

Appendix A

Background Information

Healthcheck

Data has been collected for the Healthcheck from many sources, including statutory and private organisations as well as individual contributors. All have sought out key statistics that go together to make a comprehensive basis by which to measure the need for change and ultimately show the effectiveness of the regeneration programme. Some of the surrounding villages have undertaken Community Appraisals and these are included within the Healthcheck.

One of the key data sets that the Healthcheck contains is a Town Community Appraisal undertaken in 1997. Data has been amended from the 2001 Census and the healthcheck will be continuously updated.

Whilst the healthcheck was accurate when it was collected, it is subject to change and comparative data should be obtained over time.

South Molton Community Appraisal 1997

In 1997 an appraisal of the views of residents of South Molton was carried out. It highlighted the following issues:

- Housing, and in particular the need for housing for local young people and low income families;
- Training, especially in computing and new technology;
- Economy and Tourism, support for the in-town cattle market, a need for more employment opportunities within the area particularly for young people, and support for some tourism development;
- Health and Social Services were on the whole well supported although some experienced difficulties in gaining access to these services;
- Emergency and other Services. Many felt the need for improvement in youth facilities, recreational facilities and the police service within the area. There was much support for CCTV;
- Environment, highest on the list of environmental issues were dog mess, general environmental tidiness and the board manufacturing plant. The Recycling Centre is considered to be a major asset;
- Sport, social and entertainment. Particular support for a multi purpose community centre, expansion of sporting facilities, and provision for the 8-24 age group;

- Transport and Highway. Bus services were considered to be reasonable although the need for later Saturday and Sunday buses was supported. Most wanted Town Square kept as it was with little support for pedestrianisation;
- Employment. Of the 47 people who responded who were looking for work, most cited lack of opportunities as the main barrier followed by need for private transport and/or childcare;
- General. Many saw South Molton as a working community, whilst there was also support for it being a tourist centre. A significant minority wanted it to stay as it is. There was general satisfaction with the local authorities and a high proportion of people involved in voluntary work within the area;

The conclusions of the Appraisal were that action was required on the following priority issues:

1. To build, or use an existing building, for a multi-functional Centre.
2. To investigate making Queen Street one-way.
3. To use C.C.T.V. in the town to help prevent all kinds of crime and unacceptable behaviour.
4. To look into traffic calming.
5. To refurbish the Town Hall and other public buildings.
6. To build an extension to the existing swimming-pool to enable dry sports
7. To open more footpaths and keep the ones we have well signed and maintained
8. To keep verges and streets clean and tidy, free from litter and dog mess
9. To look into your fears that Caberboard is an environmental problem.
10. To bring employment and industry to the town in the right way.
11. To refurbish existing shops and open more.
12. To keep all green spaces that we have and, if possible, find more near the town centre.

The Community Events, 2001

One of the principal reasons for arranging the consultation events was the need to ensure that the South Molton MCTI process was fully inclusive, and that the wider community were able to have their say in determining the content of the Regeneration Strategy. It was therefore decided that a number of consultation events would be held around the South Molton area, thus enabling the fullest possible participation. A significant amount of work was undertaken by the Steering Group in arranging the events and ensuring the widest possible publicity. Five consultation days were held:

- **Chulmleigh** Community College on November 26th 2001
- **Chittlehampton** Methodist Chapel Schoolroom on November 27th 2001
- **North Molton** Old School on November 29th 2001
- **Witheridge** Parish Hall on December 1st 2001
- **South Molton** Town Hall on December 6th 2001

Total attendance at these events was approximately 600 people, (170 at the village events and 420 at South Molton) which represents 5% of the area's population. This is considered to be high for events of this nature. Approximately 200 comments were made in the Comments Books provided at each venue.

The Workshops

Following the Community Events a concluding workshop event was held. This involved interested and invited residents, business people and other partners and stakeholders who participated in three workshop sessions:

1. Themes and issues
2. The current situation in relation to draft themes and issues
3. The solutions, the gaps, the way forward

Approximately 50 people attended the workshops.

Workshop 1: Themes and issues

During this first workshop we started the process of taking the raw information provided in previous consultations and in particular the consultation exhibition that has been seeking views from around the South Molton area, and building our Strategic Community Action Plan. Each group spent 35 minutes looking at the issues raised in the light of each participant's local knowledge. The purpose of this workshop was to ensure that the list we have is complete.

As a group, the participants were asked to examine each of the issues listed on the sheet (see Annex 1) and topic by topic, to confirm whether people agreed that it is an issue that needs to be addressed, and whether there are any other issues. The result of the workshop was agreement to a list of issues from each group. These lists were then endorsed/amended by the larger group.

Workshop 2: The current situation in relation to draft themes and issues

This workshop was a simple plotting exercise to identify what ideas are currently being worked on, by whom and in what partnerships. The result of the workshop was a list of current resources (partnerships/people; projects) and proposed projects against themes and issues.

Workshop 3: The solutions, the gaps and the way forward

During this workshop session, the work done in the previous two workshops was drawn together to help plan the next steps. Each group identified 6 priority projects (current, proposed or possible), 2 'early wins', and 2 feasibility studies for major projects.

The Issues

The issues that arose from these sessions were wide ranging but can be summarised under the following headings:

- the need for co-ordination
- the need to create a brand/concept/vision/image for the area
- the role and needs of the market town
- priorities for the town
- priorities for the whole area
- the organisation that will manage the process
- urgent projects and feasibility studies
- development of the *Big Plan*

Project 'Issue' groups

Following the consultation period, the steering group met monthly and in April 2002 formed 'issue' groups to deal with each of the projects identified so far or to join other existing groups which were already working on related projects. These groups are:

- Regeneration group
- (including Livestock Market Relocation and Town Centre Regeneration)
- Youth Resource Centre
- Youth Recreation
- Marketing strategy
- Small business strategy
- Capacity building
- Quick win projects
- Publicity

Stakeholders' Workshop July 2003

Copies of feasibility studies regarding the town centre development, relocation of the livestock market and provision of a new youth resource centre were circulated to stakeholders and agencies, along with results of public consultation. This generated comments regarding the technical feasibility of some of the preferred options. As a result, two facilitated workshops were arranged, one in the afternoon bringing together technical officers of statutory organisations followed by an evening session where these organisations were joined by stakeholders with interest in the projects described in the Action Plan.

During the first session with technical officers, a plan of the Central Development Area was considered by three workgroups to produce an optimum layout for the area. Since that time, the plan has been further refined by the project teams working on specific projects, with technical officers co-opted onto the teams.

The second session looked at all the projects in the plan, with each workgroup concentrating on a specific theme. Each project was prioritised, the implications of the project for MA2K and for each agency were discussed, key players and possible funding sources were identified, along with the actions required to progress the project and suggested time-scales (short, medium or long).

During the later stakeholder session, the recommendations of the previous sessions were agreed or rejected by the larger group. For those that were agreed, the project was broken down into specific actions and a timeline produced. At the end of the workshops, all the themed projects were pulled together into the project plan with milestones which appears in this Action Plan.

Analysis of Consultation Data

Data has been collected at several stages. Some key analysis is shown below:

Voting on projects at the Community Event days

Promotion & Marketing

- Develop a brand 24 yes 2 no

Business & Employment

- Shopping /retail 34 yes 2 no
- Pathfields 36 yes 0 no
- Relocate cattle market 91 yes 20 no

Community

- Skate park/BMX 101 yes 0 no
- Multi use sports facility 68 yes 0 no
- All weather pitch 79 yes 0 no
- Community/arts centre 50 yes 0 no
- Assembly rooms/pannier market redevelopment 36 yes 3 no

Education and training

- ICT 18 yes 0 no
- Skills 11 yes 0 no
- New junior school 41 yes 1 no

Housing

- Affordable 70 yes 1 no
- Associations 16 yes 5 no
- Joint ownership 10 yes 2 no

Infrastructure

- Sewerage works 18 yes 1 no
- Water supply 11 yes 0 no
- Traffic management 50 yes 1 no

Environment

- Green spaces 26 yes 0 no
- Broad St /town centre 10 yes 0 no
- Derelict land 38 yes 0 no

Youth

- Resource centre 61 yes 0 no

Responses to the consultation newspaper sent out to all households in the area in April 2003 showing suggested layouts of the Central Development Area

TABLE 1 – preferred option

(TOTAL 70% in favour of relocation of livestock market and new supermarket provision)

Option 1: livestock market retained/no supermarket	Option 2: livestock market relocated/new supermarket by PIP Centre	Option 3: livestock market relocated/new supermarket on lorry park
30%	42%	28%

TABLE 2 – major concerns

(Loss of parking was also highlighted in face to face discussions. Supermarket concern is not borne out by table 1 response, which asked the specific question)

Loss of parking	Need new supermarket	Don't need new/second supermarket
33%	19%	20%

TABLE 3 – would like to see/not like to see

Multi purpose centre	Youth resource centre	Landscaping/more green space
YES: 18% NO: 2%	YES: 14% NO: 0%	YES: 8% NO: 3%
Improve unsightly areas/need for regeneration	Bus terminus	Improve traffic flow/sustainable transport
YES: 12% NO: 4%	YES: 11% NO: 0%	YES: 14% NO: 4%

Technical Officers Feedback

Officers gave practical feedback regarding the feasibility study recommendations and public consultation responses, as shown below. Subsequently officers were co-opted onto project teams to work with the community to produce a shared vision.

- It was considered that some of the proposals for traffic movements, parking and goods servicing could present difficulties and require further study. However, option 3 was considered to be the best option in terms of traffic movements.
- More detail is required on the use of existing buildings if facilities are relocated.
- There are issues of land assembly and ownership in the Central Development Area: The majority of the land is owned by North Devon District Council or South Molton Town Council. However, much of the land around the periphery is in private ownership. In some cases the town centre feasibility study recommends development on privately owned land and careful negotiation would be required. Similarly, access rights must not be compromised.

On the whole it was felt that the key to the redevelopment was workable and practical solutions with a master plan capable of being implemented by strong partnership working.

Key issues identified

Findings from both the recent data collection exercises and public consultation events mirror those of the previous seven years. The following issues that relate to our project themes identified:

Relating to improving employment opportunities

- Low household incomes
- Relatively high levels of benefits claimants
- Low female employment levels
- Very high levels of self-employment in some wards
- Local employment required for rural population, OR ability to commute to sub-regional main towns

Relating to skills

- Low numeracy/literacy
- Need for employment related training

Relating to traffic and sustainable transport

- Better public transport (around town and to enable rural villages to access South Molton facilities) and including better connections (e.g. bus times to coincide with train times)
- Traffic management in the town centre is considered to be a priority
- Better signage (roads and facilities)
- Loss of car parking

Relating to community facilities

- Need for community facilities including arts
- Few non-sporting facilities for young people (resulting in gatherings in the town centre, in turn resulting in other residents/tourists feeling intimidated)

Relating to infrastructure

- Need for affordable housing to enable first time buyers and growing families to stay in the area
- Need for combined medical centre in South Molton
- Infrastructure to support any new development
- Environmental protection (litter, dog fouling, fly tipping)
- Resource conservation (efficient use of resources and waste minimisation)
- Town centre neglect needs addressing, (e.g. move lorry park, improve green spaces)