

“Ancient roots, future foundations”

## Winkleigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan

2018 to 2031

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“I would like to commend the Parish Council and Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan Group for all the hard work that has gone into preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are important in giving local people the opportunity to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood, shaping the development and growth of the local area in line with community needs and priorities by being taken into consideration alongside the Local Plan and other material considerations when assessing planning applications. I become an important influence on future change in the Parish.”

**The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Cox M.P. 2020**

“I am pleased to see the final version of the Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan being published. The Neighbourhood Plan for Winkleigh Parish will help shape the growth and future development of the Parish.”

**Devon County Councillor, Andrew Saywell 2020**

“This Neighbourhood Plan is an excellent initiative that will allow the community of Winkleigh Parish to influence and control many areas of future development within their neighbourhood. It is a fine example of a local community stepping up and taking control of its own destiny. None of this could have been achieved without the foresight and hard work of volunteers in the Parish who truly care about the future of this wonderful part of Devon and we owe them a huge vote of thanks”.

**Torrige District Councillor, Simon Newton 2020**

## **FOREWORD**

Neighbourhood Plans come out of the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in decisions which affect them. The Winkleigh Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the Parish and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period 2018 – 2031.

The Parish Council would like to thank the members, both past and present, of the Neighbourhood Plan Group for all the time, expertise and enthusiasm that they have brought to the group without which we would not have the plan you see today. Thanks are due to all those who took part in the preparation of the Community Plan 2014-2024 (2014), and the Village Design Statement (2016) which have helped form the foundations of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council is also grateful for the help and the engagement of many others in the parish without which it would not have been possible to produce this Neighbourhood Plan.

**Cllr. Alice Turner**

*Chair of Winkleigh Parish Council 2020*

## Vision & Introduction

1. Winkleigh has experienced considerable change and development over the past 20 years. Whilst new housing has transformed the look of the village, its economic performance, employment and wage rates continue to lag behind national and regional averages. Despite this, Winkleigh is a vibrant and cohesive community, with a strong sense of identity. There has been strong interest locally in developing plans to influence how the village evolves, including a Parish Plan (2005), a Community Plan (2014), and a Village Design Statement (2016). This Neighbourhood Plan (identified as the NP throughout this document) builds on these and now sets out a bold vision for the Parish which addresses the challenge of enabling Winkleigh to build on its strengths – its environmental assets, its history and heritage – whilst delivering sustainable economic and social opportunities which will allow it to thrive and grow for the benefit of local people.

**“Our vision is for the Parish in 2031 to be an inclusive, economically sustainable community, with development contributing to a sense of place and improved quality of life, providing a range of housing for people of all ages and incomes, whilst respecting the character of the area and protecting its valuable heritage and environment.”**

## What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

2. The Localism Act (2011) introduced Neighbourhood Planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their own future development. A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document with legal status which gives the community of Winkleigh the opportunity to set local planning policies to be considered when planning decisions are taken by Torridge District Council (TDC). Winkleigh’s NP, once adopted by TDC, will be part of the statutory development plan alongside the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan (NDTLP).

3. This plan has been built upon extensive consultation, discussion and outreach with the local community. This is detailed fully in the separate Consultation Statement. In 2016, Winkleigh Parish Council (WPC) agreed to develop a NP and in 2017 WPC applied to TDC to designate the civil parish of Winkleigh as a neighbourhood area. This was approved on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 (the “designation date”) and a working group began the process of developing the NP: further detail is provided in the separate basic conditions statement.

## How the plan was prepared

4. The foundation documents identified in the Introduction were based upon widespread consultation and detailed analysis of the needs of the Parish. These identified the key areas of concern for local people which have been taken forward in this Plan. An initial NP framework document was made available electronically and a summary document widely circulated in 2017 to residents of the Parish and to external bodies. Following this, there was detailed consultation with planning officers at TDC and external, independent advice was sought to ensure the Plan aligned with national planning guidance. A survey of local businesses was undertaken in March 2018 and expert consultants commissioned to advise on environmental and traffic management aspects of the NP. Since May 2017 WPC has received monthly progress reports and has approved each stage of the NP's development. Further detail about this work is provided in the separate Consultation Statement, which accompanied the submission version of the NP.

## About Winkleigh and the plan area

5. Winkleigh Parish is centred on a hill-top village situated in the heart of Devon. Winkleigh is a thriving village with an active community and a good range of local services and facilities. It lies in the transition zone of the UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve. It is identified as a Local Centre within the NDTLP, and it acts as the administrative centre for many surrounding Parishes. Winkleigh has a rich history: it gave its name to a "Hundred", an ancient division of a shire; it was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086); and its annual fair was chartered in 1262. Development within the parish over the centuries has been primarily driven by changes in agriculture, and even today pastoral and arable agriculture remain a key local source of employment and a determinant of its character.

6. The only other settlement in the Parish is the hamlet of Hollocombe, to the north of Winkleigh. It is a small, dispersed community of some 50 households, nestling on the side of the hill overlooking Hollocombe Water and the wooded tributary valleys of the River Taw. The most notable economic activity in Hollocombe is agriculture, specifically the rearing of gamebirds. There are no local services or physical community assets within Hollocombe.

## The North Devon and Torridge Local Plan and National Planning Policy

7. The NDTLP was adopted on 29 October 2018. The NDTLP sets out the long-term vision, strategies and policies to guide how northern Devon will develop in the period up to 2031. The strategic aims of the NDTLP are to deliver a vibrant economy, a world-class environment, a balanced housing market and mixed communities where there is an excellent quality of life. The NDTLP provides a series of topic-based strategies, place-based strategies and allocations along with a suite of development management policies to help deliver and aid the determination of planning applications.

8. The NDTLP identifies Winkleigh as a Local Centre – part of a network of towns and villages that form a primary focus for development across the rural area. It provides a spatial strategy for Winkleigh, policy guidance for development at Winkleigh Airfield and allocates land north of Chulmleigh Road as a site to deliver residential development together with a car park to serve the village.

9. This NP is aligned with the objectives and policies of the NDTLP and, by adding more locally relevant detail, supports and encourages its realisation. Significantly, as there has been consented development for new housing since the NDTLP was drafted, this NP reflects these changes. This NP is consistent with the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the Basic Conditions Statement which supports this NP sets out how our policies adhere to national planning policy.

## Sustainable Development

10. The NPPF (2019) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It states “...the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (NPPF, p.5, para. 7). At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It identifies three critical elements for the achievement of this: an economic role, contributing to a strong, responsive, competitive economy; a social role, supporting vibrant and healthy communities; and an environmental role, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. The NPPF identifies three interdependent overarching objectives for sustainable development:

- An economic objective
- A social objective; and
- An environmental objective

11. The inter-dependency of these three objectives means that in order to achieve sustainable development there needs to be positive improvements in all aspects of the natural and built environment, as well as sustaining a good quality of life for the community. Consequently, plans and decisions must reflect the local situation and development must be designed in a way that delivers positive outcomes.

12. The NDTLP describes sustainable development at the district level and has been the subject of a sustainability appraisal to meet the requirements of EU legislation. This NP has been ‘screened’ by consultees to see if its contents also require appraisal. This process concluded that the NP does not impact on environmental assets protected by the EU and does not substantially alter the pattern of land use set out in the NDTLP (or by grant of planning permission). It does not therefore require a full sustainability appraisal of its own.

13. Winkleigh’s role as a Local Centre means it has been, and will continue to be, a focus for development to serve the local catchment area. More recently, development proposals of a significant scale have been granted planning permission. The communities’ vision for sustainable development envisages smaller-scale development, to meet the needs of the immediate area, alongside complementary growth in services and infrastructure. Should development at a significant scale proceed, then this plan describes policies which seek to integrate these developments effectively into village life.

14. The NDTLP sets out sustainable development principles within Policy ST01, and this strategic policy influences the content of subsequent policies in the plan, including key development management policies (Policies DM01-DM06). They cover the essential criteria that all development must meet in order to have support – issues such as amenity; environmental protection; pollution; drainage; access; and parking. Another key NDTLP policy is DM04 which seeks to create successful places that respond to the challenge of climate change.



## The Structure of the Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan

15. The NP is divided into four policy themes reflecting local issues: the environment and resources; housing, community life and wellbeing; the economy; and transport, travel and movement. The presentation and content of each theme follows a consistent path, comprising:

- A short description of the background facts, evidence, and community views regarding the key issues;
- Our objectives for the theme - what we are seeking to achieve;
- The NP policies that are being proposed.

16. A final section in this document describes how the NP will be implemented and contains references to a monitoring framework (a separate document table alongside the NP) that will cover project work and ways in which the progress of all responsible agencies and organisations will be monitored.

## Policy Theme: Environment and Resources

ER1. This section of the Neighbourhood Plan deals with:

- a) our natural environment
- b) the historic, cultural and built environment of Winkleigh Parish
- c) sustainable use of resources in the Parish

### The Natural Environment

The background

ER2. Key Facts

- a) The Parish falls within the North Devon Biosphere transition zone, where the objective is to provide a 'living laboratory' for testing and demonstrating sustainable development on a sub-regional scale.
- b) Natural England has identified one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Parish at Popehouse Moor – a wet grassland with rush pasture, fen meadow, and willow carr.
- c) There are eight County Wildlife Sites, which are designated areas of substantive nature conservation, the largest being the 61ha. of Culm grassland and rush pasture at Hollocombe Moor.
- d) The Ancient Woodland Inventory identifies four areas of ancient and semi-ancient woodland at Chapple Copse; at the medieval deer park of Winkleigh Wood; Hollocombe Wood; and Woodrobert's Wood, Hollocombe.
- e) The Parish Biodiversity Audit (2009) identified 123 examples within the Parish of legally protected and notable species within the Parish. The statutory and non-statutory designated sites; the tributaries of the River Taw, the wet habitats provided by Culm and marshy grassland; the species rich ancient hedges and wet ditches; and the open spaces of Winkleigh Airfield, collectively provide rich and diverse environments for a variety of protected and rare wildlife, flora and fauna.
- f) The Parish has no landscapes formally designated for their value. However, it has two landscape character types: the north of the Parish is farmed lowland moor and Culm grassland; to the south, it is described as upper farmed wooded slopes.

ER3. Residents value the local environment, especially the peace and tranquillity of the area. A clear majority of local people who responded, supported conserving and enhancing the landscape and wildlife in planning policies and wanted more information about these. As the Parish has changed, there has been concern that more development, changes in land management and new national agricultural policies place pressure on habitats. There is a desire locally for natural environments to be more accessible to the public and concern about the state of hedgerows and their management. The Parish has an active Biodiversity Group that has undertaken local projects, such as tree planting and wildlife surveys. Its activities complement the policies set out in this plan.

ER4. Community feedback, and the strategic priorities of other agencies suggests a key issue for the NP is to ensure that development does not erode the biodiversity, habitats, landscapes and character of the environment, and that assets of local value and interest are protected, enhanced and sensitively managed. This NP seeks development that minimises environmental damage, provides environmental benefits and mitigates any losses. Development needs to be truly sustainable if net gains to the environment are to be delivered. Nationally, the Government's Environment Plan indicates a stronger approach to the natural environment, based on the concept of safeguarding and improving our 'natural capital' and embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development. This is reflected in the NPPF:

**“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.”**

These principles underpin the NDTLP and this NP.

ER5. In addition, there are important local and regional strategies which guide development in this area. The Devon Landscape Character Assessment aims to protect the features of the Culm area such as open skylines, hilltop churches and villages, well managed hedgerows, farmland, and unimproved 'Culm grassland'. The North Devon Biosphere Strategy for Sustainable Development 2014-2024 based around the catchment areas of the Taw and Torridge rivers (with Winkleigh within the Reserve's 'Transition Zone'), shows how sustainable development can be achieved in our area. The NDTLP has strong policies to protect the natural environment, reflecting the priorities of the North Devon and Torridge Biodiversity Action Plan, and the Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy.

## The North Devon & Torridge Local Plan

ER6. The NDTLP contains strategic policies to safeguard the natural environment from degradation or loss, and to enhance it wherever possible. It recognises the distinctiveness of the District's wildlife, habitats, landscape and tranquillity, and its sensitivity to change. Environmental enhancement is a requirement for development on the airfield, where habitat and landscape restoration could help support its importance for wildlife.

### **Objectives for the natural environment**

ER7. The NP objectives for the natural environment are:

- a) The safeguarding and protection of our environmental assets, particularly locally valued resources that may not be statutorily protected.
- b) To embed a principle of net environmental gain into proposals that come forward in the Parish. (While this is an objective of NDTLP policy ST11, more detail is given in Policies throughout the NP).
- c) To safeguard the distinctive landscape of the Parish and the setting of Winkleigh and Hollocombe, enhancing it where opportunities arise.
- d) To realise the environmental potential of the airfield for landscape, habitat and biodiversity improvement, while recognising its historic significance (see also the Economy theme).

## Policy for the natural environment

ER8. The Parish has one SSSI at Popehouse Moor, and eight County Wildlife sites that are mapped, along with other environment designations on the Devon County Council Environment Viewer. <https://new.devon.gov.uk/environment/environmental-maps>

The NDTLP has policies which protect sites of conservation interest and protected species, according to the importance of their designation. Public consultation showed that there is concern about the places where protection is weaker, notably those sites which shelter species that while not statutorily protected, are valued locally and add to the biodiversity of the countryside. The Parish has had a biodiversity audit and hedgerow survey which provide important information about local assets.

ER9. Many types of development occur in the Parish and their impact on the natural environment will vary according to the scale and nature of the development proposed. Community consultation demonstrated concern about the loss of birds and mammals that are not statutorily protected but are part of the tapestry of country life. Even small-scale development, such as house extensions, may impact, for example, through loss of ground cover and drainage, and affect protected species such as bats. Alternative development solutions that are more environmentally friendly may be possible. Ideally, all development should contribute to a net gain in biodiversity.

ER10. Future development proposals should have regard to the locally valued natural assets of the Parish and plan for their protection, enhancement and ongoing management. Developers should undertake appropriate wildlife and biodiversity audits of the site and demonstrate how the results have informed development design, including the measures taken to safeguard existing biodiversity. Proposals should reference the Parish Biodiversity Audit, species information (Devon Biodiversity Records Centre), hedgerow survey, and have regard to the “green features” identified on the Policies map. Development will be encouraged to deliver an environmental gain. The DEFRA metric to assess net environmental gain and the acceptability of developments should be used where a wildlife report to accompany a planning application is required by TDC.

## Policy ENV1: Natural Capital

Future development proposals should have regard to the natural assets of the Parish and plan for their protection and enhancement. Proposals will be expected to show how the natural environment has been considered as part of the design process and will be expected to deliver an environmental net gain in biodiversity.

Development proposals will be supported where:

- i) They respect the shape, slope and aspect of the site(s) in question and would not have a significantly adverse effect on the character of the landscape or the spatial relationship (both in visual and ecosystem terms) of the site to adjacent fields and the built-up areas of Winkleigh and Hollocombe.
- ii) Existing trees and hedges and green infrastructure should be retained and enhanced, wherever possible, along with locally designated wildlife sites and sites supporting Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species. Where loss is genuinely unavoidable, their value should be compensated for, on site wherever possible.
- iii) On “greenfield sites” new boundaries are planted to complement existing field boundaries and patterns, with new hedges and banks being created wherever they are lost (for example, to create access roads). Where loss is genuinely unavoidable the value should be compensated for on-site. Native species typical of the areas should be used.
- iv) They define curtilage boundaries using natural, local materials, with a preference for new stone, earth and hedge banks porous to wildlife, and minimal use of wooden fencing.

References for local wildlife include: Devon Biodiversity Records; The Parish Biodiversity Audit; the Hedgerow Survey, and locations shown on the policy map.

References for landscape and setting include: Devon’s Landscape Character Assessment; North Devon and Torridge Landscape Character Assessment.

## The historic, cultural and built environment of Winkleigh:

The background

### ER11. Key facts

- a) The central part of Winkleigh was designated a conservation area in 1971.
- b) There are 76 buildings and structures which are statutorily protected, including the church and the two castle mounds.
- c) There are many older properties and local features which contribute to character and distinctiveness.
- d) Shute Lane, and green lanes between Riddestone Farm and Graysbridge Farm, and between Taw Green and Bulrow Brook are old track ways and wildlife corridors.
- e) The wartime history of the airfield is an important element of local heritage.
- f) The clustered settlement form of Winkleigh is typical of the Culm ridge landscape area.

ER12. The community views Winkleigh as a special place, where the memories and lives of residents are written into the landscape, buildings and community events that occur throughout the year. These make Winkleigh a distinctive place with a clear identity. Much of what makes the Parish special is reflected in the Village Design Statement (VDS) first published in 1996 and updated in 2016. This document provides detailed background about Winkleigh and the distinctive architectural and design elements the community wish to see retained and

reflected in the new development. Visual appraisal of the Parish of Winkleigh identified six areas in the village with differing characteristics (see illustration) and the NP takes forward the principles in the VDS as Policies ENV2-ENV5.

ER13. Residents (and visitors) clearly value the traditional feel of Winkleigh and Hollocombe and the countryside surrounding them. Community feedback shows concern about new development eroding this and that recent building had failed to take cues from the traditional layout of the settlements, reflect building styles or promote easy walking routes between neighbourhoods. Protecting older buildings from inappropriate change was considered important, especially in the conservation area and the traditional core of the village (shown on illustration). Using more sustainable building materials and “future proofing” new homes was also an aspiration.

## Objectives for the historic, cultural and built environment of Winkleigh

ER14 Building on the VDS, the policies of our NP aim to:

- a) Protect and enhance the important buildings and cultural assets in the Parish (listed buildings, ancient monuments, archaeology; boundary stones and other artefacts of interest).
- b) Support development that reflects the local vernacular and traditional heritage of buildings, their layout; relationship to other nearby buildings and is sensitive to its location in the wider landscape.
- c) Support development that uses local building materials and finishes.



## Policies for the historic, cultural and built environment

ER15. While the landscape of the Parish is not statutorily protected, the character and features that make it important are recognised in the Devon Landscape Strategy. The hilltop location of Winkleigh is an important feature of the landscape, with the church tower and cluster of housing associated with the settlement being a dominant view from the south and east. The Culm measures are an important characteristic of the geography of Winkleigh. Hollocombe is an ancient settlement, comprising Hollocombe Town and the larger hamlet, situated along a hillside and near a network of hidden valleys draining to the River Taw. It has important woodland habitats, an ecologically diverse area of open moorland (a County Wildlife Site), and important local views and vistas. Many of the factors that influence the character of the landscape fall outside the scope of the NP (for example, farming practices and land management) but this NP seeks to ensure that as development occurs the countryside in which it sits is protected (and enhanced where possible) and that due regard is given to the historic and cultural significance of both built and landscape assets.

### **Policy ENV2: The setting of new development in the Parish**

Development proposals will be expected to respect and respond to the built and landscape character of the Parish, as set out in the VDS and this NP.

New developments should:

- i) Have regard to the views across open countryside both into and out of Winkleigh and Hollocombe. Existing distance views to Dartmoor from elevated positions on the south side of Winkleigh should be retained, and new vistas from the development site should be created where possible.
- ii) Ensure that the location, scale, massing, height, and design of new development in Winkleigh village enables the church to remain the dominant building in distance view, particularly from the A3124, B3220 and Bude Hill approach roads.
- iii) Ensure that any new development on the south side of Winkleigh village creates a varied alignment of buildings and rooftops, to avoid reinforcing the horizontal alignment of Southernhay and the road to the south of the village.
- iv) Use materials that maintain the overall impression of light-coloured buildings when viewed from a distance.
- v) Minimise external lighting and light spillage, to maintain the dark night skies of the Parish.

ER16. The conservation area covers most of the area identified as the 'traditional village core' in the VDS. Most of the listed buildings in the settlement are found here. The buildings that are not listed are usually traditional in design and add to the character of the village. Elements of craftsmanship and skill are also evident, for example, thatched roofs; traditional iron work; carpentry; signs. The village pump, erected to commemorate the 1832 Reform Act, and the red telephone box in the Square are also distinctive elements of the village scene. It is expected that the VDS will have a role in informing the nature and character of new development, particularly in the older part of Winkleigh village.

### **Policy ENV3: The conservation area and traditional village core of Winkleigh**

Development in the conservation area and traditional village core, as defined on Policies Map A, should respect and have regard to the established settlement form. Development proposals will be supported where they:

- i) Seek to maintain a continuous frontage in the Square and along the feeder roads.
- ii) Ensure that the frontage of replacement buildings or infill development follows the existing building line.
- iii) Ensure that any access to the rear of buildings is provided through passageways designed as an integral part of the building.
- iv) Recognise that generally, new development in the older part of Winkleigh will be of a higher density than elsewhere.
- v) Respect the setting and character of the conservation area and any nearby listed buildings.

### **Policy ENV4: Appearance and style**

Development in the Parish should generally be simple and plain in appearance; proposals should reflect the character and context of surrounding development. Attention should be paid to the alignment and proportion of windows and doors, and to local style and detailing. Preference will be given to the use of local materials or their equivalent, where this reflects the stone, colour washed rendering, Devon thatch and slate typical of Winkleigh Parish. Proposals should seek to replicate aspects of traditional design that support the area's existing biodiversity, such as eaves suitable for swallows, boundaries permeable to hedgehogs and dormice. Pattern book, standardised design should be avoided. Where larger developments are proposed, there should be an emphasis on neighbourhood creation. All planning applications should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement. In principle, the use of innovative and creative design is supported in appropriate locations, where it respects the scale, mass and distinctiveness of its location and the natural and built environment.

**Policy ENV5: Craftsmanship**

Features of heritage value and craftsmanship in the Parish should be protected wherever possible. In all new development the opportunity should be taken to introduce craftsmanship which enhances buildings and their setting. This could be through detailing on the buildings, landscaping or boundary treatments, or through appropriate artwork and street furniture. When the opportunity arises, local vernacular, including new cob construction will be encouraged, for example in small buildings such as shelters, and in walling. The VDS will be used by the Parish Council as its guidance document when assessing the craftsmanship element of planning applications.



## Resources

### The background

#### ER17. Key Facts

- a) The 2009 Winkleigh Carbon Reduction Project estimated Winkleigh households have a carbon footprint 20% higher than the UK average, largely due to domestic heating, transport fuel consumption and absence of mains gas.
- b) The average combined gas and electricity bill is around £1,300. In 2017 13.2% of households were estimated to be in “fuel poverty”. People are more reliant on expensive oil and propane gas, both of which are fossil fuels. Burning of fossil fuels is widely recognised as contributing to climate change.
- c) One consequence of our changing climate is increased quantity and intensity of rainfall.
- d) Torrridge has some of the lowest recycling rates in Devon, although measures are being taken to address this. While waste management lies outside the scope of the NP, ensuring there is adequate space in new development for recycling facilities and for storage of bins can be covered (see Policy H2).

ER18. The sustainable use of resources lies at the heart of measures to protect against climate change. Despite scientific consensus public opinion differs about the causes of climate change. However, the Government is committed under the Climate Change Act 2008 to an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 compared to 1990 levels with the Government’s Advisory Committee on Climate Change recommending a “net-zero” target by 2050. Driving down levels of fossil fuel use, enabling higher levels of generation from renewable technologies and planning to ensure the future resilience of communities to changes in the climate are key aspects of Government policy. Recently elements of public opinion have placed more urgency on tackling climate change, raising the topic up the political agenda once more. TDC have declared their commitment to fight climate change, aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030. Proposals to meet this target are being drawn up but are expected to focus on those aspects of carbon management that can be delivered by the Council’s own activities. The Parish Council has also declared a climate emergency and wishes to put in place plans to tackle the issue. Much potential project work is likely to fall outside the scope of the NP, but the Parish Council will monitor progress and work with TDC to implement activities and projects that contribute to carbon reduction.

## **Sustainable Energy Use: Evidence and approach to policy**

ER19. The way we live is dependent on the resources the environment provides. Modern lifestyles create impacts that cause environmental problems (such as waste, pollution, noise, carbon emissions) and erode the capacity of the planet to support life. The Parish has no mains gas and households and businesses are dependent on electricity, oil, bottled gas and bulk tank L.P.G. Where the housing stock is old, it is likely to be less efficient to heat and this places further strain on household energy bills. The take-up of domestic renewable energy (solar photo-voltaic, solar thermal) is also lower in Torridge than elsewhere in Devon. In 2018/19 the take up of domestic renewable energy in Torridge was 51.3%. Public consultation demonstrates support for low carbon housing and whilst current legislation does not require buildings to be more energy efficient than building regulations, in the housing section of this NP support for low carbon housing is signalled.

ER20. Transport is the other large user of energy. With limited public transport residents are dependent on private transport. As well as being a major contributor to carbon emissions (and affecting air quality), the rising cost of fuel is a concern to the community.

ER21. Community views about renewable energy installations are divided. Many acknowledge the need for more urgency to tackle climate change but differ on the acceptability of renewable energy generation technologies. Whereas there is clear support for low carbon building, incorporating energy saving and generation measures, the support for free standing commercial generation is less strong. The NP focus, therefore, is on renewable energy generation that delivers community benefit.

## **Objectives for sustainable energy**

ER22. The objectives of the NP are:

- a) To promote the generation of renewable energy and heat where it supports the community.
- b) To improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings.
- c) To promote the take-up of measures to generate energy at the individual building level and save energy in buildings.
- d) To promote low carbon transport.

The realisation of these objectives will be assisted by project work at the local level, particularly in the promotion of energy saving measures.

## **Policies for sustainable energy**

ER23. This NP seeks to play an active role in a sustainable energy future by supporting both the installation of individual low carbon technologies and those that benefit the community. In the future there may be a role for renewable energy installations that are community owned for wholly local benefit. A community owned scheme enables the retention of financial gain within local economies, reduction of carbon emissions, educational and investment opportunities.

ER24. Other proposals likely to come forward include individual installations to support farm businesses and farm diversification. During the lifetime of the NP there may also be proposals for small clusters of turbines or larger commercial schemes (exploiting different renewable energy generating technologies) in the Parish. When this occurs, these would only be supported if generation provides some form of community benefit proportionate to the size and scale of the scheme concerned. With any renewable energy generating scheme there is a trade-off to be made between the environmental gains to be made from the installation(s) and the potential loss of amenity and impacts on the landscape and natural environment, which should not be to an unacceptable extent.

### **ENV6: Sustainable energy generation**

Within the Parish, proposals for renewable energy/heat installations for individual buildings or enterprises and renewable energy technologies that benefit the community (to supply heat for local housing, businesses and community facilities or to support farm businesses/diversification), will be supported where they demonstrate that:

- i) the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape (including any cumulative impacts) and that any adverse impacts on adjacent land users or important natural, historical, archaeological or biodiversity assets can be adequately mitigated.
- ii) following public consultation, all significantly adverse environmental impacts identified by local communities have been satisfactorily addressed.

## **Sustainable energy and transport**

ER25. Proposals and policies to promote pedestrian and cycle use are included in the Transport, Travel and Movement theme of the NP. Technologies that support the use of hybrid fuels and electric vehicles have become more common. Electric vehicles require more frequent re-charging compared to the mileage achieved in a petrol or diesel vehicle. Currently, they are more suited to urban areas and short journeys, but if more charging infrastructure existed, this could change. The Government is moving towards minimising the use of fossil fuels in transport, and it is important to futureproof our local transport opportunities by including publicly accessible vehicle charging points in new development where appropriate. In addition, the Parish Council will press developers to ensure new development has adequate private electricity supply arrangements to enable safe and convenient arrangements for electric vehicle charging.

### **ENV 7: Electric vehicle charging**

Developers will be encouraged to provide private electric vehicle charging points within all housing developments and make provision for at least one charging point which is publicly accessible.



## Policy Theme: Housing, Community, Life and Wellbeing

### The background

H1. The Parish has experienced considerable change over the last 20 years, with significant house building, most notably the new estates clustered around the edges of Winkleigh. Levels of new development, and its impact (particularly on traffic) were the most contentious issues during public consultation.

H2. Residents' opinions about the need for new housing are divided. Most of those in favour thought it should be centred in Winkleigh. Large scale development was only supported by 3% of respondents, with the majority favouring sites of less than 15 new homes – it follows that most supported small-scale sites, infill, single plot development and conversions. There was considerable concern about the scale of development in recent years and its impact on the community – in terms of the amount of housing, the lack of connectivity and walking routes. The design of new housing which was often thought to be more suited to an urban rather than rural environment. Many thought the pressure of new development on key facilities such as roads, shops, village parking, and essential infrastructure such as the school and doctors' branch surgery was unsustainable.

### H3. Key Facts

- a) Affordability is a significant issue. In December 2016 the Torridge housing affordability ratio was 9.8 compared with a level of 7.8 across England and Wales.
- b) The most recent housing needs survey (August 2014) identified 35 Winkleigh households registered on Devon Home Choice.
- c) Between 1997 and 2011, 132 new homes were built in the Parish, mostly on three large sites – Kings Meadow, Elms Meadow, and Westcots Drive. Since 2011, 16 dwellings have been completed.
- d) Across northern Devon there is expected to be a need for at least 2,200 new homes in rural areas in the period 2011-2031. The housing land allocation in Winkleigh, on land north of Chulmleigh Road, provides a contribution towards this.
- e) Outline planning approval has been granted for schemes at Eggesford Road (23 units); land south of Townsend Farm (55 Units); and Kingsley Plastics site (up to 70 units). At 31 March 2019, there were planning permissions in place for 160 dwellings in the Parish.
- f) The 2017 ward profile for Winkleigh shows that 68.4% of the housing stock is detached dwellings, compared to 43.2% across Torridge as a whole.

H4. Housing affordability continues to be an issue: of those who thought they would require affordable housing in the next five years, half required property to rent rather than buy. There was some support for development of community owned housing, through a community land trust.

The key housing issues for the NP to address are therefore:

- a) Ensuring new housing is suited to the Parish, in terms of the scale, design (see ENV policies), type and mix of housing.
- b) Ensuring new development creates sustainable neighbourhoods.
- c) How to secure as much affordable housing as possible, particularly to rent.
- d) Ensuring investment in infrastructure keeps pace with development (covered in the section on Making the Plan Happen).

## The North Devon & Torridge Local Plan

H5. Winkleigh has been designated as a Local Centre in the NDTLP. The NDTLP foresees the Local Centres of the District as the focus for modest growth to support the needs of the wider rural area. The NDTLP expected to see an increase of 10% in the housing stock of Winkleigh over the lifetime of the Plan (to 2031). The Parish Council supports a more modest growth of 5%.

For the NDTLP area, Torridge and North Devon councils are required to maintain a continuous five-year land supply; if this is not achieved additional housing sites may be released. Where a five-year land supply cannot be demonstrated, the NPPF requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied to decisions, which could result in planning permission being granted to sites which are not identified or enabled by the NDTLP.

H6. The policies of the NDTLP cover many concerns of Winkleigh residents. As well as allocating land for new housing, the NDTLP describes the role of Winkleigh in the wider rural context; restricts new housing in the countryside; provides for a proportion of affordable housing on development sites; seeks to achieve a mix of house types and tenures to meet everyone's needs; and aims to improve the quality of development.

### Housing objectives

H7. The Policies of our NP aim to:

- a) Provide a mix of house types and tenures (including affordable housing) that meets the needs of the community and respects village character (as set out in the principles of the VDS).
- b) Support new forms of housing delivery, such as self-build housing.
- c) Promote development that creates healthy neighbourhoods, successfully Integrated into the village form.
- d) Explore how new initiatives such as community land trusts could help deliver housing for local need.
- e) Encourage new development that delivers energy saving/efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies above the current building regulations standards.
- f) Safeguard, support and enhance community assets important for the future social and community life of a healthy Parish.
- g) Ensure any significant development required in the Parish to meet a shortfall in housing land supply occurs in a sustainable way and delivers community benefit.

## Housing policies

H8. The NP uses the development boundary set out in the NDTLP. Within the development boundary, the principle of development is accepted. The policies of the NDTLP also set out the circumstances where development may be allowed elsewhere in the Parish, but outside the development boundary. Examples are where development is needed to meet local economic needs (e.g. housing for farm workers); the reuse of rural buildings and development necessarily restricted to a countryside location.

H9. The community wish to see more targeted, small scale development, to meet the identified needs of the Parish. Whilst there are opportunities to provide affordable housing on development sites through policies in the NDTLP, the community may also be able to assist through local action and by identifying philanthropic landowners willing to make sites available at less than residential land market value. The Parish Council has been exploring how a community land trust might deliver sites for affordable housing. Similarly, there may be other situations where development is required to benefit the community.

H10. The policies of the NDTLP (Policy ST18) require 30% of housing on qualifying (for Winkleigh sites that will accommodate six or more dwellings or where the site has an area of 0.5Ha or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings proposed) sites to be affordable. In exceptional circumstances, where on site provision is not possible or appropriate, a financial contribution will be sought. The NDTLP also supports the development of affordable housing and starter homes outside the development boundary (so-called “exceptions sites”), subject to a range of criteria that restrict the location, scale and occupancy of development. The Parish Council will rely on the affordable housing policies of the NDTLP (and any Supplementary Planning Guidance on the topic) to secure affordable housing in the Parish. The scale, mix, and type of housing required to meet the affordable housing need will be informed by the North Devon and Torridge Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, Local Housing Needs Surveys and in some cases, information from Devon Home Choice.

H11. The price of housing in the area, combined with low wages intensifies demand for more affordable housing. The existing housing stock of the Parish has a higher proportion of detached, larger properties. If aspirant homeowners, particularly first-time buyers, are to gain access to the market then it is important to retain and provide smaller properties as well as to plan to increase the stock of affordable and entry level housing.

### **Policy HCLW1: Replacement dwellings**

In order to retain a stock of smaller dwellings, proposals for the demolition and replacement of dwellings, or extension to dwellings (where planning permission is required) will not be supported where the floorspace of the completed dwelling or extension is more than 40% larger than the original home.

H12. The original dwelling should be established with reference to the definition in section 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). The maximum 40% increase would be measured as the Gross External Area (GEA) of the dwelling.

H13. As well as a need for affordable housing, there is demand for housing to meet the needs of low to middle income households. The composition of family units is also changing; there are more single households, families with single parents and, coupled with the rise in house prices this has led to many more people requiring assistance to buy property. There is growing interest in self-build housing.

H14. The average age of residents in Winkleigh Parish is increasing. Over the lifetime of the NP, there is likely to be a need for housing to meet the needs of the less mobile, and housing that can be adapted to meet the changing circumstances of the household. There is also room for design that showcases construction technology, particularly where this results in homes with lower running costs. This is particularly important for this Parish, with its lower than average incomes, high proportion of households in fuel poverty and rising energy costs.

H15. The appearance of new development in the village is not just a matter of design. The way in which space is used has a marked impact on the degree to which a place is pleasant to live in. Parked cars, lack of responsible maintenance for public open space and insufficient storage space for day-to-day items such as bins and bicycles often detract from what is otherwise a good living environment. Site maintenance should aim to foster pride in neighbourhoods and a collective sense of stewardship. The ongoing maintenance of green infrastructure created in new development should be provided for by means of a commuted payment to WPC or an agreed nominated management company.

H16. Parking is dealt with in the section dealing with Traffic, Transport and Movement.

**Policy HCLW2: Storage**

All new residential development should make adequate provision for the storage of day-to-day items, such as bicycles, recycling and refuse bins. Storage should be designed in as part of the development, either within the building itself or in appropriate external storage facilities.

## Land to the north of Chulmleigh Road

H17. This land has been allocated for residential development in the NDTLP. Development of the land will be subject to the principles set out in Policy WIN02. Policy WIN02 of the NDTLP allocates land to the north of Chulmleigh Road for up to 55 dwellings. Policy WIN02 also requires; provision of a carpark for about 20 cars at the southern end of the site; a landscaped buffer zone to protect the setting of Court Castle; community woodland of 0.6Ha; and safe pedestrian and cycle access. The allocated site is well located close to the village centre. There is also the potential to create links to other nearby development, facilities (such as the Sports Centre, playing fields and allotments) and to add diversity of design to the village scene.

H18. The site also offers the chance to anticipate future transport trends and, specifically, to encourage more low carbon car use. Including a publicly accessible vehicle charging point on the site (possibly as part of the proposed carpark) would create an opportunity at a mid-point in Devon for electric vehicles to re-charge, as well as providing a local facility to encourage electric car uptake.

### **Policy HCLW3: Land to the south west of the Village**

if developed, should:

- i) Have a layout and design that recognises the potential for this area to be phased and planned comprehensively, especially the future road layout and pedestrian linkages. Consideration should be given to creating an alternative route from Hatherleigh Road to the A3124 through this area, avoiding Townsend Hill.
- ii) Within the design, incorporate traffic calming measures and traffic calming/public realm improvements, both within any development and on the surrounding approach roads, that create a priority environment for pedestrians.
- iii) Provide for safe and convenient car and bus parking facilities to serve the area and the primary school, including a priority crossing to the school site for pedestrians. Parking and associated hard surfacing should be well screened by planting  
Provide for reinforced natural boundaries within the site and adjacent to the open countryside with planting and the creation of new hedgerows.
- iv) Existing Rights of Way across the site and their amenity value, should be retained and new links created to these
- v) Plan for a buffer between any business/employment use and residential properties to safeguard amenity for future residents
- vi) Assess the need for improved community infrastructure required to address the impact of development.

## Sustainable development and the five-year housing land supply

H19. National planning policy requires local planning authorities to maintain a five-year land supply of deliverable housing sites and the NDTLP enables this. If this position cannot be maintained (for example if allocated sites or sites with planning permission are not taken up), additional sites for housing may be released in sustainable locations to address the shortfall.

H20. Prior to the adoption of the NDTLP, the role of Winkleigh as a small rural service centre made it an attractive location for additional housing that would contribute to a recognised deficit in Torridge's five-year land supply. In the absence of a five-year land supply, planning permission was granted on two large sites south west of Winkleigh (for up to 125 dwellings in total), outside the NDTLP defined development boundary. There is a widespread perception locally, that individually these applications pay little regard to the overall pattern of development, fail to factor in the consequential impact on the village of increased traffic, do not reflect the infrastructure requirements for the village, nor consider holistically the wider range of community benefits that housing development could deliver. As stated earlier in this section, the community supports limited development and smaller housing sites for around 15 dwellings or less.

H21. This NP has left the sites with planning permission outside the development boundary, taking the view that more sustainable sites exist to serve Winkleigh's long term housing need. The outstanding permissions may or may not be taken up in the form currently consented. If the area to the south and west of the village remains undeveloped, then further development would not be supported in the form it is proposed at present.

H22. Policy H6 establishes the principles to guide significant development proposals that are located beyond the NDTLP development boundary and which are justified based on a deficit in the five-year housing land supply.

It can apply to the following situations:

- Where there are speculative planning applications on land outside the development boundary.
- Where there is sustained developer interest in land to the south and west of the village, between Hatherleigh Road and Townsend Hill. (Refer to Policies Map A - Outline Planning Applications (A) 1/0127/2017/OUTM and (B) 1/0346/2017/OUTM)
- Where there is scope to influence the detailed planning application stage of extant planning permissions to the south and west of the village.



#### **Policy HCLW4: Development to meet the five-year land supply**

If additional land release is required beyond the development boundary to address a deficit in the five-year housing land supply, the following principles should apply:

- i) The sustainability of the proposals should be tested, at both a site level and for any cumulative impact on the community.
- ii) Development should adopt a “masterplan” approach wherever possible, linking together land parcels (or phases of development) and integrating them seamlessly into the pedestrian, cycle and road network of the village.
- iii) Development should deliver a range of services and infrastructure to meet the additional demand caused by the proposal.

## **Community Life & Wellbeing**

CL1. Winkleigh has a thriving community life. There is a good range of groups, societies and other organised activities which bring people together. These are mainly focussed around the three significant community buildings: Village Hall; Community Centre; and Sports Centre, although the church and chapels are also important. In addition to weekly and monthly markets, there is a regular memory café, youth club, a music group in Hollocombe, and a thriving football club and allotments. Linking residents together is the active Winkleigh Society which produces the quarterly journal “Distinctly Winkleigh”. The main event bringing the community together each year is Winkleigh Fair, held every July.

### **Objectives for Community Life and Wellbeing**

CL2. The objectives of the NP are:

- To ensure community life continues to thrive by safeguarding existing community facilities and assets against loss
- To ensure new facilities are provided to meet the changing and growing needs of the community
- To create an environment where access to the countryside and enjoyment of green space can be enhanced if opportunities arise

## **Community Life and Wellbeing Policies**

CL3. The challenge as the village grows is to secure the future of community assets, to exploit their potential, and to develop new infrastructure to meet the needs of new residents.

Community infrastructure and leisure facilities are safeguarded in the NDTLP, but there is a challenge in Winkleigh arising from the wealth of community space available, its financial viability and the changing needs of residents.

CL4. The Parish Council will work with local organisations and the respective management bodies of community halls in the Parish to safeguard them against loss and secure their longer-term future for the benefit of the community.

### **POLICY CLW1: Community assets and infrastructure**

Should the economics of retaining three community buildings prove unsustainable, or there is no longer a need for the facilities in their current form, any future uses of the land and/or buildings should demonstrate community benefit unless the premises are no longer required to meet the needs of the local community.

CL5. The health of residents is an important factor in quality of life. Leisure facilities are currently focused on the playing fields, just outside Winkleigh village. It is important that development of the allocated housing land to the north of the village provides a safe pedestrian link to the sports facilities and allotments. Ironically, for a community nestled in the countryside, access to walks and to green spaces is restricted. There are few communal outdoor areas, no parks, and particularly around Winkleigh village, poor access to public rights of way or bridle paths. Unlike many urban areas, there are comparatively few local opportunities for people to gain the benefits of walking for health or other outdoor activities. Tackling obesity and lack of exercise, particularly amongst children, are major public health issues. New green infrastructure should be provided as part of planned development on the allocated housing site north of Chulmleigh Road (see Policy HCLW3).

CL6. It has long been an aspiration of the community to create a footpath between the village and Winkleigh woods, an area of open access woodland and a popular dog walking destination. Shute Lane also offers potential to link the residents of Westcots Drive and Elms Meadow to the school and village centre. Developers should have regard to the Devon Countryside Access Forum Position Statement on Greenspace.

CL7. Hollocombe is more fortunate. It has a network of public rights of way close to the settlement, connecting people with local woodland and the countryside. There is also public access to land at Hollocombe Moore, Hollocombe Woods and Winkleigh Woods.

**Policy CLW2: Access to the countryside for leisure**

Existing public rights of way will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. Subject to the impact on adjacent land users and the environment, proposals to extend and link public rights of way and create new routes (particularly where they link to well used areas such as the Winkleigh Sports Centre and playing fields/playground and Winkleigh Woods) will be supported.

CL8. The Wallingbrook Health Centre (in Chulmleigh) has a branch surgery located in a bungalow on Southernhay. Should development opportunities in the village be taken up there will be a significant rise in the numbers seeking health care. The Parish Council, in liaison with health service commissioners and providers will keep the need for improved facilities under review (see also Policy H4). The issue of developer contributions for key infrastructure is discussed in the final section of this document entitled Making the Plan Happen.

CL9. Developers should have regard to the Devon Countryside Access Forum Position Statement on Greenspace.

## Policy Theme: The Economy

### The background

E1. A comprehensive survey of local businesses was conducted in March 2018 to understand the factors encouraging and inhibiting business development in Winkleigh. Its conclusions were that:

- a) Winkleigh needs investment in light business/industrial facilities to encourage companies to move to the area and provide opportunities for local people.
- b) There is some evidence that over the next five years local businesses expect to expand but very few additional workers will be needed.
- c) Those businesses based in the Parish want to stay, but there is concern that connecting main roads are inadequate for an increased level of commercial traffic.
- d) There is a desire to maintain the character of the Parish itself, through effective traffic and parking management.
- e) Flexibility in the design of future workplaces is key. Future employment patterns are difficult to anticipate, and development proposals should reflect this uncertainty. Boundaries between our work and non-work lives are increasingly blurred and future design of workspaces should acknowledge this.

#### E2. Key Facts

- a) 67% of the Winkleigh population aged 16-74 are economically active (2011 Census)
- b) 23% of Winkleigh residents over 16 have no qualifications
- c) Over a third of economically active residents work part-time
- d) At nearly 22%, levels of self-employment are more than twice the national average.
- e) Household income is low - £22,559: those who work outside the Parish earn more than those working within it.
- f) The economy of Torridge is dominated by activities linked to tourism and/or agriculture, with a high incidence of poorly paid and seasonal employment.
- g) Small employers are dominant in the Parish and there is a rising trend of self-employment, part-time working and micro-business.

## The NDTLP

E3. The NDTLP has a vision for the economy of northern Devon that is for a diverse and resilient economy that can adapt to challenges and maximise opportunities underpinned by an appropriately skilled workforce and effective infrastructure.

### **Economy Objectives:**

E4. This Plan seeks to maximise economic development opportunities consistent with the need to promote sustainable economic growth in our rural economy, to safeguard neighbourhood amenity, and to protect the environment. The objectives are:

- a) To improve the level and variety of employment and by promoting training and support to businesses, including agriculture.
- b) To seek out opportunities to improve the skills level of the workforce.
- c) To promote a mixed economy across the Parish which delivers local benefit, by building upon its existing strengths, links and connections, and by supporting development applications which deliver this.
- d) To support measures which maintain and improve the effectiveness and vibrancy of the Village's retail businesses, including encouraging spending to support local shops and businesses.
- e) To promote appropriate development at Winkleigh Airfield, recognising its potential for employment and environmental enhancement, by working with TDC to agree and implement a revised Site Development Brief.
- f) To improve the availability of effective ICT and high-speed broadband communications throughout the Parish.
- g) To promote the potential of Winkleigh for sustainable tourism and countryside recreation.

## Strengthening and diversifying the economy

E5. Winkleigh's residents work in a variety of locations, many travelling outside of the Parish for work. The economy of the area is relatively weak, with few large employers, dependent on small, local enterprises, agriculture, sole-traders, and home-based work. Local wages are low and earnings data shows that higher earners resident in Winkleigh are usually employed outside the Parish. Substantial inward investment is unlikely and so the focus of the NP is on strengthening and diversifying the economy and providing opportunities for new and emerging types of small-scale economic activity. The key is creating the environment in which new enterprises can exploit the potential of the knowledge economy and new technology and communications to provide employment. The NP supports development which would provide a stimulus to Winkleigh or the wider local economy, particularly where it offers higher paid employment, training and personal development opportunities.

E6. An important signal given by the NP is the enduring importance of agriculture and tourism as resilient foundations of our economy. It is important that these industries are drivers for future growth and that the potential of on-line, modern communications, and digital technologies are maximised to enable opportunities in these areas to be exploited. Additionally, this NP recognises that more traditional areas of local economic activity can be significantly developed if they are aligned with and exploit the potential of the knowledge economy. Specifically, sustainable tourism and countryside recreation are growing markets in this part of Devon. There is a rich seam of small craft and creative businesses who require flexible responses to workspace needs.

E7. The NP has five general employment areas, or areas of employment land for commercial/ industrial development: Winkleigh Airfield, north of the A3124; Winkleigh Airfield south of the A3124; (where uses on both parts of the Airfield are subject to the Site Development Brief prepared by TDC); Seckington; Beechlea and Western Barn. These are shown on the Policies Map B. The NP seeks to retain these general employment areas for employment purposes.

E8. Within the general employment areas, there is land available for commercial development to meet foreseeable needs, without designating further land in the open countryside.



E9. Whilst commercial investment in land and building in Winkleigh remains weak, there is continuing pressure to change land and buildings which have had a former commercial purpose into a residential use. Given the economic requirements of the Parish, the NP supports policy of the NDTLP (Policy DM13) protecting economic and employment assets. The low skill base of the Parish suggests a greater need for business support and training and proposals that deliver these outcomes will be supported, for example, training, teleworking, networking and touch down business facilities.

**Policy EC1: General Employment Areas**

Employment development will be supported in principle on the land identified as general employment areas on Policies Maps A and B. On these areas, land currently or previously used for employment purposes, will be retained for that purpose, or uses that supply training or business support, unless there is no reasonable prospect of such a use coming forward. Development on the Airfield should reflect the Site Development Brief or any successor document adopted by the planning authority.

E10. New forms of working and better ICT and telecommunications have weakened the ties to market that formerly might have required a business to have an urban location, or one with good road communications. Many people work from home and larger businesses have found premises through the conversion of redundant rural buildings. In future, there may be demand for new purpose built live-work space. It is important that uses to support the economy are enabled but that this does not lead to inappropriate development in the countryside. Policy EC2, therefore, supports provision of purpose built live-work space on general employment areas or within the Winkleigh development boundary.

**Policy EC2: New economic development**

Development proposals will be supported in the following circumstances:

- i) The development of new businesses, and the expansion of existing businesses, particularly those that further the knowledge economy, including improved telecommunications and ICT infrastructure, subject to the policies of the NDTLP and the NP
- ii) Purpose built live-work development,<sup>1</sup> within the development boundary or on a general employment area, where it is compatible with other land users. The primary purpose of live-work units should be to provide flexible workspace, therefore the residential element of live-work development should be provided in such a way that the future use of the total floorspace for business use is not compromised
- iii) In all cases lighting for security and operational reasons should be provided in a way that minimises light pollution.

<sup>1</sup> Live-work units are defined as: Units of living accommodation, which are specifically designed to accommodate work facilities for those residing there.

## The future use of Winkleigh Airfield

E11. The NDTLP contains Policy WIN01: Development at Winkleigh Airfield. The overall objective of the policy is to ensure restoration and enhancement of the landscape, whilst allowing for appropriate development. It is important that environmental enhancement covers not just the landscape and amenity, but also includes the need to enhance biodiversity across the area.

E12. A Site Development Brief, prepared by TDC, covers the whole of the area. Winkleigh Airfield is recognised as a focal point for economic and employment opportunities that could complement and enhance Winkleigh's role as a local centre. The airfield is a site of environmental and historical significance and so, in addition to supporting appropriate development that meets a local or wider need, it is required that development enhances environmental assets and conserves heritage assets on the site. Restoration and enhancement of the landscape and its continued use for agriculture, where appropriate, together with access improvements, are recognised objectives. The expansion of existing businesses and new development within areas defined in the Site Development Brief will, therefore, be acceptable providing it helps to achieve these goals, which are supported by the NP.

E13. Should the Site Development Brief for Winkleigh Airfield be revised at a future date, the Parish Council will work with TDC to agree the contents, reflecting the overall objectives set out in Policy WIN01 and the NP. Policy EC3, below, reinforces this commitment and also makes some additional requirements, recognising the role of the knowledge economy; the need to promote pedestrian and cycle access from the airfield to Winkleigh itself; specifically references the World War II heritage and requires lighting and boundary treatments that recognise the rural nature of the site.

E14. The airfield is not considered an appropriate location for residential development, or further food-related retail development, as it is detached from the village with its range of services and this would lead to further dispersed development in the countryside, contrary to national policy. The Four Seasons Park, adjacent to the Airfield would also benefit from better pedestrian links to the village.

### Policy EC3: Winkleigh Airfield

Development at Winkleigh Airfield will be supported where it is compatible with the provisions of Policy WIN01 of the NDTLP and it provides for:

- i) Other acceptable uses which would enhance the knowledge economy and/or offer business support, such as training, conference facilities, teleworking and networking suites.
- ii) Safe pedestrian and cycle links within and across the site, and/or to Winkleigh village.
- iii) Measures that safeguard, enhance and improve access to, and public understanding of, the World War II heritage of the site.
- iv) Any lighting and boundary treatments to recognise the rural location of the site, its landscape and biodiversity value and the dark skies of the area.

## **Retail businesses**

E15. The NDTLP contains Policy ST22 which safeguards against the loss of community facilities, including shops to meet the needs of local communities.

E16. Winkleigh village has a range of shops and facilities providing day-to-day needs appropriate to the size and scale of the current population which it serves. As the Parish grows there is a need both to promote Winkleigh shops, services and businesses, to encourage people to spend locally and to ensure capacity to meet future needs. However, it is also important that new facilities are located where residents can walk easily to them, to minimise additional traffic on Parish roads and encourage more pedestrian movement. Currently, opportunities for central village services to expand are limited. As the Parish population grows additional, small-scale, retail development that is easily accessible on foot, which complements existing provision, and that meets the needs of the resident population, is invited.

### **Policy EC4: Retail businesses**

Support will be given for additional small-scale proposals of up to 60 m<sup>2</sup> gross internal floorspace for use as shops, restaurants and cafes, professional and financial services, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways, to serve Winkleigh and its rural hinterland, where it is within or adjacent to the Development Boundary, well related to the built-up area, and offers safe and convenient access for pedestrians from within the village.

# Policy Theme: Transport, Travel and Movement

## The background

### T1. Key Facts

- a) Transport accounts for 25% of energy used by households.
- b) Residents travel further, on average to access jobs, facilities and services.
- c) Car ownership levels are high. There are 1.6 vehicles/households in Winkleigh Ward compared to 1.4 in Torrridge. 39.5% of households own 2 cars or vans, compared to only 28.2% in Torrridge (2011).
- d) There are regular bus services along the A3124.
- e) The only nearby connection to the rail network is Eggesford train station, 4 miles away, without a carpark.
- f) The footpath network in the Parish and within Winkleigh itself is poorly developed with few linkages to residential areas, and little connectivity.

T2. Winkleigh's location in the heart of Devon means its residents travel in all directions for work, service, leisure and other activities. Many local people also drive to the village for shopping, school and other facilities. The village has bus services along the main A3124. There is no public transport to Chulmleigh (where the health centre and secondary school are based) or to rail stations at Eggesford and Morchard Road. The village itself is served by a network of small roads and lanes, many of which lead on to The Square. The main A3124 is a strong boundary to the south and east of the village; for those living along Eggesford Road, it is also a significant barrier to safe and convenient pedestrian access to the centre of the village. The main roads present a harsh environment compared to the more enclosed and intimate quality of The Square and its approach roads. Hollocombe is served by a network of small, single track rural roads which dive steeply down the hillside where most of the properties lie. The only cycle route in the Parish is the shared surface alongside the A3124.

T3. Community discussions highlighted the following issues:

- a) Speed along the A3124, especially past the sports centre, Barnstaple Street, Torrington Road, Townsend Hill and Exeter Road.
- b) Danger to schoolchildren and local motorists along Townsend Hill due to excessive speed and volume of traffic.
- c) Lack of adequate parking in The Square and along Exeter Road.
- d) HGVs using unsuitable minor roads.
- e) The impact of traffic on safety, pedestrian confidence and the ability to cross the roads.
- f) The form of recent development that pays no attention to pedestrian links and does not encourage walking routes between neighbourhoods and to key facilities and services.
- g) There is a longstanding desire to find a dedicated walking route to Winkleigh Woods (see Community Life section).

T4. Underlying these discussions are concerns that, as the size and population of the Parish grows, so too will the volume of traffic, and that this will exacerbate existing problems, erode the character and distinctiveness of Winkleigh and further undermine the safety of pedestrians.

T5. These issues are of long standing, featuring prominently in the Winkleigh Community Plan. Local initiatives such as speed watch, the appraisal of major routes into Winkleigh to inform the Hamilton Baillie report (see below), and meetings of the County Council (as Highways Authority) reflect the importance of these issues to the community and their desire to address them.

T6. The Parish Council commissioned Hamilton-Baillie Associates to look at how the NP could tackle traffic and safety concerns through reinforcing local distinctiveness. This found that the key to developing a traffic strategy lay in seeking ways to reduce speeds, to raise driver awareness of the presence of the village, and to find ways to retain and promote human activity and ownership of Winkleigh's streetscapes through a combination of measures.

T7. The policies for transport, traffic and movement in the NP aim to improve the pedestrian and cycling connections between neighbourhoods by giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists over motorised traffic. A major finding of the Hamilton Baillie report was that changing drivers' behaviour and responses to the street scene was likely to be more successful in tackling traffic issues such as speed than traditional engineering solutions (such as one-way systems, changes to speed limits, large road junctions).

T8. The NP is limited in its ability to tackle the range of issues identified by the community, as the many traffic management issues fall outside the scope of the planning system. For example, changes on existing transport routes, traffic lights, speed limits, signage, traffic circulation, crossing points etc are usually excluded. These are the responsibility of Devon County Council, as the designated Highways Authority. The Parish Council will liaise closely with the County Council to help realise the objectives and policies of the NP and will work with the community and relevant organisations to develop project work to meet those concerns that fall outside of the NP.

## **Transport, travel and movement objectives:**

1. To place pedestrians and cyclists at the heart of future plans.
2. Reduce the 'strangling' effect of surrounding through-routes to reduce the severance of parts of the village from the centre.
3. Change driver perceptions, by making small changes on through-routes so that they "read" as part of the village. This can be tackled initially through a series of easy measures such as street furniture, planters, the removal of white lines and, where opportunity arises, resurfacing to signal priority to pedestrians and cyclists.
4. To reduce traffic speed by examining how village gateways and "rat-runs" can be modified to slow traffic and signal the village environment, for example through the realignment of carriageways; surfacing measures; appropriate traffic calming, and the location and design of village and highway signage.
5. Manage parking and congestion more effectively.
6. Enhance the environment of the Square (at the heart of the conservation area), removal, relocation and simplification of signage and noticeboards; enhancement of the pump and its setting; and the road resurfacing to indicate appropriate parking areas.
7. Improve pedestrian networks and create new walking and cycling routes to key services, between neighbourhoods and to the open countryside.

## General transport policies

T9. Currently the village centre and environs are heavily orientated in favour of car usage, with the needs of pedestrians subordinate to those of drivers. A consequence of this marginalisation has been that pedestrians feel less safe, and there is a perception that roads have become more congested and traffic speeds have increased. Socially, motorised transport isolates people from their neighbours and divides communities, but by reclaiming the streets and sharing spaces, a sense of place can be reclaimed.

### **Policy TTM1: Design and Traffic Management**

The design and layout of new development will prioritise movement according to the following hierarchy:

1. Walking and cycling
2. Public transport
3. Private motorised transport.

This means development will:

- i) Contribute to a network of footpaths and cycleways that safely and conveniently link residential areas with each other and the main services in the village. Cul-de-sac development and layouts should be avoided, to prevent neighbourhood segregation. Development will encourage the creation of circular walking and cycling routes for health and leisure.
- ii) Design the road layout to reduce traffic speed without the need for speed limits.
- iii) Consider proposals for access and road layout in local context and, where possible, banks, walls and other features disturbed during the creation of new accesses and paths should be re-instated elsewhere within the site using traditional methods and materials.



T10. With the designation of Winkleigh as a Local Centre within the NDTLP and with the consequent development and growth expected, the potential conflict between motorists and pedestrians may be exacerbated. The impact on the village square and sites such as the primary school are of particular concern. Policy TTTM2 seeks to mitigate this.

**Policy TTM2: New development and traffic**

New development which would significantly contribute to additional traffic and parking congestion in and around the Square and the school will not be supported if it would cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Where development may result in significant numbers of additional pupils attending the school, opportunities should be taken to work with the school to review the school travel plan so that measures to improve safety for pedestrians and promote less car use are fully explored.

T11. Within the development boundary there are some opportunities for limited infill development. Where this occurs opportunities should be taken, in accordance with Policies TTTM1 and TTTM3, to enhance pedestrian and cycle linkages and overcome the current barriers pedestrians face in reaching the school and village centre.

T12. Typically, recent development in Winkleigh has been of a cul-de-sac type, with little opportunity to walk through and between adjacent neighbourhoods. Pedestrian access to the village centre and other key services can also be poor, with walkers having to take inconvenient detours to reach the school, doctors and shops. There are opportunities to improve this situation, which is particularly acute on the south side of the village, with poor connections between Elms Meadow, and Westcots Drive and between these estates and the rest of the village. Policy HCLW3 aims to ensure future development seriously considers how pedestrians will wish to move around the village, regardless of whether the development is on allocated sites or sites that are unforeseen by the NDTLP.

**Policy TTM3: Creating links between neighbourhoods**

The connectivity and permeability of new development within or adjoining the Development Boundary should be maximised to give ready pedestrian and cycle access to the Square and other key village facilities (such as the school and doctors' surgery) and to encourage non-motorised movement between neighbourhoods. Measures that improve the links between neighbourhoods on the south side of the village, connecting Elms Meadow and Wescots Drive with each other, and providing direct, safe and convenient access to the school and village services and facilities will be supported.

T13. Parking within the village is limited with competition between residents and those visiting shops and facilities. Inappropriate parking causes some congestion in the square particularly when large delivery vehicles or agricultural machinery require access. These issues are likely to cause future problems as the population grows and could, unless addressed, inhibit retail and other development in the village, and impact upon the quality of the lives of those living in the centre of the village.

T14. The development of a car park on the allocated housing land north of Chulmleigh Road will go some way to easing parking congestion in the Square, particularly if there is signage to it. Management of parking in the Square and some of the narrower roads in the village is more problematic and falls outside the scope of the NP. Many of the difficulties experienced arise from vehicle owners parking inappropriately. The situation could be helped by designating, by means of surfacing, the places where parking is acceptable. If the opportunity arises (through ongoing maintenance work, or if enhancement work in the conservation area is proposed) then this might be possible. Once the carpark on the allocated site has been provided, the Parish Council will liaise with the County Council to discuss parking management and signage in and around the village.

#### **Policy TTM4: Parking**

New development will address the parking needs of residents and visitors. New houses should provide for their own parking needs, either within their own curtilage or by alternative suitable off-street parking provision

T15. Whilst street lighting at night contributes to perceived feelings of safety, there is local pride in our dark skies at night and concern that excessive street lighting could undermine this asset. Policy TTM5 seeks to address and balance these concerns.

### **Policy TTM5: Street lighting**

Street lighting in new development will be designed to minimise light pollution, while having regard to pedestrian safety and security, and will be appropriately timed to support the dark skies of the area.

### **Transport Infrastructure contributions**

T16. Hamilton Baillie consultants identified how infrastructure funding could impact upon traffic management and travel issues within Winkleigh. Funding could include: s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); New Homes Bonus; other funding to promote small scale change; private sponsorship and not-for-profit company investment.

T17. Where required to offset the impacts arising from new development, the Parish Council will liaise with agencies and organisations for developer contributions and other funding to help realise the following (not in priority order):

- a) Improvements to public transport (including access to rail services).
- b) Improvements to school transport services.
- c) Implementation of the Hamilton Ballie report findings where the impact of development requires mitigation of any harm.

T18. As opportunities arise, the priorities for local expenditure and transport-related public realm improvements will be:

- a) Townsend Hill: Measures to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety, particularly near the school and any future access required to land to the west.
- b) The junction of the A3124 with Exeter Road and Eggesford Road.
- c) Enhancement of the Square with appropriate paving/surfacing to indicate parking spaces and provision of cycle parking.
- d) Commissioning of further studies and design work to implement change.

# Making the Neighbourhood Plan happen

## Introduction

D1. To be effective the NP needs to be delivered and progress monitored on a regular basis. This section of the NP will change and develop over time as policies are delivered.

There are three ways in which the objectives and policies in the plan will have an impact.

1. Building on the earlier project work of the Community Plan there are a series of project-based actions which complement the Plan. These are included in the delivery and implementation framework.
2. Using the objectives and policies of the NP as a tool for shaping the decisions that are made, particularly by TDC in its Development Management function and by the Parish Council when commenting on planning applications.
3. Securing investment to make sure essential infrastructure (such as sewage treatment works, drainage, access and parking, school facilities, community facilities, green space and play space) keeps pace with development.

## Who is responsible?

D2. It is important that the NP is used by WPC, TDC and other decision-making partners and delivery agencies. The main users of the NP will be the Parish Council and TDC. The latter will be responsible for monitoring the overall progress of the NDTLP, particularly in relation to district wide levels of development. The Parish Council will be responsible for monitoring the specific policies of the NP, coordinating projects and actions and measuring progress.

D3. The NP also sets out a longer-term vision for Winkleigh with policies that are designed to improve the functioning and connectivity of the village. To deliver a sustainable future for Winkleigh, the vision, objectives and policies will be used to inform negotiations with any future developers.

D4. During the preparation of the NP the Parish Council has been in consultation with other key agencies, particularly Devon County Council (whose responsibilities include Highways, Education and the Historic Environment); the NHS; Devon Wildlife Trust, Natural England and the Environment Agency, as well as adjoining local planning authorities and Parish councils, and will look to work with these strategic bodies to deliver actions that also complement their strategies and plans.

The community and voluntary agencies, private business, and developers, also have a part to play, particularly in terms of community infrastructure, events and village life.

## **How will the delivery of the plan be funded?**

D5. The Parish Council has limited funds available to help implement the NP and will look to other funding streams to deliver the objectives and policies.

The main funding sources will be:

- i) Winkleigh Parish Council
- ii) Torridge District Council
- iii) Devon County Council
- iv) s106 contributions
- v) Other funding streams such as waste funding initiatives; lottery funding; and contributions from economic partnerships, the private sector and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector.

D6. The position of delivery funding will also be kept under review. At the time of writing the Government is reviewing its policy position on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and its relationship to s106 agreements. Other potential funding streams may not be secure in the longer term and other new funding sources may arise.

## **New Infrastructure**

D7. Additional development places a burden on the facilities of the Parish. In particular, the levels of potential development in Winkleigh will mean accommodating additional children at the pre-school and primary school, and greater numbers of pupils travelling to Chulmleigh for secondary education. The pre-school and primary school currently (summer term 2018) have 250 pupils. School capacity is registered as 210.

D8. It has also been a long-held aspiration of the community to have better medical facilities and the existing medical practice itself recognises the pressures that an enlarged population will place upon them. Development proposals that include appropriate medical facilities would be supported.

D9. Policy ST23 (Infrastructure) of the NDTLP seeks developer contributions to offset the impacts of development on physical, social and green infrastructure. Examples include flood alleviation, access, car parking and traffic management measures; adequacy of pre-school, primary and secondary educational facilities and social infrastructure (community meeting places, library provision, access to public transport, school transport, medical facilities, open green space and play space).

D10. Investigations and improvements to sewerage infrastructure to support new development are now funded through connection charges rather than by developer contributions.

## **Future work**

D11. Transport and traffic issues have long been an issue for the Parish, as detailed in the section on transport, traffic and movement. Following work by Hamilton Baillie, the Parish Council wish to act on the recommendations. Dealing with many of the issues will take time and considerable finance. Some of the steps that need to be taken can be actioned by the community, but some of the infrastructure required will take longer to deliver and needs to be front-loaded by more detailed research and costing.

D12. Working with delivery partners, the Parish Council will actively seek funding to cost more detailed proposals for transport and traffic management measures, reflecting the findings of the Hamilton Baillie report.

D13. Neighbourhood planning also offers opportunities for local communities to deliver housing land to meet local need. The Parish Council will explore this, and future Community Development Trust ideas, taking them forward through any relevant mechanisms.

## **Working together**

D14. This NP has an objective greater collaboration and community engagement in future decisions about land use in the Parish. In particular it wishes to see positive behaviours by all interested parties: landowners and other people with significant control over land are expected to engage with the local community where management decisions about land and buildings are likely to impact on them; and local people and their representatives are expected to respond reciprocally.

D15. The broad principles set out here are a series of responsibilities and expectations for all interested parties. Specifically:

- a) The local community can reasonably expect to be engaged in decisions about the use of land and buildings where planning permission is required and the outcome is likely to impact on the community, for example, through adequate pre-application discussions, or an engagement plan where appropriate.
- b) Engagement should be a genuine exercise in collaboration, should commence in advance of a planning application, and should aim to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
- c) Engagement and communication should be open-ended to encourage positive working relationships between local people and landowners.
- d) Engagement should be proportionate to the resources available to all parties and the impact that the decision may have on the community.

## **Monitoring the progress of the plan**

D16. A separate delivery and monitoring framework document details how the policies within the NP will be delivered, how this will be monitored, and identifies the key agencies responsible. It is intended to use the delivery and monitoring framework as a tool for annual reporting to the Parish Council and other delivery agencies so that progress can be assessed. Monitoring will highlight those policies which have been most successful in influencing the decision-making process, and those where use of the policy or progress towards a desired outcome has been disappointing. Action can then be taken to address these findings.

D17. Over time, the NP is likely to become outdated as circumstances change and development occurs. The monitoring and delivery framework can help assess the relevance of the NP's contents and a review of all or part of it can then be undertaken as necessary. It is anticipated an appraisal of the contents will be required every 5 years and/or when the NDTLP is reviewed.





