



**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT FOR NORTH
DEVON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

(APRIL 2006 – MARCH 2007)

DECEMBER 2007

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SUMMARY

The Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires every Local Planning Authority to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The 2007 Annual Monitoring Report is the third to be prepared and covers the period from 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007. This AMR covers the whole area of North Devon District excluding the area within Exmoor National Park. A series of contextual indicators have been set out which indicate the key social, environmental and economic characteristics of the District.

Progress towards implementing the proposed timetable for Local Development Documents (LDDs) identified in the approved Local Development Scheme (LDS) is assessed and indicates that key dates prior to April 2007 were met, although there has been some slippage in respect of some of the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

Monitoring information for Core Output Indicators (COIs) is set out, where available, to assess performance against national planning policy objectives. The Housing Trajectory indicates that housing provision since 2001 continues to be above strategic housing requirements. However, information is not available this year for all COIs.

Local Output Indicators monitor the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents (LDDs) are being implemented successfully and the impact and effectiveness of local plan policies. These results indicate that the majority of residential and employment development has occurred in the main towns and there remain low vacancy rates in the town centres. The local economy remains buoyant, with unemployment remaining low. There have been no major impacts on the local environment but the number of households on the housing register remains high, despite a fall in the level of homelessness.

The AMR sets out how the range of indicators will be reviewed and how it is proposed to collect 'missing' information in the future and the difficulties in achieving that. Policies in the emerging Local Plan did not carry significant weight until the Inspector's Report was received in August 2004. Following the Local Plan's adoption in July 2006 the effectiveness of the policies therein can be better assessed.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 changed fundamentally the development plan system. The North Devon Local Plan will be replaced gradually with a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs). Collectively, each of these LDDs will make up the Local Development Framework (LDF) for North Devon.
- 1.2 Section 35 of the Act requires every Local Planning Authority to produce an annual report to the Secretary of State. This Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents (LDDs) are being implemented successfully.

- 1.3 Monitoring is an increasingly important aspect of evidence based policy making. It is required to identify when existing policies are not being implemented or are not working effectively, so that appropriate action can be taken. It is also proposed to identify key challenges, opportunities and possible ways forward for revising and adjusting spatial planning policies.
- 1.4 The 2007 Annual Monitoring Report is the third to be prepared for North Devon and covers the period from 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007. The first 2 AMRs included monitoring information over previous 12 month periods, which provides a baseline for comparison.

Key Contextual Characteristics

- 1.5 This Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) covers the whole area of North Devon District Council excluding the area within Exmoor National Park, where the National Park Authority will be preparing their own AMR. This area, excluding the land within the National Park, coincides with the area covered by the Local Development Framework (LDF) for North Devon and the approved Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 1.6 Contextual indicators are set out below to show some social, economic and environmental characteristics of the locality. They provide context against which to consider the effects of policies and implications for developing new policies. Most of the information in Table 1 is only available for North Devon district as a whole, so all of the North Devon figures include those parts of Exmoor National Park situated within North Devon (except where indicated otherwise), even though the National Park is not covered by this Annual Monitoring Report.
- 1.7 Table 1 shows the contextual indicators for North Devon, with comparable information for Devon, the South West region and the United Kingdom where available.

Table 1: Key Contextual Indicators for North Devon (2007)

Contextual Indicator	North Devon	Devon	South West	UK
Population				
Population Size ¹	91,500	731,000 ²	5,124,100	58,845,700
Population Density (people per hectare)	0.83	1.14	2.16	2.46
% of population under age 16	18%	17%	18%	19%
% of population over age 75	10%	11%	9%	8%
% of population within urban areas ³	62.9%	~	~	~

1 Office of National Statistics, nomis 2006 figures

2 Excludes Plymouth and Torbay U.A.s (Total pop. 378,900)

3 Barnstaple, Ilfracombe, South Molton, Braunton and Fremington

Ethnic Composition (2001 census)				
White	99.05%	98.75%	~	~
Black	0.09%	0.13%	~	~
Asian	0.24%	0.24%	~	~
Chinese	0.13%	0.21%	~	~
Employment				
Average annual household income (2006 CACI data)	£28,863	~	~	£32,300
% unemployed	3.5%		3.7%	5.3%
% retired	21%	20%	21%	16%
% employed	80.1%	78.1%	77.9%	74.3%
% employees by sector – Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry & Fishing	5.4%	4.7%	~	2.1%
Manufacturing & Construction	23.3%	19.9%	~	22.2%
Distribution, Hotels & Catering	27.9%	24%	~	21.8%
Public Admin, Educ'n & Health	23.9%	27.1%	~	24.1%
Banking & Finance	10.1%	12.5%	~	16.9%
Transport & Communications	4.4%	5.6%	~	6.8%
Housing				
Number of households	42,543	298,576	2,313,481	22,387,939 ⁴
Average household size	2.15	2.45	2.21	2.63
Average house prices	£219,727	£237,839	£225,810	£183,896 ⁴
Transport/Accessibility				
% of households with no car	20.3%	19.1%	20.2%	27.4%
% travel to work by car	60.67%	62.5%	66.56%	62.14%
% travel to work by public transport	3.4%	4.7%	6.1%	14.9%
Environment				
Area of the District (ha)	108,618	~	~	~
% area of district within National Park	18.5% ⁵	~	~	~
% area of district within AONB	7.2%	~	~	~
Area covered by SSSIs (ha)	3143 ⁶	~	~	~
Area covered by registered parks and gardens of special historic interest (ha)	399	~	~	~
Number of listed buildings	2909 ⁷	~	~	~
Number of Conservation Areas	39 ⁸	~	~	~
Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments	82 ⁷	~	~	~
Community Safety				
Crime rate per 1000 population	87	77	86	103 ⁴

4 Figure for England and Wales

5 The parts of Exmoor National Park within North Devon district are excluded from this AMR.

6 When the SSSIs within the North Devon part of Exmoor National Park are included, the total area covered by SSSIs within North Devon is 9588 hectares.

7 These figures relate to North Devon district outside Exmoor National Park.

8 Within North Devon district there are 39 Conservation Areas outside the National Park plus 5 Conservation Areas within the North Devon part of Exmoor National Park.

2. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 The most recent North Devon Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved in May 2007, having been submitted formally to the Government Office for the South West during March 2007. This version supersedes the previous LDS approved in May 2006.

2.2 The Development Scheme Programme within both LDSs identified certain Local Development Documents (LDDs) that were scheduled to reach key stages before April 2007. The review of their progress against key dates will fall within the scope of this year's Annual Monitoring Report. Reference is also made to documents reaching key stages since March 2007.

Table 2 : Progress against the Proposed Timetable in the Development Scheme Programme

Local Development Document (LDD) and stages	Target Date ¹	Date achieved
Core Strategy DPD • Issues & Options Consultation	Nov/Dec 07	Nov/Dec 07
Education Contributions Code of Practice SPD • Public Consultation ² • Adoption & Publication	May/June 06 ² Feb 07	July/August 06 Feb 07
Development Brief for Anchorwood Bank, Barnstaple SPD • Public Consultation • Adoption & Publication	Nov/Dec 06 March 07	Nov/Dec 06 March 07
Development Brief for Queen Street/Bear Street SPD • Public Consultation • Adoption & Publication	Nov/Dec 06 April 07	Nov/Dec 06 April 07
Code of Practice on Developer Contributions SPD • Public Consultation • Adoption & Publication	Nov/Dec 06 April 07	Nov/Dec 06 April 07
Development Brief for Ilfracombe Bus Station SPD • Public Consultation ² • Adoption	May/June 06 ² Oct 06	July/Aug 06 July 07
Barnstaple Design Guide SPD • Public Consultation	July/August 07	N/A
Guidance on Refuse Storage for New Residential Developments • Public Consultation	July/Aug 07	July/Aug 07
Development Brief for Land East of Parsonage Lane, South Molton SPD • Public Consultation	July/Aug 07	July/Aug 07

Guidance on Micro-Renewable Energy Generation in New Developments SPD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Consultation 	Sept/Oct 07	Est'd Jan 08
Guidance on Agricultural Workers Dwellings SPD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Consultation 	Sept/Oct 07	Est'd Jan 08
Affordable Housing Code of Practice SPD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Consultation 	Sept/Oct 07	None

1 Target dates identified in the Local Development Scheme adopted June 2007.

2 Consultation date from 2006 Local Development Scheme.

2.3 Table 2 indicates that most of the key dates since April 2006 have been met, as set out in the timetable in the approved Local Development Scheme. Work is underway on several documents in preparing a robust evidence base. Changing priorities for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) may require the LDS to be reviewed.

2.4 Of those documents that have not completed their Public Consultation stage by the target dates, it is hoped that any slippage in the timetable will be largely recovered and eventual adoption and publication will take place not significantly after the target date.

2.5 Delays have resulted mainly from an over optimistic programme and tight timetable, partnership working (on the Core Strategy and SPDs on Micro-Renewable Energy Generation and Agricultural Workers' Dwellings) and the introduction of new Limehouse software to facilitate the online submission of representations.

2.6 Following Public Consultation on the draft Development Brief for Ilfracombe Bus Station in summer 2006, the Council resolved in October 2006 not to adopt this SPD. Consequently this SPD was omitted from the 2007 LDS. This decision was subsequently reviewed in July 2007 with the SPD being adopted, which explains the apparent delay against the 2006 LDS timetable.

2.7 Although preceding the 2007 LDS, the North Devon Local Plan was adopted in July 2006 broadly in accordance with the timetable set out in the 2006 LDS. This date falls during the period covered by this AMR and provides an up-to-date development plan for the district.

3. OUTPUT INDICATORS AND POLICY PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 **Output Indicators** are used to assess the performance of planning policies. They will measure quantifiable physical activities that are related directly to, and are a consequence of, the implementation of planning policies. There are different tiers and types of output indicators to differentiate issues of national and local relevance.
- 3.2 **Core Output Indicators** are set by Central Government and will be monitored by Local Planning Authorities across the Country. The results of these indicators should provide a consistent data source, which can build up a comparable picture of the impact of planning policies and general principles at regional and national levels.
- 3.3 **Local Output Indicators** are identified by the District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to monitor the impact and effectiveness of particular planning policies at a more local level. The selection of local indicators focuses on issues and impacts that are considered to be important locally, without duplicating the core output indicators.

CORE OUTPUT INDICATORS

- 3.4 The Government has identified a series of Core Output Indicators of which 7 groups are relevant to the District Council. The detailed definitions are set out below with the relevant information for North Devon (where available).

Business Development

	Core Output Indicator	Quantities 2006 - 2007
1a	Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type. ¹	B1: 7618 m ² B2: 4849 m ² B8: 9100 m ² TOTAL: 21,567 m ² (net)
1b	Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas. ¹⁺²	B1: 7618 m ² B2: 4849 m ² B8: 0 m ² TOTAL: 12,467 m ²
1c	Amount of floorspace by employment type, which is on previously developed land. ¹	B1: 6618 m ² B2: 689 m ² B8: 9100 m ² TOTAL: 16,407 m ²
1d	Employment land available by type. ¹	B1/B2/B8: 50.5 hectares
1e	Losses of employment land in (i) employment ² / regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area	Employment Areas: 0.321 hectares District wide: 0.321 hectares (excluding National Park)
1f	Amount of employment land lost to residential development.	0 hectares

¹ Use Classes from the 2005 Use Classes Order: B1 (business); B2 (general industrial); B8 (storage or distribution)

² Employment areas include business parks and industrial estates identified in the North Devon Local Plan. There are no regeneration areas in North Devon.

- 3.5 Historically, the monitoring of employment land has been calculated from site areas of employment land allocations and permissions (in hectares) in order to monitor the implementation of Structure Plan targets for provision of additional employment land (in hectares). However, floorspace completions have been calculated split by use types where known. The figures shown for B1/2/8 refer to where the floorspace cannot be identified within a specific Use Class.
- 3.6 The floorspace figures indicate that the majority of new employment floorspace is within identified employment areas with one additional warehouse (9100 sqm) completed elsewhere in Barnstaple. All new employment development was on previously developed land, with the exception of some new development on Roundswell Business Park.
- 3.7 The main industrial estates and business parks around North Devon have been approved for a range of B1, B2 and B8 uses so it is not possible to allocate any undeveloped land to a particular use class until a potential occupant has been identified. This data cannot be obtained in future years unless allocated sites or outline planning permissions are restricted to a particular use class.
- 3.8 Monitoring of employment land has not differentiated between the sub-classes of business development (Use Class B1) because, historically, such development has not been restricted to a particular part of this Use Class. All figures for Business development (B1) refer to the Use Class as a whole. Similarly, this data cannot be obtained in future years unless allocated sites or future planning permissions are restricted to a particular part of the B1 Use Class, which would be inappropriate unless there are valid planning reasons.
- 3.9 There was no loss of existing employment premises to residential development, although part of Roundswell Business Park was lost to a veterinary hospital. In addition, an insurance office (A2) was lost to residential. No employment land has been lost to retail or leisure development this year.
- 3.10 The adopted Structure Plan requires 70 hectares of employment land in North Devon (2001-2016) or an average of 4.66 hectares per year. At the end of March 2006, the residual requirement was for 51.8 hectares (2006-2016) or an average of 5.2 hectares per year. During 2006/7 a net total of 1.3 hectares of new employment land was completed, which falls below both of these local targets.
- 3.11 The majority of strategic employment floorspace requirements identified in the Structure Plans to 2011 and 2016 have already been committed, even when detailed planning applications are still awaited. Despite the apparent availability of 50.5 hectares of employment land, and even if additional employment land is provided to replace employment land lost to residential or other redevelopment, it is anticipated that the strategic employment floorspace up to 2016 will be fully committed well before 2011. Consequently, additional employment land is required to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for existing businesses to expand and new businesses to find suitable premises. Also, adequate appropriate new jobs are required to meet the needs of the local population and retain a vibrant local economy and low levels of unemployment.

3.12 In particular, the potential expansion of Pathfields Business Park in South Molton is being held up by lack of available allocated employment land and there is a list of businesses waiting for new sites. There is also little employment land left at Roundswell Business Park, a strategic employment site in Barnstaple. However, provision of additional employment land would be out of conformity with the strategic employment provisions set out in the adopted Structure Plan to 2016.

Housing

	Core Output Indicator	
2a	Housing trajectory showing:	See Figure 1
(i)	net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer;	1980 (from April 2002 to March 2007)
(ii)	net additional dwellings for the current year;	482
(iii)	projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or a ten year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer;	2541 ¹
(iv)	the annual net additional dwelling requirement;	327 ²
(v)	annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.	282 ³
2b	Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land.	61% (296/482)
2c	Percentage of new dwellings completed at:	
(i)	less than 30 dwellings per hectare;	20%
(ii)	between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and	38%
(iii)	above 50 dwellings per hectare.	42%
2d	Affordable housing completions.	100

1 The North Devon Local Plan was adopted in July 2006 and is saved until 2011. A 10 year period would run to 2016, in accordance with the adopted Devon Structure Plan, which requires 4900 dwellings in North Devon (2001-16). From 2002-07, 1980 dwellings have been completed, in addition to 379 from 2001-02, leaving a residual requirement for 2541 by 2016. However, the adopted local plan currently only meets part of this residual requirement, allocating sites to meet only the housing need up to 2011.

2 The adopted Devon Structure Plan requires 4900 dwellings in North Devon (2001-16) or 327 dwellings per year.

3 Calculated as 2541 divided by 9 years (2007-16).

3.13 A total of 2541 additional dwellings are required 2007-2016 to meet strategic housing requirements, since 2359 have been completed 2001-2007 out of the Structure Plan requirement of 4900. As at the end of March 2007, there are 536 dwellings under construction and 1121 had extant planning permission leaving a residual requirement for 884.

3.14 Of the 482 new dwellings completed, 131 (27%) were on allocated sites with 351 (73%) on windfall sites. Equivalent figures for the proportion of new development on allocated sites in recent years are 51% in 2005/6, 29% 2004/5 and 23% in 2003/4.

- 3.15 Whilst the adopted North Devon Local Plan only covers the period to 2011, allocated sites without planning permission identified for residential development have a potential capacity of at least 1525 dwellings, which exceeds the residual requirement of 884. The figure of 1525 dwellings includes several allocated sites with undetermined planning applications including sites with planning permission granted since 1st April 2007. These figures exclude all capacity from windfall sites. Consequently, the strategic housing requirements until 2016 are likely to be met without requiring any additional site allocations, even though residential allocations have only been identified for the period until 2011.
- 3.16 The land supply of immediately available, suitable and deliverable land is calculated to be 10.5 years based upon the annualised strategic housing requirement from the current Structure Plan. It is proposed to publish details of 5-year land supply in early 2008 and it will need to be reviewed once the Regional Spatial Strategy has been adopted. It is also proposed to prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in partnership with other authorities in the Northern Peninsula HMA.
- 3.17 The **Housing Trajectory for North Devon** (Appendix 1) shows that housing provision is above strategic housing requirements. It has been calculated on the basis of the annualised strategic housing requirement from the adopted structure plan of 327 dwellings per year until the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has been adopted in 2008. The draft RSS (June 2006) indicates an annual average requirement of 395 dwellings for North Devon from 2006 to 2016, which has been taken as the annualised strategic housing requirement from the anticipated adoption in 2008 until 2016.
- 3.18 The projected completions in the Housing Trajectory are uncertain because there is no established mechanism for projecting completions. There is no remaining phasing for local plan allocations before the end of the plan period in 2011. In the short term the stated projection is approximately 440 dwellings for 2007/8 in view of 220 recorded completions for the first six months of that year. Thereafter the projected completions of 440 per year reflect a cautious estimate based on the average number of completions over the last 5 years (396 dwellings per year), recognition of the high level of dwellings currently under construction (536 dwellings) and with extant planning permission (1121 dwellings). It is likely that this level of provision is exceeded, but it is uncertain by how much.
- 3.19 It is anticipated that the actual completions will be above this projected level, but even this cautious estimate is well above the annualised strategic housing allocation in the Structure Plan and slightly higher than the annual average requirement set out in the draft RSS. It is even further above the annualised requirement to 2016 taking into account the actual completions since 2001. In the longer term after 2011 the Council will release enough land to meet any residual Structure Plan requirement to 2016. However, it is still unclear what level of housing provision will be required through the adopted Regional Spatial Strategy, so future projected completions in the longer term are artificial beyond an indicative average level.

- 3.20 Figures for the average density of completed residential developments indicate that 80% of completed dwellings were at densities in excess of 30 dwellings per hectares. Those developments below 30 dph tended to be single plots including barn conversions, agricultural dwellings and dwellings on the edges of rural settlements. The majority of new dwellings were developed at over 50 dph, rather than between 30 to 50 dph as in previous years. This shift indicates that suburban sites and new residential estates are being built at increased density.
- 3.21 The proportion of new dwellings on previously developed land (61%) meets the challenging target of 60% set out in the Local Plan and the national target set out in PPS3. It also exceeds the regional target of 50%. In view of the majority of housing allocations being on previously developed land, it is anticipated that this proportion will remain at over 60% in future years.
- 3.22 The level of affordable housing completions during 2006/7 is 100 dwellings, including 57 new grant free affordable homes. This provision is the highest level achieved so far, improving on last year's total of 65 and continuing an upward trend. In addition to the new affordable homes provided, financial contributions have been negotiated through planning obligations towards future provision of affordable housing off-site. At 31 March 2007, £596,715 had been negotiated for off-site affordable housing provision.
- 3.23 The thresholds for the provision of an affordable housing element in residential schemes were lowered with the adoption of the Local Plan in July 2006, but many schemes still come in just below this threshold. If such a scheme falls below the target density for the area where it is located then it may be possible to negotiate higher numbers, but schemes that meet minimum density requirements are more difficult to refuse.
- 3.24 As part of the Housing Market Assessment for the Northern Peninsula, a Strategic Viability Assessment is being prepared to determine the extent to which trigger thresholds can be reduced or a higher proportion of affordable housing can be provided without threatening the viability of future development.

Transport

	Core Output Indicator	
3a	Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car parking standards set out in the local development framework.	~
3b	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre.	~

- 3.25 The District Council does not collect the data to report on these Core Output Indicators. It was hoped that adaptations to the existing monitoring database during 2006 would have enabled the percentage of non-residential development complying with parking standards to be provided in the future, but required information is not readily available.

3.26 Devon County Council have provided information using Accession software indicating the areas within which new development is within 30 minutes public transport time of each and all the stated facilities. However this information has revealed certain bizarre anomalies and obvious gaps and cannot be relied on. Accordingly it is not considered that figures provided for these Indicators are reliable enough to provide meaningful information. It is hoped that more reliable information will be available in time for future AMRs.

Local Services

	Core Output Indicator	
4a	Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development. ¹	Retail: 46 m ² (gross) 46 m ² (net) Office: 7618 m ² (gross) Leisure: 381 m ² (gross)
4b	Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres. ¹	Retail: 0% (gross) 0% (net) Office: 0% (gross) Leisure: 43% (gross)
4c	Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard.	1%

¹ Use Classes from the 2005 Use Classes Order: A1 (retail); A2 (financial and professional services); B1a (offices); D2 (assembly and leisure).

3.27 There were two retail developments completed this year, both small extensions to existing village stores in Braunton and Witheridge. Neither of these sites are located on existing employment areas or in existing town centres. In addition, two new foodstores in Barnstaple town centre (Londis and Spar), with a combined floorspace of 128 sqm net, replace existing non-food retail units of equivalent floorspace.

3.28 There were five new office developments completed, all within use class B1. Whilst none of these sites were located in existing town centres, all were located on existing industrial estates.

3.29 As indicated above for the Business Core Output Indicators, all figures for Business development (B1) refer to the Use Class as a whole. This data cannot be obtained in future years unless allocated sites or future planning permissions are restricted to a particular part of the B1 use class, which would not be appropriate unless there are valid planning reasons.

3.30 There were two new leisure developments completed, one of which was situated in Ilfracombe town centre. The other development was for an indoor pool and leisure complex at an existing holiday park in the countryside, where the need for a sequential approach to site selection would not apply.

- 3.31 Bicclescombe Park has retained green flag status for the fourth consecutive year. Whilst only 1% of eligible open space has the green flag award, other areas of open space are managed to similar standards to those required by the green flag, but have not been entered for adjudication to be awarded green flag status.

Flood Protection and Water Quality

	Core Output Indicator	
7	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality.	0

- 3.32 No developments were granted permission contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency during the period 2006/7. All applications to which the Environment Agency raised concern have been either refused, negotiated to overcome the objections or are still undetermined.

Biodiversity

	Core Output Indicator	
8	Changes in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including:	
(i)	change in priority habitats and species (by type);	None identified from available data.
(ii)	change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national or sub-regional significance.	No new sites designated

- 3.33 The District Council has a Biodiversity Action Plan including 10 adopted Habitat Action Plans covering a cross-section of local habitats. There has been no recorded change in the extent of the areas of these habitats. However, small incremental changes will have occurred since, for example, one of the habitats is *towns and villages*, which will have expanded by a few peripheral houses at the expense of *farmland/arable* habitat. A qualified assessment of the habitat would be more useful than a quantified indicator, since it is the biodiversity value and enhancement of land within the habitats that is as important as the area covered. However, such information is not readily available.

- 3.34 There were no changes in the coverage of international or national or sub-regional designations.

- 3.35 The North Devon Biodiversity Action Plan neither identifies any priority species nor includes any Species Action Plans. No information is available for the change in populations of priority species from county, regional and national biodiversity action plans.

Renewable Energy

	Core Output Indicator	
9	Renewable energy capacity installed by type.	N/A

- 3.36 The District Council adopted a Renewable Energy Action Plan in May 2006, which sets a local target of 35.9 MW (electricity) and 17.3 MW (heat) by 2010. Over the period 2006-2010 these figures equate to an annual target of approximately 7.2 MW_e and 3.5 MW_{th} respectively.
- 3.37 No large scale renewable energy capacity has been installed during 2006/7. The approval given by the Secretary of State for the wind farm at Fullabrook (66 MW_e) alone will exceed North Devon's adopted target by 84% and will meet 44% of Devon's target of 151 MW_e.
- 3.38 There has been additional capacity from the installation of solar panels and collectors as well as other micro-generation schemes on domestic properties, but this provision is difficult to quantify as planning permission is frequently not required. Nevertheless, it is recognised that targets for installed capacity were not achieved during 2006/7.
- 3.39 Policy ECN15 of the North Devon Local Plan adopted in July 2006, includes a requirement for new residential and commercial development of a 'significant size' to incorporate at least 15% of predicted energy requirements from renewable sources. This policy will potentially increase the level of renewable energy capacity to be installed through micro-generation schemes, as well as making it easier to monitor within new developments. No on-site renewable energy was installed for major developments under this policy during 2006/7. However, on-site renewable energy has been approved as part of planning permissions for major developments some of which are under construction.

LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS

- 3.40 Table 1 of the emerging North Devon Local Plan identifies indicators to monitor the impact and effectiveness of local plan policies. Those indicators with specified targets have been set out under the relevant chapter headings of the local plan and include details of the relevant policies and the targets identified. Indicators duplicating Core Output Indicators have been excluded, as have those for which no information is available.
- 3.41 Historically, the LPA has not monitored which planning policies were used and how often in determining planning applications. Whilst it is proposed to do so in the future, this information cannot be collected retrospectively so is not available for this Annual Monitoring Report.
- 3.42 Alongside local plan policy performance indicators, some additional Local Output Indicators have been included which are intended to supplement the Core Output Indicators. These indicators will reflect other issues important locally that are not monitored directly by the local plan policy indicators and should recognise the context of North Devon as reflected in the contextual indicators identified in Table 1.

The Plan Strategy

	Local Plan Indicator – the distribution of development	
Policies	STY1, STY2, STY3, HSG2, HSG3, HSG4, ECN1, ECN3, ECN4	
	The proportion of new housing and employment development within Barnstaple, the Area Centres and Local Centres. (Target: at least 50% of new homes and employment development built in Barnstaple during the plan period.)	<p>Residential: 26% in Barnstaple; 43% in Area Centres; 16% in Local Centres.</p> <p>Employment: 100% in Barnstaple; 0% in Area Centres;¹ 0% in Local Centres.</p>
	The proportion of new housing and employment development built in the Priority Area of Rural Regeneration and the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint. (Targets: maintain rates of development in the PARR; progressively reduce rates of housing development within the ASLDC throughout the Plan period excluding Ilfracombe.)	<p>Residential: 21% in PARR; 47% in ASLDC; 18% in ASLDC (excluding Ilfracombe).</p> <p>Employment: 100% in PARR; 0% in ASLDC; 0% in ASLDC (excluding Ilfracombe).¹</p>

¹ Development at Mullacott Industrial Estate to the south of Ilfracombe is classified as being within the Area Centre of Ilfracombe.

3.43 A total of 85% of new housing was located within the main settlements (including Area and Local Centres), up from 84% last year. The proportion of housing in Barnstaple has dropped from 43% last year to 26%, but with approximately 50% of allocated housing capacity still situated within Barnstaple. The proportion of housing in Local Centres has also fallen from 19% last year to 16%. The proportion of housing in Area Centres has risen to 43% from 22% last year reflecting high levels of completions in Ilfracombe and South Molton. There remain a high level of commitments in these settlements. The proportion of new housing in the Area of Strategic Landscape and Development Constraint (ASLDC) has risen significantly to 47% from 25% last year, although the rise in the ASLDC excluding Ilfracombe is just 2%. These figures indicate an overall concentration of housing development in the main settlements, which reflects the intention of the settlement strategy.

3.44 All new employment development this year has been within Barnstaple, in contrast to last year when the majority was completed at Pathfields Business Park in South Molton. However, the majority of employment land still under construction at 1 April 2007 was at Pathfields. There is no new employment development this year across the rest of the district.

Development Standards

	Local Plan Indicator – sustainable development	
Policy	ENV1,DVS1,DVS1A,HSG9,ECN15	
	Appeals dismissed where decision referred to policy DVS1A. (Target: at least 90% appeals dismissed)	70% (23 appeals, of which 16 were dismissed)
	Local Plan Indicator – design and landscaping	
Policies	DVS1, DVS2	
	Appeal decisions relating to design/landscaping issues. (Target: at least 90% appeals dismissed)	58% (12 appeals, of which 7 were dismissed)
	Local Plan Indicator – Public Health, Safety and Amenity Considerations	
Policies	DVS3, DVS4	
	Complaints to Environmental Health Unit resulting from new development. (Target: no substantiated complaints from development completed after April 2006 which cannot be resolved using enforcement measures)	None identified.

- 3.45 In 2006/7, 23 appeal decisions referred to sustainable development issues (design, renewable energy, location etc.) of which 16 were dismissed. Out of these, ENV1 was used 13 times (of which 10 were dismissed and 3 allowed); DVS1A once (allowed); DVS1 once (dismissed); HSG9 3 times (all dismissed); and ECN15 once (dismissed). The inspector did not quote any revised deposit/adopted policies in 5 of these appeals.
- 3.46 Twelve appeal decisions in 2006/7 referred to design and landscaping of which 7 were dismissed. Out of these, DVS1 was used 8 times (5 dismissed and 3 allowed); and DVS3 5 times (3 dismissed and 2 allowed). The inspector did not quote any revised deposit/adopted policies in 2 of these appeals.
- 3.47 Where appeals were allowed contrary to these policies, the key issues reflected different interpretation of the policies, and balance against other policies, particularly with regard to design. There are not considered to be any fundamental problems or weaknesses with these policies. The Local Plan was adopted in July 2006. Thereafter it carried full weight as part of the Development Plan and is saved as part of the Local Development Framework until at least July 2009.

Environment

	Local Plan Indicator – landscapes of national importance	
Policies	ENV2, ENV3, ENV4	
	Major development proposals permitted in the AONB, Heritage Coast and Exmoor National Park fringes. (Target: no significant departures from the development plan permitted)	No significant departures for major development in AONB, Heritage Coast & National Park fringes.
	Local Plan Indicator – landscapes of local importance	
Policies	ENV5, ENV6	
	Major development proposals permitted in the CPA and AGLV. (Target: no significant departures from the development plan permitted)	No significant departures for major development in AGLV & CPA.
	Local Plan Indicator – nature conservation	
Policies	ENV8, ENV9, ENV10, ENV11, ENV12	
	Development proposals affecting locally distinctive and important biodiversity habitats and networks (Targets: no net loss to locally distinctive and important habitats or networks; no net loss or damage to SSSIs or County Wildlife Sites)	No adverse impacts on SSSIs and County Wildlife Sites has been identified.
	Local Plan Indicator – archaeology	
Policies	ENV13, ENV14	
	Number of recorded nationally and locally important archaeological sites and remains. (Targets: no loss or damage to archaeological sites and remains of national importance (as identified by the National Monuments register); no damage without archaeological record to sites of local importance (as advised by the County Sites and Monuments Register).	No adverse impacts on nationally important archaeological sites has been identified.
	Local Plan Indicator – built heritage	
Policies	ENV16, ENV17, ENV18	
	Changes to Conservation Areas. (Target: no reduction in the area of conservation areas)	No change in area.
	Changes to the listed buildings register (Target: no buildings delisted or downgraded to a lower status)	No buildings were delisted or downgraded. 3 additional listings.
	Number of listed buildings at risk (Target: no increase in the number of listed buildings at risk)	6

- 3.48 There was one major planning application approved adjacent to the AONB/CPA/Heritage Coast, for extension of the Holiday Park at Stowford Meadows. This application is not considered to harm the designated landscape.

- 3.49 There was one major development approved within the Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), for a large agricultural building. This proposal was acceptable in the AGLV and was felt not to harm the protected landscape. The Fullabrook decision for 66 MW_e is outside the period covered by this AMR, but represents a major impact on the protected AONB and AGLV landscapes which will be highlighted further in next year's AMR for 2007/8.
- 3.50 The 82 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in North Devon (outside the National Park) cover a total of 55 hectares with the largest four sites between them covering 31.5 hectares. There have been no approved developments damaging any of these nationally important archaeological sites.
- 3.51 There were 3 additions to the listed buildings register, all Grade II listings, namely the Well Head at Chittlehampton, and the War Memorials at Combe Martin and Kentisbury. There has been no change in the number of buildings at risk.

Local Output Indicator		
	Number of Conservation Areas with an adopted Character Statement.	1

- 3.52 Fremington Quay Conservation Area was designated in 1996 and is the only Conservation Area with an up-to-date character statement. Others are currently being prepared.

Travel, Transport and Communications

Local Plan Indicator – promoting sustainable transport choices		
Policy	TRA1A	
	The number of travel plans adopted in major new non-residential developments (Target: travel plans adopted for all major new non-residential developments)	3
Local Plan Indicator – transport parking		
Policy	TRA8	
	Number of average car parking spaces in residential development. (Target: level of on-site car parking not to exceed an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling)	Not available.

- 3.53 Two major non-residential planning applications were approved during 2006/7 that incorporated travel plans: for a travel lodge and small workshops. Another application for reserved matters reiterated the requirement to implement a travel plan originally approved at Outline Application stage.

Housing

Local Plan Indicator – strategic housing provision		
Policy	HSG1, HSG2, HSG3, HSG4, HSG5	
	The number of people in the District classified as homeless. (Target: no net increase in the number of people classified as homeless)	40 (31/3/07)
	The number of households on the housing register. (Target: no net increase in the housing register)	3759 households (31/3/07)

3.54 These figures demonstrate that the number of homeless people has fallen significantly from last year (60), whereas the number of households on the housing register is very similar (3765). The previous figures for these indicators form a baseline against which future performance can be assessed.

The Economy

	Local Plan Indicator – Industry	
Policies	ECN1, ECN2, ECN3, ECN4	
	Loss/net gain in employment land. (Target: no net loss in employment land)	Loss of 0.32 hectares
	GDP per head/average household incomes. (Target: to increase GDP per head and household incomes)	£25,274 (2004)
	Unemployment levels. (Target: to improve the ranking/score of need in index of deprivation)	3.3%
	Local Plan Indicator – tourism	
Policies	ECN8, ECN9, ECN10, ECN11	
	Loss/gain of tourist accommodation and facilities. (Target: no net loss of tourism accommodation)	Loss of 360 bedspaces ¹
	Local Plan Indicator – renewable energy	
Policy	ECN15	
	Renewable Energy generation by major new developments. (Target: at least 15% of energy generation for major developments from renewable energy)	None.

¹ Figures relate to North Devon excluding Lynton/Lynmouth within Exmoor National Park.

3.55 There has been a net gain of employment land within North Devon. This figure (loss of 0.32 ha) was calculated as employment land completions excluding those in allocated/existing employment areas, minus losses of existing employment land to residential and other forms of development. All new employment completions were on allocated/existing employment areas this year, so the sole loss to a veterinary hospital (see para. 3.9) results in a net loss.

3.56 The number of tourist bedspaces in North Devon has fallen slightly for North Devon (excluding those in Lynton/Lynmouth) between 2005 to 2006 from 39,710 to 39,350 bedspaces (approx. 0.9% loss). The rate of loss from 2004 (41,560 bedspaces) has slowed but continues a downward trend. The latest losses were primarily from serviced tourist accommodation from around the district, although provision for holiday flats and houses has increased.

3.57 Policy ECN15 has only recently started to carry significant weight with formal adoption of the Local Plan in July 2006. There were a number of major developments approved within 2006/7 incorporating a proportion of energy generation from renewable sources, although none had been completed during the period covered by this report.

Shopping and Community Facilities

	Local Plan Indicator – retail ¹	
Policy	COM1	
	Percentage of shops (A1 Use Class) in the primary shopping frontages of Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. (Target: no net decrease in the number of shops within the primary shopping areas of Barnstaple and Ilfracombe)	Barnstaple 77% A1 use Ilfracombe 62% A1 use
	Percentage of shops (A1 Use Class) in the centres of Braunton and South Molton. (Target: no less than 50% of the total number of units in non-shop use within the centres of Braunton and South Molton)	Braunton 58% A1 use South Molton 34% A1 use

¹ All surveys undertaken during October 2006.

3.58 These indicators show a significant majority of A1 (retail) units in the Barnstaple and Ilfracombe primary shopping frontages and in Braunton village centre. The proportion for Barnstaple has fallen slightly (from 79%), the figure for Braunton remains constant, whilst the proportion of in South Molton town centre remains low. Another small fall in Ilfracombe (from 64%) means that the cumulative fall (from 68%) since 2005 is becoming significant.

	Local Output Indicator ¹	
	Percentage of ground floor units in Barnstaple Town Centre which are (i) Use Class A1 (retail) and (ii) vacant.	55% A1 use 5% vacant
	Percentage of ground floor units in Ilfracombe Town Centre which are (i) Use Class A1 (retail) and (ii) vacant.	46% A1 use 8% vacant
	Percentage of ground floor units in South Molton Town Centre which are vacant.	3% vacant
	Percentage of ground floor units in Braunton Village Centre which are vacant.	2% vacant
	Percentage of ground floor units in Woolacombe Village Centre which are (i) Use Class A1 (retail) and (ii) vacant.	47% A1 use 0% vacant

¹ All site surveys undertaken during October 2006.

3.59 The vacancy rates remain relatively low in all centres although rates have increased in Barnstaple (from 4%), Ilfracombe (from 7%) and South Molton (from 2%). There is no change in the low vacancy rates for Braunton or Woolacombe.

3.60 The proportion of ground floor C3 (residential) units in South Molton is higher than in other Town Centres – 26% in South Molton, compared to 11% in Ilfracombe, 5% in Barnstaple and 6% in Braunton. The equivalent figure for the local centre of Woolacombe is 15%. Consideration should be given to reviewing the town centre boundary for South Molton for a more concentrated town centre, possibly excluding East Street east of the New Road junction.

Recreation

	Local Plan Indicator – recreation	
Policy	REC5, REC6	
	Loss/gain of open space. (Target: no net loss of public open space)	None identified
	Amount and type of open space provided in new development. (Target: to meet locally adopted standards of provision in new development)	Not available.

3.61 The District Council has not collected data to report on the level of new open space being provided. However, adaptations to the existing monitoring database during 2006 and 2007 will enable this information to be provided in the future. Nevertheless, an assessment of section 106 agreements signed during 2006/7 together with other financial contributions identified a total contribution of £284,041 for provision of new and enhancement of existing open space off site, including contributions towards its future maintenance. This figure is £50,000 lower than in 2005/6, but still more than twice the equivalent figure for 2004/5.

SIGNIFICANT EFFECT INDICATORS

3.62 Sustainability Appraisals of emerging Local Development Documents may indicate potentially significant effects. These need to be monitored to enable comparison between predicted and actual effects measured during the implementation of policies.

3.63 Sustainability Appraisals have been undertaken for all Local Development Documents. During 2006/7 no DPDs have reached the stage where a sustainability appraisal is required so the only significant effects to monitor are from the SPDs. Many of the significant effects are not dependent solely on implementing the SPD. The Sustainability Appraisals for the SPDs have indicated that a commentary on identified issues should be used rather than specific indicators. Some relevant indicators are reported elsewhere in this AMR, for example provision of affordable housing.

3.64 There are five adopted SPDs (as listed in section 2 of this AMR), of which two were adopted by the end of March 2007. The three adopted development briefs relate to sites that do not yet have planning permission so there are currently no significant effects to monitor. The other two SPDs identify a series of effects to monitor, but there will have been no significant effects prior to April 2007.

3.65 As a baseline for future monitoring of education and other developer contributions, the contributions obtained during the period 2006/7 for provision of new and enhanced of existing infrastructure have been recorded

- £427,200 for off-site provision of affordable housing
- £67,366.50 for education contribution
- £22,000 for green travel initiatives
- £4,000 for community facilities

4. UPDATING INDICATORS

- 4.1 The information required for the range of indicators is incomplete for a number of reasons:
- Information for the required indicators is not readily available because the information cannot be obtained from third parties or published sources;
 - Information for the indicators is not available because the required information has not previously been collected;
 - There are insufficient resources available to collect new survey data to meet the required indicators;
 - The indicators are unclear as to what is required or how it should be obtained.
- 4.2 Whilst there is no opportunity for the District Council to amend the Core Output Indicators, it is understood that the Government is currently reviewing them. However, the Local Output Indicators and local plan policy performance indicators can be amended as required and should be reviewed regularly. With the preparation of new Local Development Documents (LDDs) identified in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), new indicators will be prepared as new policies are introduced in the Local Development Framework (LDF), replacing those saved from the adopted Local Plan.
- 4.3 In future Annual Monitoring Reports it is proposed to drop local indicators for which information is unavailable and to introduce new local indicators. New indicators should monitor performance and impact using readily available data which will inform directly the performance of policies. Where possible, indicators should be able to report on the effects of a range of documents and strategies. For example, feeding into the monitoring of regional indicators as well as monitoring the effects of the Community Strategy.
- 4.4 It is scheduled for the North Devon Community Strategy to be reviewed during 2008, which provides an opportunity for a new series of local indicators to be prepared which can jointly monitor both the LDF and the Community Strategy since these documents will have shared and complementary objectives.
- 4.5 A Sustainability Appraisal Framework was adopted in April 2006, which includes local sustainability indicators and baseline data. These indicators are to be merged with those for Torridge DC for consistency. It will provide a combined list of sustainability indicators and indicators for use in appraising joint LDDs including the Core Strategy. It will also enable the list of sustainability indicators to be rationalised and revised to those where baseline information and published data are more readily available. These indicators will also be used to inform the preparation of new local indicators.

5. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Owing to the recent introduction of Core Output Indicators, the information required is not necessarily available this year and some of it may still be unavailable next year for the reasons highlighted in the report. In particular, subdivision of the B1 (Business) Use Class will remain a problem. Amending the definitions of these indicators is beyond the scope of the District Council, as is the availability of required data from third parties, although ongoing work by the South West Observatory will help to streamline data collection.

- 5.2 The Local Output Indicators do not have complete information, although most of the required data is available. The local indicators need to be reviewed to a new series of comprehensive local indicators which can jointly monitor the LDF, a new Community Strategy and proposed Sustainability Appraisal indicators.
- 5.3 Where information is available the performance of local plan policies was generally satisfactory. The adoption of the Local Plan in July 2006 has started to be reflected for decisions made during 2006/7, with greater weight being given to its policies.

6. TIMETABLE FOR AMR 2008

- 6.1 This year's AMR is not comprehensive and it will continue to be developed to take account of on-going discussions, with tools to assist in monitoring being developed by statutory bodies and emerging best practice. Work to develop the AMR for next year has already begun to enable additional information to be collected and recorded with the existing databases being upgraded, where resources allow, to enable additional monitoring information to be obtained. Best practice from other Local Planning Authorities will continue to be shared.
- 6.2 Where information has not been collected previously, there is an opportunity to start collecting this required information for future planning applications. However, it needs to be recognised that schemes being completed next year may have been approved originally many years ago, so required information will not always be available on a comprehensive basis. In addition, there will be difficulties in collecting information retrospectively for planning applications submitted back in April 2005 before the new indicator requirements were established.
- 6.3 Amendments to a database to monitor planning data more effectively commenced in Spring 2006. Further refinements will enable some of the missing information to be provided, as will greater consistency and completeness of the data being entered in the database. However, further additions and refinements are still required.

