB.



### **Policy EE1 – Conversion of Agricultural Buildings**

When considering proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings for business or business related purposes, regard will be had to:

- i) The surrounding rural landscape;
- ii) The local road network and highway safety;
- iii) Agricultural and other land based activities in the area;
- iv) The amenities of neighbouring residents and other uses; and
- v) Whether the buildings can be converted without requiring substantial rebuilding or disproportionate extension.

### **Key supporting evidence**

Yarcombe Aims and Objectives Consultation, October 2014

Yarcombe NP Questionnaire Report, Community Council for Devon for Yarcombe Parish Council, August 2014

*(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)*

### **Related national and district policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 28

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013 - 2031 – Strategy 28

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 – Policies RET/1B and PD/1C

## ***To support the provision of high speed internet connectivity***

### **Justification for our policy**

8.9 We recognise that regular use of the internet and social media is important if we are to maintain our quality of life. Fast and reliable connection will be essential in future for running successful businesses, accessing services and assistance, furthering education and creating a breadth of opportunities for personal growth and development. We are intent on establishing and maintaining the necessary level of connectivity. While the main driver for our policy is to help sustain and improve the local economy, the need for improved provision extends beyond the traditional business premises and office as many people are now working from home or running a business from home which could require high speed broadband connectivity. There are naturally positive spin-offs in ensuring improved connectivity speeds to households on this basis as the use of the internet for social interaction, education and access to essential services increases with time.

8.10 However, this cannot be done at all costs and so recognizing the special quality of our natural and built environment, to minimise the visual impact of new connectivity infrastructure such as cabling or telecoms boxes or hubs for super-fast fibre broadband, such infrastructure should be appropriately sited, sympathetically designed and camouflaged so that it is in keeping with its setting and surroundings.



#### **Policy EE2 – High Speed Internet Connectivity**

**The development of super-fast broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.**

#### **Community Actions and Projects**

**CA 1-** Work with providers to accelerate the introduction of super-fast broadband and more reliable connectivity across the whole parish.

#### **Related national and district policies**

National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraphs 42-43

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013- 2031 - Strategy 3

## 9 Energy and Low Carbon Alternatives

Energy and Low Carbon Alternatives	
Aims	Objectives
1. Encourage small scale and unobtrusive renewable energy providing it is sensitively sited.	a) Ensure that any renewable energy schemes are sensitively sited and appropriately landscaped to protect the essential qualities of the AONB.
	b) Resist large scale and obtrusive renewable energy schemes that are likely to have an impact on the enjoyment of the natural and built environment and are contrary to our Vision.

### Introduction

- 9.1 We recognise the importance and value that renewable and low carbon energy schemes (and improvements to energy efficiency of buildings where done sensitively) can have to help provide alternatives to fossil based fuels and therefore help reduce carbon dioxide emissions, improve the security of energy supply, reduce households bills for energy, generate an income for community organisations and businesses and reduce the cost of supply of energy.
- 9.2 However, in practical terms, different types of renewable and low carbon energy installations will be suitable in different built and natural landscapes. We have already set out how we value our natural landscape and tranquillity in Yacombe within the context of the AONB and the policies we have developed on energy proposals reflect this position.

### *To support Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes*

#### Justification for our policy

- 9.3 Evidence we have gathered<sup>8</sup> together with the views of our local community have identified support for smaller scale renewable and low carbon energy schemes which respect the qualities of the landscape and natural environment as a whole and do not have an adverse impact on the beauty of and biodiversity within our parish.
- 9.4 This includes the findings of the “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report which assessed the suitability, in broad terms, in the AONB of different types and scales of renewable and low carbon energy solutions. Table 1 below, reproduced from the “Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills” report<sup>9</sup>, sets out this position and also helpfully confirms what we mean in our policies by “small scale” and “large scale” renewable energy installations.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Such as the Blackdown Hills Management Plan, 2014; the Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, 2010; and, the Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in the Devon Landscape: Advice Note, 2013.

<sup>9</sup> p.9, Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, Land Use Consultants in association with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2010

**Table 1**

TYPE	TECHNOLOGY	SUITABILITY
<b>Biomass</b>	Large-scale 10-40MW electricity generation plant	Red
	Small Combined Heat and Power plant	Green
	Business / domestic biomass boilers	Green
	Business / domestic biomass stoves	Green
<b>Anaerobic digestion</b>	Centralised anaerobic digestion (AD) plant	Red
	AD serving a group of farms	Amber
	AD serving a single farm	Green
<b>Waste to energy scheme</b>		Red
<b>Micro-hydro</b>	Micro-hydro	Green
	Restoration of traditional mill sites	Green
<b>Photovoltaics</b>	Building associated PV systems	Green
	Solar PV farms	v. limited
<b>Solar hot water</b>		Green
<b>Ground, air and water source heat pumps</b>		Green
<b>Community heating</b>	Small-scale or micro community heating	Green
<b>Wind</b>	Large-scale turbines (90m – 135m)	Red
	Medium-scale turbines (25m – 90m)	v. limited
	Small-scale turbines (12m – 25m height)	Amber
	Micro turbines (<11m)	Green

Key to table:

Red: No support; Amber: Limited support; Green: Much support

Source: p.9, Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report, Land Use Consultants in association with the Centre for Sustainable Energy 2010

We note that current guidelines state that wind turbines will only be permitted where they are specifically allocated in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan and we are not intending to do so here.

**Policy ELC1 - Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes**

**Proposals for renewable or low carbon energy schemes should be small scale, sensitively sited, and where necessary appropriately landscaped, in order to protect the quality of the Blackdown Hills AONB landscape, biodiversity, tranquility and wildlife habitats.**

**Key supporting evidence**

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19

Renewable Energy in the Blackdown Hills Report

Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in the Devon Landscape: Advice Note  
*(More relevant evidence is summarised in the Yarcombe Parish Written Evidence Report)*

**Main related national, district and AONB policies**

National Planning Policy Framework

East Devon adopted Local Plan, 2013 - 2031 – Strategy 39

Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan, 2014-19 - Policies PD 1/A, PD 1/B, PD 2/B, CC 4/B

## **Monitoring and Review**

While there is no statutory requirement for the impact of this Plan and its policies to be monitored, the Parish Council will periodically monitor the impact of policies on change in the parish by considering the policies' effectiveness in the planning application decision making process. The Parish Council will do this by referring to this Plan when reviewing planning applications. The delivery of community actions that have been identified will also be periodically monitored.

A full or partial review of this Plan is unlikely to be considered necessary during its lifetime unless triggered by changes to legislation, changes to national or District-wide planning policies or significant planning issues being raised by the local community which cannot be dealt with effectively by a combination of national, district and / or existing neighbourhood plan policies.

## **Appendix 1 Summary Table of Aims, Objectives, Policies and Community Actions**

<b>Natural Environment</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
<p><b>Aim 1.</b> Protect and enhance the natural environment, including the distinctive landscape and ecology.</p>	<p><b>1a)</b> Retain and enhance the existing beauty of the parish by encouraging the planting of native trees and hedges, along with the preservation of existing Devon banks.</p>	<p><b>Policy NE1 – To promote measures which protect and enhance the natural environment.</b></p> <p>i) Development proposals should demonstrate that they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity and that they will enhance the natural environment where there is an opportunity to do so.</p> <p>ii) Where mitigating measures are unavoidably required for development to be acceptable within its landscape setting, appropriate landscaping should be employed to mitigate the impact of the development, and such measures should include the use of native species of trees and hedges where planting is required.</p> <p>iii) Proposals for development that would affect existing traditional Devon hedges should demonstrate that all other options have been assessed and that it is the least damaging option to the hedge, its setting in the landscape, biodiversity and habitats.</p>	<p><b>CA1-</b> The Parish Council will work with partners such as the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB and EDDC to encourage the planting of native species of hedge and trees.</p> <p><b>CA2 -</b> The Parish Council will work with partners such as the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB, Devon County Council and EDDC to encourage the positive management and preservation of our Devon banks.</p> <p><b>CA3 -</b> The Parish Council will work with the local community, farmers, the Blackdown Hills AONB, EDDC and DCC to identify particular hedgerows and Devon banks at risk in the parish.</p>
<p><b>Aim 2.</b> Protect the tranquility of the environment and maintain the dark skies.</p>	<p><b>2a)</b> Resist any development likely to have a significant adverse effect on tranquillity or dark skies and seek ways to reduce any existing impact.</p>	<p><b>Policy NE2 – To protect tranquility and maintain dark skies</b></p> <p>To ensure that the tranquility of the parish and our dark skies are maintained, development should demonstrate that it:</p>	



		<p>i) will have no significant adverse effect on the tranquillity, through increasing levels and frequency of noise, of the parish;</p> <p>ii) will have no significant adverse effect, through light pollution (during any part of the year), on our valued dark skies observable from the parish;</p>	
--	--	---	--

<b>Built and Historic environment</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
<p><b>Aim 1.</b> Ensure that all new development of domestic and agricultural buildings is sympathetic to the traditional character of the area.</p>	<p><b>1a)</b> Work with East Devon District Council and applicants to ensure that any new development, alteration or extension is constructed according to the Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide.</p> <p><b>1b)</b> Ensure that the size, scale, location and materials used, minimise the visual impact on the essential character of the village and neighbouring properties.</p>	<p><b>Policy BHE1 – To maintain the Built Character of our parish through High Quality Design</b></p> <p>To ensure that new development is sympathetic to the traditional built character of the parish:</p> <p>i) proposals for residential development should be of a high quality design and take account of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses.</p> <p>ii) proposals for any development should enhance the visual amenity of the setting and minimise any adverse</p>	<p><b>CA1</b> - The Parish Council will encourage use of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses for residential development which does not require planning permission or fall under Permitted Development Rights.</p>

		<p>visual impact on the essential character of Yarcombe, and on neighbouring properties to the proposed development site. Particular attention should be paid to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ensuring that the size, scale and location of the development is appropriate to the form, scale and setting of the surrounding built environment;</li> <li>b) ensuring that materials and design of the development are in-keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment;</li> <li>c) ensuring that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the natural environment.</li> </ul>	
--	--	--	--

<b>Population and Housing</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
<p><b>Aim 1.</b> Support local needs small scale housing development, to include affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing.</p>	<p><b>1a)</b> Facilitate small scale housing development which supports the needs of the aging population as well as that of young people and families.</p> <p><b>1b)</b> Ensure that any new build housing is in keeping with its surroundings.</p>	<p><b>PH1 – To facilitate small scale housing development which includes affordable housing and bungalows for downsizing.</b></p> <p>Development proposals on appropriate exception sites within or physically well related to the village which meet one or more of Yarcombe’s identified housing needs will be supported providing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the development is small scale and is in keeping with its surroundings;</li> <li>b) the Blackdown Hills Design Guide for Houses is taken into account.</li> <li>c) any development does not otherwise compromise the character of the village centres in which they are located.</li> </ul>	

<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
1. Endeavour to maintain and improve local facilities and amenities such as the village hall	1a) Support any necessary and sensitive improvement of local facilities and amenities; 1b) Enable and support entertainment and leisure activities for all sections of the community	<b>Policy CFS1 – To improve local facilities and amenities</b> Development proposals which seek to improve Yarcombe’s existing local community facilities and amenities will be supported where: i) they directly serve the community in Yarcombe;  ii) it can be demonstrated that the community benefit outweighs the impact of development  iii) they do not have a significant adverse impact on the special character of the area’s natural and built environments.	
2. Encourage small scale retail units such as a village shop	2a) Support proposals for new or improved retail or social amenities that are in keeping with the character of the area and which meet local needs	<b>Policy CFS2 – To encourage new retail outlets, such as a shop</b> The provision of premises for new small scale retail and commercial business within Yarcombe village will be supported where it: i) meets a local demand; ii) can be provided preferably through the conversion or extension of an existing building, or if that is not viable, the development of a new building, without having a significant adverse impact on the special character of the area’s natural and built environments.	

<b>Transport and Accessibility</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
Aim 1. Support measures to reduce traffic speed through Yarcombe.	a) Support appropriate physical measures to help reduce traffic speeds when necessary.		<b>CA1</b> – Consider implementing new technologies as they become available, that are designed to manage vehicle speeds.
Aim 2. Maintain, and if possible enhance a network of footpaths.	a) Maintain good public access to footpaths and woodlands. b) Support small scale improvement projects for footpaths and bridleways.	<b>Policy TRA1 – To maintain and if possible enhance the network of public rights of way.</b>  Development proposals which affect public rights of way should demonstrate how they would protect the existing network of public rights of way and where possible, enhance the local network by the provision of new or extended routes, and prevention of their use by mechanically propelled vehicles where such rights do not exist.	

<b>Economy and Employment</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
<b>Aim 1.</b> Support and sustain local businesses.	a) Support the appropriate conversion of agricultural and other buildings where it is necessary to maintain viability of farm business.	<p><b>Policy EE1 – Conversion of Agricultural Buildings</b></p> <p>When considering proposals for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings for business or business related purposes, regard will be had to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) the surrounding rural landscape;</li> <li>ii) the local road network and highway safety;</li> <li>iii) agricultural and other land based activities in the area;</li> <li>iv) The amenities of neighbouring residents and other uses; and</li> <li>v) whether the buildings can be converted without requiring substantial rebuilding or disproportionate extension.</li> </ul>	
<b>Aim 2.</b> Aim for provision of high speed internet connectivity to all parts of the parish.	a) Support the provision of high speed internet connectivity to all residential properties and business premises.	<p><b>Policy EE2 – High Speed Internet Connectivity</b></p> <p>The development of super-fast broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.</p>	<b>CA 1-</b> Work with providers to accelerate the introduction of super-fast broadband and more reliable connectivity across the whole parish.

<b>Energy and Low Carbon Alternatives</b>			
<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Community Actions</b>
<p><b>Aim 1.</b> Encourage small scale and unobtrusive renewable energy providing it is sensitively sited.</p>	<p>a) Ensure that any renewable energy schemes are sensitively sited and appropriately landscaped to protect the essential qualities of the AONB.</p> <p>b) Resist large scale and obtrusive renewable energy schemes that are likely to have an impact on the enjoyment of the natural and built environment and are contrary to our Vision.</p>	<p><b>Policy ELC1 - Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes</b></p> <p>i) Proposals for renewable or low carbon energy schemes should be small scale, sensitively sited and where necessary appropriately landscaped, in order to protect the quality of the Blackdown Hills AONB's landscape, biodiversity, tranquillity and wildlife habitats.</p>	

## Appendix 2 Blackdown Hills AONB Design Guide for Houses

Please see guide electronically at [www.blackdownhillsaonb.org.uk/Planning.html](http://www.blackdownhillsaonb.org.uk/Planning.html)