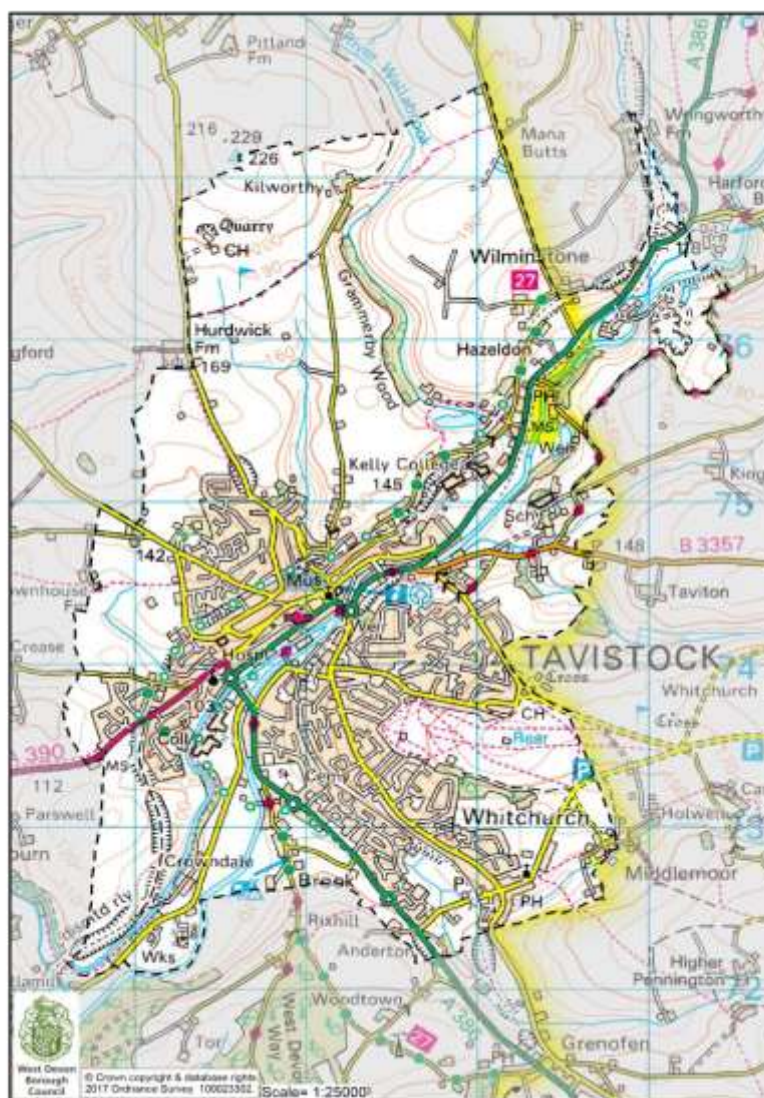


Tavistock Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group - Terms of Reference

1 Background:

- 1.1 On September 13th 2017, Tavistock Town Council (TTC), (the 'qualifying authority') submitted an application to West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) to designate a plan area in respect of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The proposed plan area covers the boundary of TTC's area and is identified by the black dotted line on the map below. Subsequently in June 2021 a revised application was submitted recognising that the designated area fell within both the West Devon Borough and Dartmoor National Park Local Planning Authority areas so as to ensure full coverage.
- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan area does not overlap with any other existing or proposed neighbourhood plan areas



- 1.3 The 2017 application was not accompanied by a Terms of Reference. However, WDBC was satisfied that TTC endorsed the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, WDBC confirmed that proposal met the criteria of regulation 5A (2016 regulations) and designated the area for the purposes of preparing a neighbourhood plan for Tavistock.

- 1.4 Subsequently, four Town Councillors were designated as 'Neighbourhood Plan Champions' and they initiated discussions with several local organisations. However, for a variety of reasons, progress faltered and it was not until 1st June 2021 that TTC authorised its Development Management and Licensing Committee (DMLC) to initiate the preparation process in earnest.
- 1.5 These terms of reference have regard to the acceptability, in principle, established in the 2017 application but will necessarily operate, as/where applicable, under the revised designations of 2021 (para 1.1 refers).

2 Name

- 2.1 The name of the Group will be the Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the Steering Group will be to support the Town Council to carry out the functions necessary to facilitate a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Tavistock including the following:

Plan Development/Delivery

- Along with other authorities and relevant local organisations, preparation, maintenance, delivery and monitoring of a Project Plan and associated arrangements for a NDP for Tavistock approved by the Town Council covering the following:
 - objectives and scope of the Plan
 - the relevant information available.
 - additional information gathering necessary
 - policy preparation
 - consultation procedures, including ways of involving the whole community
 - adoption procedures, including assisting the Independent Assessor appointed to examine the plan where applicable
- Signing off all documentation for presentation to TTC as 'qualifying body' and principal funder and WDBC in its capacity as Local Planning Authority.

Funding and Operation

- Appointing key volunteer personnel
- Recommending engagement of any remunerated professional services in accordance with Town Council procurement requirements
- According with the foregoing two bullet points the engagement, following a competitive process (whether voluntary or remunerated) of a Project Manager, responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the Plan Processes, the management of volunteers and any consultants appointed, reporting progress to the Group and qualifying body, and managing the preparation of all publicly available documentation (other than the minutes of the Group Meetings).
- Identification of sources of funding and 'in kind' support
- Planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan, reporting to TTC.
- Establishment and maintenance of a stand-alone Neighbourhood Plan Website and social media presence,
- Regular reporting to TTC on progress, issues arising and outcomes.

4 Membership

- 4.1 The Steering Group will be made up of 8-14 voting members comprising:

Initially, and to facilitate project manager recruitment and early stages to completion of the 'initial questionnaire and associated publicity to promote participation:

- Up to 4 members of TTC (one of whom shall be a serving Member of the Development Management and Licensing Committee of Tavistock Town Council) appointed by the Council
- 1 representative appointed by each of the following business, heritage and community groups:

- jointly the Business Improvement District and Chamber of Commerce;
 - Tavistock Heritage Trust;
 - Lions Club.
- Thereafter, following the initial questionnaire, publicity and promotion, the Steering Group membership to comprise the foregoing plus, following a ‘recruitment’ exercise by the Steering Group - individual residents of Tavistock (who may or may not also be members of voluntary bodies or other organisations in the Town) up to the maximum membership of the Steering Group.
 - Wherever possible the SG shall seek to come to a decision by negotiation and consensus. Should that not be possible each Steering Group Member shall have one vote. The quorum for the Steering Group shall be one third of the number of duly appointed voting Members
 - Note the Membership of the Steering group to include, additional to the threshold listed above, the following in a non-voting co-opted capacity:
 - One WDBC member from a Tavistock Ward appointed by the Local Planning Authority;
 - The County Councillor for the area if available.

4.2 The initial Membership of the Steering Group shall be determined by Tavistock Town Council following the initial community consultation and engagement activities on the recommendation of its designated Councillor Members. Thereafter -

- within the numbers set out above the Steering Group may appoint to vacancies, or
- co-opt non-voting volunteer Members with particular skills or expertise to support the work of the Group;
- All Members of the Steering Group shall have recent relevant, or shall receive within 6 months of taking office, planning training.

The Steering Group’s meetings will be open to the public and, at the discretion of the Chairman (and subject to prior notification of the subject to be raised), those attending may be invited to address the Group.

5 Defining Roles

- 5.1 At the first meeting, the Steering Group will elect a Chairperson, Minutes Secretary and Finance Co-ordinator. If necessary/appropriate a communications co-ordinator may also be appointed from the Membership of the Steering Group. Appointments shall be reviewed in May of each year.
- 5.2 Other members of the Group will be asked take responsibility for activities as and when appropriate.

6 Roles & Relationships

- 6.1 TTC insurance will cover the agreed activities of the volunteers of the Steering Group as set out in the Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Policy. Those remunerated for services, or providing professional services shall hold their own professional indemnity and other insurances.
- 6.2 Those Town Councillors who are also members of the Steering Group, will act as a liaison between the two bodies. On behalf of the Steering Group the Project Manager shall provide regular reports to the Town Council for information or decision as appropriate.
- 6.3 Whilst Members of the Steering Group will be accountable to their parent organisations (if/where appointed to represent one) the Steering Group as a whole shall be accountable to the wider community for ensuring the Plan reflects its collective expectations and to the Town Council in its capacity as qualifying body. All participants will achieve this by being clear and open when individual roles or interests (or those of the organisations they

represent) are in conflict and adhering to the operating rules and procedures of the Steering Group (including the Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Policy) and the Town Council (as applicable).

7 Steering Group Meetings

- 7.1 The Steering Group shall normally meet monthly, or more frequently if required by circumstances.
- 7.2 In respect of physical/virtual attendance, meetings of the Steering Group will be governed by the same rules as TTC's meetings other than that it may, if a majority of its Members agree, conduct business virtually.
- 7.3 The date of the next meeting will be decided before the close of each meeting. Dates of meetings will be made available to the public via press notice and the Neighbourhood Plan website.
- 7.4 Steering Group members will be provided with at least three clear working days' notice of meetings, and agendas
- 7.5 The Secretary will keep a record of meetings and will circulate action notes to Steering Group members and the Town Council in a timely fashion. These will be publicised on the Neighbourhood Plan website.
- 7.6 Freedom of Information. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and as a body constituted by and operating through the Town Council, the Team will make available to the public, minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, its organisation and structure and information on budget, expenditure and allowances, via the website.

8 Task and Finish Groups

- 8.1 The Steering Group may appoint Task and Finish Groups to carry out duties specified by the full Steering Group, including, but not limited to:-
 - Data gathering
 - Consultations
 - Drafting policies
- 8.2 Each Task and Finish Group will nominate a lead person reporting to the Project Manager.

9 Finance

- 9.1 All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Town Council, who will ring-fence grants for Neighbourhood Development Plan purposes only.
- 9.2 The Steering Group will notify the Town Council of all planned expenditure and provide the necessary evidence of compliance with budget and procurement practices. Related invoices, purchase orders, contracts or equivalent shall only be issued/processed by the Town Council and all goods and services procured shall be and remain the property of the Town Council.
- 9.3 The Finance Co-ordinator shall keep a clear record of income and expenditure (planned and actual) and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the Town Clerk (or his/her nominee).
- 9.4 The reasonable expenses of volunteers are met through the applicable Allowance Scheme.

10 Dissolving the Steering Group

- 10.1 On adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Town Council and Steering Group will discuss and agree the future working of the Steering Group.
- 10.2 If the Steering Group wishes to dissolve it must obtain the approval of the Town Council before doing so and any residual funds held shall be administered by the Town Council in accordance with the requirements of the funding body.

11 Changes to Terms of Reference and Review of Membership

