

## Clevedon Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report to Clevedon Town Council June 2017

### Purpose:

- This is the fourth report to the Town Council on the work of its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- This report is to recommend an interim report on the vision and objectives for the plan and forward this to North Somerset Council's Planning Department as part of the process for its development of a new Local Plan for the whole District.

### Information:

The Group has met monthly for the last year and undertaken a number of engagement activities with the community and local organisations. These have allowed the development and testing to get views on what people like about Clevedon, the issues the town faces over the next 20 years and to set out a vision and objectives for a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Vision and Objectives, drawn from the process so far, will be the basis for the development of policy areas and detailed policy within the scope of Neighbourhood Plans. Whilst the Joint Strategic Plan for the West of England and North Somerset's response to it indicates no major development in Clevedon, it is the view of the Steering Group that the town will inevitably change and face pressure over the plan period and a well-considered Neighbourhood Plan offers the community the greatest say over change and the protection and development of Clevedon's character and assets.

Vision and Objectives have been distilled into six Policy Areas (the maximum the Steering Group believes can be covered). The Group intends to use the Frome Neighbourhood Plan as a reference model because a) it is a similar size town to Clevedon and b) it has been successfully 'made' following external examination and local referendum. Each Policy area will be developed to cover their **context, key objectives, how they will be achieved** and an actual **policy** which will be the basis for planning decisions.

The Steering Group believes it has developed a fair basis for the development of the Council's Neighbourhood Plan. With the progress of the new Local Plan at District Council level, there is an urgency to complete a plan for Clevedon to ensure its influence on wider policy. This will require greater focus from the Town Council than has been needed to date. The Group asks the Council how it can ensure this focus and to consider a more formal link to the Council's Planning Committee from this point on.

**Recommendation:**

1. The Council accepts the interim report of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and its submission to North Somerset Council as part of the current Local Plan development
2. The Council authorises the Steering Group to continue to act for a further year on its behalf to prepare a full Neighbourhood Plan arising from the vision and objectives reported.
3. The Council assigns four Councillors to the Steering Group for a further year to assist the plan development, advise the group and inform the Council and its committees of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
4. The Council determines a more formal relationship with the Steering Group to secure effective working over the next year of the plan preparation.

Peter Templeton  
Chair of Steering Group

# Clevedon Neighbourhood Plan Interim Report June 2017

## Introduction

We need a neighbourhood plan to maintain Clevedon's character over time and through changes and pressures of population, economy and demographics. As governments loosen planning controls and pressure for housing increases, Neighbourhood Plans offer communities an effective and statutory voice over these pressures for change – allowing the community to help shape the future and moderate remote or excessively market led decisions.

The next 20 years are likely to see unparalleled levels of technological change affecting everyone's lives. This will be combined with a move to decarbonise the environment and move away from fossil fuel use. No local or neighbourhood plan prepared today should ignore the potential for disruptive technological and climate change mitigation measures in its proposals and policies.

These, virtually inevitable, factors are a matter of self-interest to Clevedon with half of its housing in tidal and fluvial flood zones.

Over the last year, Clevedon Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has worked with individuals and groups across the community using events, workshops, meetings, press releases and social media. From this the following summarises what has been found. These points should be recognised as a submission to North Somerset's Local Plan process and be the basis for a Neighbourhood Plan for Clevedon.

## What people like about Clevedon:

1. A coastal town with a valuable and historic sea front area, coastal walks and a distinct geographic boundary and identity
2. A safe and friendly community, good to bring up children
3. Strong community associations and organisations caring for the town and providing cultural and sporting assets
4. Independent shops and markets and a variety of supermarkets
5. The Curzon cinema
6. Open spaces

## Issues facing Clevedon:

1. Clevedon is becoming a town with an ageing population; with fewer children and fewer families with dependent children. This is a risk to the town's sustainability, e.g. the maintenance of educational assets, pressure on medical and care services, under-occupancy of houses
2. Housing is expensive. Many younger adults cannot afford to buy in Clevedon. Workers increasingly needed for care and support roles may need to commute in rather than live in the town
3. Physical constraints (Channel, flood plain, Green Belt) severely limit the potential for housing development. This is recognised in the Joint Spatial Plan. Although welcome in many

respects for the character and definition of Clevedon, will this lead to further population loss and demographic skew threatening community assets and viability?

4. Many people commute out of Clevedon daily, this includes many of the higher value jobs
5. The town centre (Queens Square/Triangle area) doesn't have the appearance or range of shops people would like, despite the town being fairly prosperous, near a motorway junction and potentially an attractive destination.
6. Traffic is likely to become more problematic, including traffic moving through the edge of Clevedon to the motorway junction from Yatton, Tickenham and Portishead directions. Whilst the town is generally safe for pedestrians, certain locations at certain times are more dangerous and this may get worse because of new housing in adjacent villages.
7. Public transport is insufficiently frequent and well routed to make enough people switch from cars. This limits mobility for young people, those on low incomes and the disabled.
8. Parking is regarded as difficult in parts of the town.

### **Vision:**

- By 2036 Clevedon will be a thriving, prosperous, self-reliant town which provides for both its population and that of the rural hinterland, as well as a popular destination for visitors, shoppers and innovative business development.
- There will be local, regional and national recognition of Clevedon's protected historic heart, cultural and environmental assets and coastal setting
- The town centre will become a thriving local retail, service and innovation centre fulfilling the needs of residents and the surrounding area, complemented by other established specialist shopping streets
- The employment base will have strengthened allowing more opportunities for residents to work locally and to maintain a sustainable demographic profile. Enterprise and innovation will have increased the number of higher value and worthwhile jobs particularly around cultural, digital and environmental industries. Increasing numbers of those who travel to work outside Clevedon will make the journey by public transport, cycle or shared car journey. Access by public transport within Clevedon and between the other towns will be improved.
- New housing will contribute to the community's sustainability by prioritising affordable housing, designed for life, meeting demographic needs and contributing to carbon reduction
- Clevedon will have increased its locally generated energy contribution through sensitive schemes within residential, community, business and agricultural premises

### **Plan Objectives (to be developed into policy areas):**

1. 'Destination Clevedon':
  - a. Protect and enhance the character and heritage of the sea-front and coastal areas
  - b. Redevelop and transform the town centre to diversify uses, bring in more trade, improve the range of shops and businesses and reduce shop vacancies
  - c. Build on the cultural assets of the town (Cinema, Pier, Princes Hall, etc.)
  - d. Promote innovative enterprise for more good quality jobs in Clevedon

2. Secure and develop the educational, health/wellbeing assets and services of the town (including digital readiness) to maintain and increase self-reliance
3. Encourage housing that is affordable, sustainable and helps secure a viable population profile
4. Protect a network of open spaces and develop community and sports assets by:
  - a. Protecting and extending green corridors, bio-diversity, river management and developing public accessibility
  - b. Protecting and developing informal and formal open spaces including sports and recreation areas.
5. Improve movement within, to and from the town:
  - a. Improve public transport services to, from and within Clevedon
  - b. Manage traffic issues arising from surrounding developments
  - c. Make walking, cycling and public transport more practical and realistic than car use
6. Integrate climate change reduction into all new developments and promote energy generation on existing buildings and suitable land