

## SECTION 3: EMPLOYMENT, THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

3.3.1 Historically, in this rural area, agriculture has made an important contribution to the local economy; more recently, the number of visitors coming to this area has made tourism increasingly important as an industry in its own right and as farmers diversify. Despite the rural nature of the parish, there are varied businesses within the parish including sole traders, family run businesses, and larger concerns, together providing diverse economic activity (production and services, including online services, and care providers for the elderly and people with disabilities), employing both locals and non-local people, plus those working from home. The JLP recognises the need to support the rural economy and in rural areas promotes the growth of businesses providing local services and employment.<sup>14</sup>

3.3.2 An ageing population brings with it a need for residential accommodation and community care services. Camplehaye is a well-established residential home within the village and Venn House provides care for the elderly and specialist dementia care.

3.3.3 Whilst farming and businesses supporting farming predominate the local economy, there are many small businesses and trades that serve the local communities, such as engineers, mechanics, electricians, builders, physiotherapists, chiropodists, accountants, retail, etc.

3.3.4 The JLP acknowledges the importance of agriculture, tourism and small rural businesses. One of its *Strategic Outcomes* is that *“the rural and urban landscapes will continue to enjoy national recognition and contribute to a thriving rural economy through investment in traditional industries and innovative diversification.”*<sup>15</sup>

3.3.5 It is important to encourage diversification to secure a successful rural economy. *“The uses of the rural environment have changed over time and some buildings which have become redundant offer opportunities for redevelopment. This policy supports that where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development criteria set out in other policies of this plan”.*<sup>16</sup>

3.3.6 The responses to the March 2023 survey indicated 36% of the population in employment, 16.5% self-employed, both of which closely reflect the West Devon averages, but 48% retired, which is much higher than the average for the wider area.<sup>17</sup>

*‘Our workforce is ageing and there are around 2.2 working-age adults for every one person aged 65 and over. Devon has seen a particularly strong growth over the past decade in residents aged over 65 years, with this age group making up more than 25% of the county’s population, above the national figure of 19%’.*

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<sup>14</sup> JLP 2014-34 P.264 para 6.56

<sup>15</sup> JLP 2014-34 page 179

<sup>16</sup> JLP 2014-34 p.266 para 6.60

<sup>17</sup> Extract from Devon County Council Strategic Plan 2056/9 p.6

**Location of new businesses, their size and factors inhibiting local business development.**

3.3.7 Around 70% of respondents to the March 2023 questionnaire thought that encouraging new business to the Parish was a good idea. New housing without

access to new job opportunities could exacerbate the role of the settlement as “a dormitory” for a working population commuting outside the area for employment.<sup>18</sup>



The most favoured types of new employment were for retail, agricultural, craft industries and home working, the emphasis being on limited scale with minimal impact on the environment.

Encouraging large enterprise to locate to the area was not supported. Local residents showed great appreciation for existing small businesses and trades and a desire to see them flourish in the hope that this would sustain the school and existing businesses.

3.3.8 Factors adversely affecting local businesses include business rates, lack of suitable premises, and poor broadband connection and mobile connection. 50% of business respondents reported faster/better internet as being important for the growth of their business.

3.3.9 Whilst the reach of high-speed fibre optic internet connection is confined to more densely populated communities within the parish, principally the village, Airband is being made more widely available as a means of obtaining a reasonable connection through satellite at an affordable cost.

3.3.10 All domestic properties in the Parish received a survey form that included the Business section, so that ‘invisible’ businesses would have the option to respond. The majority of identified businesses (40) received their survey through delivery to the associated home or business premises. A further 12 were identified as having Parish connections. These received survey forms by post or delivery, or information about the survey by email.

<sup>18</sup> Survey Monkey Wordcloud analysis of responses in March 2023

19 responses to the Business survey were received from 17 enterprises (32.7% of known businesses).

The policies in this plan will seek to address these issues.

#### **Employment issues that are important to local people and businesses:**

- Support sustainable growth and expansion of appropriate, new small businesses as well as existing ones
- Support new business units in appropriate local locations through conversion of existing buildings
- Promote the retention and development of local facilities, such as shop, pub, and school
- Encourage improvements in broadband and mobile connection, including the provision of transmission facilities for high speed Wi-Fi or mobile phone-network-based broadband where this can be achieved without significant negative visual impact

### **3.4 TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC**

3.4.1 West Devon is a rural, sparsely populated area and there is heavy reliance on the car to access essential services and facilities. Both parishes have seen the reduction of public transport services. WDBC, in its strategic core plan (2006-2026), recognises that public transport is not accessible to everyone and that certain rural areas run the risk of isolation despite larger villages having a bus service.

3.4.2 The relative lack of public transport in the Parish and the associated increased dependency on vehicles leads to an increased need for parking facilities within any proposed new housing development (see paras 3.4.11-14 below).

3.4.3 The JLP notes an intention to promote flexible car use through park and ride facilities, car sharing and car clubs and to promote good quality, accessible and safe footpaths and cycle routes.

3.4.4 The JLP states *'Development will be required to contribute positively to the achievement of a high quality, effective and safe transport system in the Plan Area. It will promote sustainable transport choices and facilitate sustainable growth that respects the natural and historic environment. Development proposals should therefore, where appropriate:.....'*<sup>19</sup>

#### **Traffic in the Village**

3.4.5 There are no A roads running through the Parish. The main route from Tavistock towards Launceston skirts the west side of the village connecting with the B3362 at Collacombe Down; there is linear development along the length of this road from the southern end of the village (Venn) to its exit point at Hurditch in the North. The main route connecting Tavistock with Lydford cuts through the east of the parish but not through heavily populated areas.

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<sup>19</sup> JLP DEV29 page 287

3.4.6 Neither are there pavements on any of the roads through the village, so pedestrians are obliged to walk on the roadway. Data from the speed cameras operated by the LPC at the south and north ends the village on the Tavistock /Launceston road show a high volume of vehicles traveling above the speed limit of 30mph, with speeds of over 80 mph being recorded. Walking along or crossing this road is considered hazardous by residents and it can prove particularly challenging for those who are hard of hearing, or unable to walk briskly; it is unsuitable for children to walk along this road. The arterial road through the village to the east of this road, Green Hill, provides a loop from the pub to the north to Venn in the south. The primary school lies along its route. Children walking between the primary school and the playing field at the village hall have no complete pavement route. Reducing the speed of traffic through the village has support and is one of the listed 'Community Aspiration'.<sup>20</sup>

3.4.7 On-street parking adds a further hazard to the free movement of traffic and compromises pedestrian safety.

3.4.8 WDBC does not address speeding problems in their strategic plan, but residents expressed a wish for future housing developments to be linked to the introduction of traffic calming / further speed reduction measures. Whilst outside the remit of the NP these aspirations are important to the local population. Some of these issues are aspirational and are included in the comprehensive list in Appendix XIII.

### **Bus Services**

3.4.9 There is a limited bus service; it operates along the main road to the west of the village, stopping at the public house and provides 9 services a day on weekdays and Saturdays only, 5 to Tavistock and 4 to return.

36% of those in work do so mainly from home thereby helping to reduce the impact of the reliance on vehicles for transportation. A similar percentage commute 30km or less to work, with 82% driving a vehicle to their workplace.

A recurring theme in many responses to the March 2023 questionnaire was the inadequacy of the bus service and in particular the lack of a sustainable bus service to Tavistock and beyond that provides an adequate service for those commuting for employment.

3.4.10 As of February 2026, the community transport Ring and Ride service operates 1 day a week to take people with no access to a vehicle either to Launceston or Tavistock. This is a very limited service.

3.4.11 99% of respondents to the March 2023 survey indicated that they used their own or family vehicle to travel in and out of the parish.

### **Parking**

3.4.12 The survey highlighted that 76% of households have 2 or more cars whilst less than 3% had no vehicle. Cars parked on the roadside throughout Lamerton village narrows the road to such an

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<sup>20</sup> Appendix XIII– November 2023 Q.25

extent that the free flow of traffic is difficult. This problem is particularly bad at the start and end of the school day when the additional volume of traffic makes it difficult to get through the village at all, and on occasion the school bus to Tavistock struggles to pass parked vehicles.

3.4.13 The village's parking problems are as a consequence of inadequate provision of off -road parking. The majority of older properties abut the roadway in front of them and have no adequate parking facility sufficient for the number of vehicles maintained by the households that live in them. Even newer properties do not provide sufficient parking spaces for the number and size of vehicles maintained by many households.

3.4.14 New development may, by creating access to green field sites, result in the loss of on-street parking where residents have traditionally been able to park outside or opposite their dwellings.

3.4.15 There is concern that with an increase in the village population, further pressure will be put on the road system by the increased number and movement of cars, thus increased provision of off-road parking is seen as essential for any new housing development.

Locating development to minimise traffic movements through the village is also considered advantageous.

Parking and traffic issues that are important to local people:

- Ensure that all developments have sufficient off road parking provision for residents and visitors
- Encourage developments where traffic is not increased in the centre of the village
- Support the provision of additional parking
- Ensure that residential and environmental amenity is not adversely affected by traffic
- Ensure that roads in new developments should be wide enough to allow vehicles (especially emergency vehicles) to pass each other without using the pavements
- Explore traffic calming and speed reduction measures
- Explore the possibility of the provision of new and improved footpaths, not just within new developments, but with appropriate extensions to create safe pedestrian routes to the key locations in the villages

The policies in this plan will seek to address these issues.

### 3.5 YOUNG PEOPLE, SPORT AND RECREATION

*'Our children and young people are Devon's future. This means focusing on creating an environment for young people to thrive, through childhood and into adulthood..... (The Report) recognises the systemic challenges many families face, including poverty, poor mental health, fragmented services, and the impact of isolation or trauma'.<sup>21</sup>*

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<sup>21</sup> Extract from Devon County Council Strategic Plan 2025/9 p14

3.5.1 Play equipment, funded and maintained by the charity running the village hall and its playing field, is available for primary school aged children within the grounds of the village hall and accessible, well used, and valued. The primary school uses the playing field for supervised sports for this age group as part of its curricula activities. Older children have access to the playing field and multi-use games area (MUGA) also provided and maintained by the charity operating the community centre which provides equipment for use on the court.

3.5.2 12% of respondents to the March 2023 survey lived in households with children under 12 and 21% with family members aged between 12 – 18. In addition, the survey was open to young people of secondary school age to express their views directly, and 5 responses were received. The responses reveal an acceptance that the Parish will only ever be able to provide limited facilities for this demographic and their needs would be better served by good transport independent of other household members to access local facilities in Tavistock. The policies in this plan will seek to address these issues.

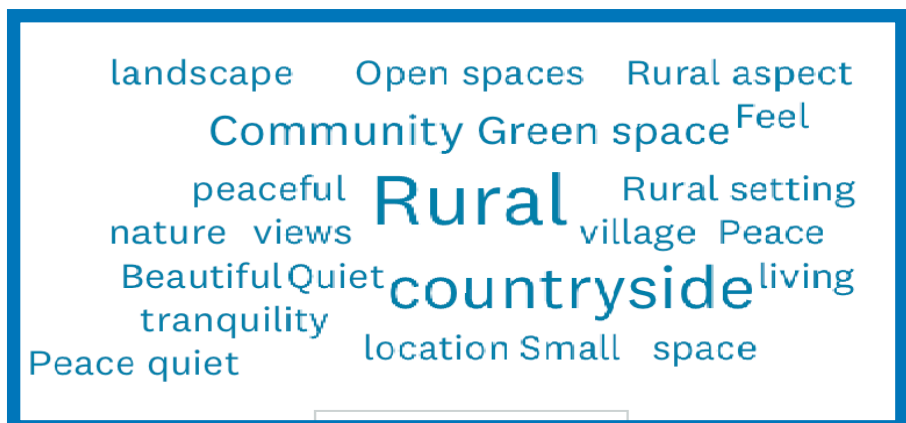
**Recreational issues that are important to local people:**

- Promote the retention of existing facilities for older children and for play and physical activity for younger children
- Support development that enhances and increases community facilities, recreation and local services within the core villages

**3.6 THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES**

3.6.1 The beauty of the area and the wildlife that inhabit it are of importance to the community and the Plan seeks to protect the environment.

*Wordcloud* analysis of responses (Q.2) highlights the responses to the March 2023 survey rating the 3 things most valued by residents clearly illustrates the importance of a sense of community alongside a sense of the value of the benefits of a rural environment.



**Physical well-being**

3.6.3 If the built environment is well planned and implemented to a high standard, it will have a beneficial impact on the physical well-being of its inhabitants. The goal should be to create an environment which enables and supports healthy lifestyles, for example through the provision of

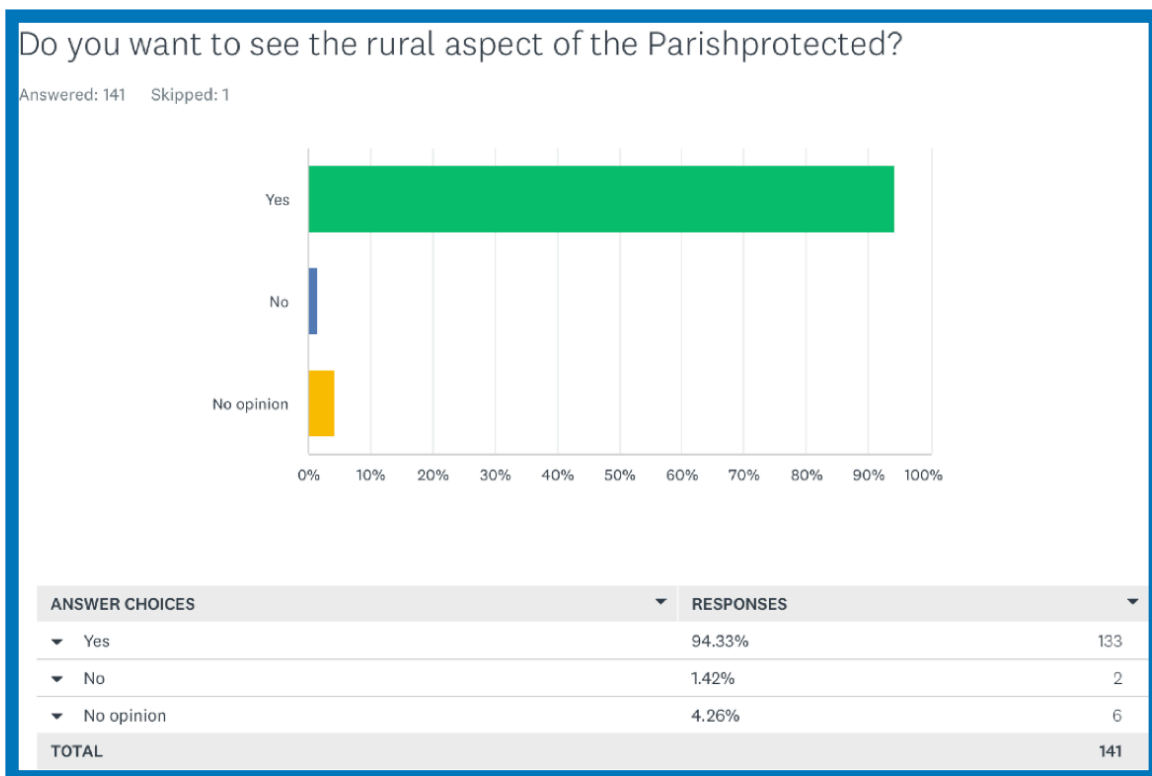
safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, allotments, opportunities for play and recreation and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

3.6.4 There is strong community support for safeguarding existing parish assets – community centre, pub, school, church and sports field.

3.6.5 Lamerton’s only retail outlet, at a distance of about a mile from the village, is combined with a petrol station and provides a limited range of convenience and fresh foods, newspapers etc. Respondents to the March 2023 questionnaire suggested approximately 10% visited daily whilst 26% visited weekly. However the business has expanded its range of products under new management since the survey was completed.

3.6.6 The rural aspect of the Parish is important to residents and the countryside is an important leisure asset for local inhabitants wanting to be physically active; they enjoy the proximity to farmland providing opportunities for walking using the public rights of way that criss cross the parish; almost 15% of respondents reported using footpaths daily and a further 13% weekly.<sup>22</sup>

3.6.7 There are somewhat limited opportunities for cycling on busy roads and horse riding along bridle paths.



<sup>22</sup> Q.13 March 2023 Survey



### **Social well-being**

3.6.8 There are a number of clubs and sports groups that use the village hall, and other activities associated with St Peter's Church. In addition, the village pub provides a meeting place for residents. The allotments are used by village residents both to produce food and to connect to the rural landscape, but also for social interactions. Heritage and heritage assets were also considered of importance to 89% of respondents to the March 2023 survey.

3.6.9 Creating places and spaces for people of all ages and accessible to all promotes community engagement, helps foster community spirit and counter rural isolation.

3.6.10 Increased connectivity through telecommunications is not only important for rural enterprise and home-working but allows fuller interaction for young and old across the area and beyond.

### **Landscape, renewable energy and amenities.**

3.6.11 The landscape is treasured by parishioners with respondents to the March 2023 survey considering it important or very important to them and 100% of respondents considered conserving unspoilt countryside, peace and quiet, farmland, access to country walks, fresh air, lack of pollution, open spaces, wildlife and rights of way was important or very important to them as the most valued aspects of living in the Parish.

3.6.12 A significant majority of respondents to the November 2023 consultation indicated support for each type of renewable energy – ground source heat pump, air source heat pump, solar panels and bio energy for residential developments; in addition, hydro-electric and wind turbines were supported for agricultural and commercial use.

3.6.13 Amongst the specific local facilities listed the ones rated as most important included the Village Hall, the pub, the playing field with the children's play area.

3.6.14 In the March 2023 survey, residents were asked for their top 3 priorities for improving life in the parish. The responses were diverse but focused on the issues of infrastructure, housing and safety.



Wordcloud analysis of responses

3.6.15. Asked for their views on the main objectives of the NP, similar issues were identified, alongside protecting the environment.

The policies in this plan will seek to address these issues.

**Community - centred issues that are important to local people include:**

- A strong statement about the importance of the landscape quality to ensure that development does not diminish the scenic quality of the area
- Support small scale renewable energy projects
- Ensure that community facilities are protected
- Promote opportunities for physical and social activities