WIRKSWORTH
NEIGHBOURHOOD
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2015 - 2028
for submission to Derbyshire Dales District Council, September 2014

Alison Clamp, Town Mayor

“Wirksworth is a special town, it will continue to grow and change. This Neighbourhood Plan guides that growth and change so that we keep what is special but improve our town for all who live and work here.”
A NOTE ON THE DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT

This plan’s relationship with the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan is important and is set out in statute, regulations and government policy. When this plan and the draft local plan have passed through their statutory stages, they will be separately adopted by the district council as statutory plans. (Their relationship is explained in the Evidence and Explanations Document which accompanies this plan.)

Within this Submission Draft of the Wirksworth Neighbourhood Plan, there are many references to the 2013 draft local plan and its policies. Because of that, the neighbourhood plan is dependent on the draft local plan being adopted.

During the preparation of this plan, it was assumed that the June 2013 draft of the local plan would be adopted early in 2015, before or at the same time as the neighbourhood plan. However, in August, the local plan suffered a set-back and it is now unlikely to be adopted so soon.

Because the set-back is due to concerns that the local plan may not have identified sufficient housing land and there seem to be no other major concerns, it is likely that the policies in the eventually-adopted local plan will prove to be identical or very similar to those in the 2013 draft (except that there may be more housing sites). Therefore, there should be no need to alter the references that the neighbourhood plan policies make to the local plan.

Because Wirksworth Town Council and Future Wirksworth have been preparing the neighbourhood plan since 2011, we do not want the consultations that we have carried out to become irrelevant and we are continuing to progress our plan. So it may become adopted as a statutory plan some time before completion and adoption of the local plan.

We hope that those reading the neighbourhood plan will understand that the references to the local plan may for some time be references to a draft, unadopted local plan. We hope, too, that the decision-makers who will be applying the policies of the neighbourhood plan will give the policies, including the references to the draft local plan, the weight that they deserve.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1.1 WHAT IS THE WIRKSWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

1.1.1 This is a plan which promotes growth – the growth of our town alongside the preservation and development of our vibrant community in line with the strategic policies of the draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. The plan’s purpose is not to reduce development pressures on the plan area. It is designed to maintain and enhance the character of the plan area and enable improvements where they are needed, placing community vitality, environmental sensitivity and mitigation of climate change at its core.

1.1.2 To discourage growth would be to put at risk the very shops, community facilities, employment opportunities and population balance on which the character of Wirksworth depends. Our town centre, schools and health provision are good but will continue to thrive only if the community accepts the changes that, during the plan period, will be necessary to support them and helps to resist causes of decline.

1.1.3 The plan covers the area of the Civil Parish of Wirksworth, which has a population of 5813¹, and includes the town of Wirksworth, the settlement of Bolehill and other small settlements and a large area of countryside, as shown on the Proposals Map. It covers the period until 2028, the same period as the draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (DDLP)².

1.1.4 Throughout this plan, “Wirksworth” means the parish of Wirksworth (that is, the entire plan area), except where it is defined as something else.

1.1.5 Wirksworth Town Council is the local council responsible for the area and has approved the plan. The town council delegated the work of preparing the plan to a steering group and plan team known as Future Wirksworth.

1.1.6 Neighbourhood plans give parish communities a say in what sorts of development should and should not be permitted in their area. The Consultation Statement that accompanies this plan describes how Future Wirksworth has consulted local people. Consultation has taken place in a variety of forms and over a considerable period of time. The plan is not just Future Wirksworth’s plan, nor the town council’s: it could not have been compiled without the involvement of local residents, businesses and organisations.

1.1.7 Our neighbourhood plan will be an important part of the “development plan” for Derbyshire Dales³. It will adjust the effects of the district council’s policies, to make them closer to what our area needs.

1.1.8 Neighbourhood plans may concentrate on just one issue, such as where the new housing sites should be, or on many. In preparing this plan, Future Wirksworth and the town council have asked local people about all aspects of development.
Consequently, they have written into this plan policies and action points addressing many elements of Wirksworth life. The policies, if adopted, will have statutory force.

1.1.9 One thing that this plan does not do is to say where the main, new housing sites should be. That is because the district council is including the housing sites in the local plan that it is currently preparing. However, this plan accepts the sites that the 2013 draft of the local plan identified and includes policies to ensure that they are developed to a standard appropriate to Wirksworth.

1.2 A COORDINATED PLAN

1.2.1 Although the plan is divided into chapters, the chapters are not mutually exclusive. The plan should be read as a coordinated attempt to link all aspects of life in Wirksworth.

1.2.2 Given the way planning law works, it is not possible to have statutory policies on many of the things that are important to us, such as car parking fees or financing a youth centre. These have been highlighted by local people during the preparation of the neighbourhood plan but are not what is defined in planning law as “development”.

1.2.3 However, we have identified them as Town Council Action Points, making clear that they will be things the town council will try to achieve, in partnership with other councils and bodies, during the next few years because they have arisen as a direct consequence of preparing the plan. The town council will prepare a Wirksworth Town Plan, which will contain a programme to guide the carrying out of the Town Council Action Points.

1.3 HOW THE PLAN WILL BE USED

1.3.1 One of the main purposes of the plan is to help Derbyshire Dales District Council to make decisions on planning applications. The plan is also intended to guide land owners and developers, to encourage the right sort of development in the right places and to make the plan area a better place to live, work and visit.

1.3.2 Planners and decision-makers will be required by law to take account of the statutory policies of the plan. They will have to treat them with the same level of importance as the policies in the district council’s local plan.

1.3.3 When considering planning applications, the planners must treat all policies equally. Some policies (for example, policies which favour new sports facilities) may conflict with others (for example, policies which seek to protect the local environment). Only after considering all the policies and local circumstances should the planners decide which ones should be given most weight in a particular case.

1.3.4 By law, most planning applications have to be accompanied by a ‘design and access statement’. Where a design and access statement is provided, it should specifically address the policies of this plan, explaining how the proposed development accords with the policies or, if it does not, why it does not.

1.4 GETTING THE PLAN APPROVED

1.4.1 Wirksworth Town Council is submitting the plan, with the Evidence and Explanations Document, the Consultation Statement and the Basic Conditions Statement, to Derbyshire Dales District Council (‘the local authority’). The local authority will check that the town council has followed

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4 For an explanation of “statutory policies”, see Evidence and Explanations Document.
5 For an explanation of “development”, see Evidence and Explanations Document.
6 The Town Council Action Points are explained in the relevant chapters but there is also a complete list in Chapter 8.
the correct legal processes and will then publicise the plan, making it available for at least 6 weeks, for anyone to comment, and will appoint an independent examiner.

1.4.2 The examiner will read the documents and the comments that people have made and will decide whether the “basic conditions” have been met. The basic conditions require the examiner to consider whether:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate for the plan to proceed;
- the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local development plan;
- the plan is compatible with EU obligations; and
- the plan is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

1.4.3 If the plan meets the basic conditions, the examiner will recommend that the plan proceed to a referendum. If it does not, he may suggest modifications or recommend that it does not proceed further.

1.4.4 The examiner is entitled to recommend that the referendum area includes people beyond the boundary of the plan. The referendum will ask: “Do you want Derbyshire Dales District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Wirksworth to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?” If more than 50% of those voting vote “yes”, the local authority will bring the plan into force.

1.5 VISION

1.5.1 This section sets out the town council’s Vision for the neighbourhood plan, as modified following progressive consultations with local people. The consultations are also reflected in the objectives and ambitions of the topic chapters.

Our Vision for Wirksworth

1.5.2 The Town Council’s Vision for town and parish in 2028 sees:
- A vibrant and prosperous market town with a caring, tolerant and active community at its heart. A place that is forward looking and where a broad range of people can live, work, shop, visit and enjoy themselves in an outstanding environment that is cherished and cared for.

1.5.3 Our vision will be achieved by:
- Planning for balanced growth, including: addressing the declining youth population; bringing forward sites for development to meet the current and future needs of our community; and ensuring that such development is sustainable in its use of energy and complements the town’s character.
- Insisting that development enhances the natural and built heritage of the area to ensure it continues to be a special place to live and work and ensuring that development in Wirksworth is designed in accordance with guidelines that reflect the town’s distinctive character.
- Supporting the provision of new, well designed, low carbon housing to accommodate the needs of the community, across age and income levels and in particular encouraging young families to live here.
- Sustaining and improving a range of recreational and community facilities to support the health, education and well-being of all local people.
- Encouraging development and investment to build the local tourist economy.
- Supporting growth and innovation within the local economy, in particular building on the area’s distinctive strengths, including its creative entrepreneurial community.
- Promoting sustainable transport that links to surrounding areas and includes a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Maintaining a thriving town centre, with an independent retail offer, to ensure the needs of local people and visitors are met.
CHAPTER 2, contributing to our Vision by insisting that development enhances the natural and built heritage of the area to ensure it continues to be a special place to live and work and ensuring that development in Wirksworth is designed in accordance with guidelines that reflect the town’s distinctive character.

2.0 QUALITY AND CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 Wirksworth has a strong visual character and it is important that any new development recognises and respects that character and contributes to the quality of this special place. (References to “Wirksworth” in this chapter are to the built-up area (principally, the area within the settlement framework of Wirksworth and Bolehill) and to the surrounding landscape.)

2.1.2 The community supports growth in line with the strategic policies of the draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan. Without such growth, Wirksworth will not be able to fulfil its social and economic potential. But people are aware that new developments, large or small, may erode the qualities that make the town special if they are not carefully managed in terms of their layout and design. It is important that the residential developments which are necessary to meet the housing supply targets should be both interesting and sensitive to their location. This is particularly true for the potentially large development of houses on the Middleton Road site. They should not be the “anywhere-type” estate that does not respond to the strong character of Wirksworth and does not have a sense of place. Similar considerations apply to developments of all kinds, including tourist developments and new places of employment.

2.2 WHO SAYS WIRKSWORTH IS SPECIAL? WHAT’S THE EVIDENCE?

2.2.1 Local people, when consulted by Future Wirksworth in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan, gave the following examples of why they consider Wirksworth to be special:-
- local character and distinctiveness
- local landscape quality
- distinctive views and vistas
- access to the countryside
- heritage
- sense of community

2.2.2 Many outsiders also think Wirksworth is special and it is becoming increasingly attractive to tourists. There are several reasons which are discussed in Chapter 5, but, for the purposes of this chapter, the Wirksworth Project must be mentioned.

2.2.3 Wirksworth had been an important and populous town during the lead mining period but, by the mid 20th century, it was falling into decline, with fine buildings in ruination, shops serving a declining range of customers, limited local job opportunities and an air of neglect. In 1979, the town, district and county councils joined forces with the Sainsbury Monument Trust and the Civic Trust to set up The Wirksworth Project. The objectives of The Wirksworth Project were to:
- Increase awareness and pride of, and in, the town’s special qualities
- Encourage good care of the town’s historic buildings and townscape
- Encourage sustainable use of the town’s buildings
- Encourage the growth of job opportunities

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7 The settlement framework is a policy of the draft local plan and is shown for information on our proposals map.
8 More information about the Project is in “The Wirksworth Story – New Life for an Old Town”, pub. 1984
9 See the Consultation Statement submitted with this plan.
- Encourage investment in the town’s shops
- Realise the town’s tourist potential for the economic benefit of its residents.

2.2.4 With the co-operation of local organisations, businesses and the people of Wirksworth, regeneration work was carried out, new factories and workshops were built, much of the town’s ancient character was restored and, on the whole, the aims were achieved. The project received national and international recognition. The regeneration has been sustained and this has been recognised by the receipt of a Commendation in the East Midlands RTPI Jubilee Awards in 2012. Wirksworth is, today, more visually appealing to visitors and more visited.

2.2.5 Visitors to the town do not always find it immediately attractive. Prettiness is not its key characteristic and does not need to be, because Wirksworth has other qualities. For those who stay here, this place becomes more and more appealing. Wirksworth offers a dramatic and memorable experience for residents and visitors and it is important that this is not lost through inconsiderate development.

2.3 WHAT ARE WIRKSWORTH’S DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS?

2.3.1 Wirksworth is an historic, rural market town within a dramatic and attractive landscape. It has a powerful sense of place in terms of both built environment and rural setting and there is a strong defining link between the two. The views of the settlement within the surrounding landscape, from outside the town, and the views outwards, from within the town, provide a constant and important visual connection between town and countryside. The location, landscaping and design of new development is therefore crucial to maintaining this critical balance between landscape and settlement.
2.3.3 Wirksworth’s distinctive visual characteristics are considered below in two ways:

- The characteristics of its relationship as a settlement to the wider landscape (paragraph 2.3.4);
- The characteristics of the historic settlement itself (paragraph 2.3.5).

2.3.4 Characteristics of Wirksworth’s relationship to the wider landscape are:

- The location of the town in a bowl at the head of the Ecclesbourne Valley.
- The siting of the town on the meeting point of underlying carboniferous limestone and millstone grit, giving rise to different landscapes to east (wooded slopes on millstone grit) and west (more open, fewer trees, slopes with jagged rocky outcrops on carboniferous limestone).
- The strongly defined edges along Hannage Brook and the railway line and of Yokecliffe estate.
- Its position as a market town at the junction of north-south and east-west routes.
- The original historic settlement can be seen clustered around the town centre landmarks of St. Mary’s church and the Market Place.
- Historic fringe clusters of Bolehill in the north, Gorsey Bank and Millers Green in the south and The Dale/Greenhill more centrally.
- The strong contrast between the built form of the historic settlement and the considerable 20th century development to the south of the historic core where the valley widens out.
- Ribbon development along the arterial roads.
- The former quarry workings at The Dale (partially filled in), Stoney Wood (reclaimed), the National Stone Centre (worked out and revegetating) and Middlepeak (mothballed).

2.3.5 Characteristics which define historic Wirksworth within the settlement area include:

- A high density collection of modest miners’ and quarry workers’ dwellings and grander homes of the better-off and a variety of shops and work places.
- Roofs mainly of Staffordshire blue tiles, stone tiles or imported slate and extensive use of locally quarried limestone, gritstone and lime render for the buildings, paving and boundary walls, imparting a vernacular greyness, contrasting with the smarter ashlar sandstone and the use of imported or manufactured materials in the deliberate architecture of the public buildings, such as the schools, the larger town centre buildings and the Town Hall.
- Significant hilly topography giving rise to dramatic changes of level within short distances so that roads and pathways are steep and buildings appear piled on top of one another.
- The physical proximity of the formal space around the church to that of the Market Place and their separation and enclosure by substantial buildings fronting the Market Place.
- The relationship of those spaces and buildings, which maintain a sense of enclosure in the town centre, to a number of informal spaces nearby and to many glimpses of the surrounding landscape.
- An organic network of ginnels, paths and roads throughout the town informing the identity and activity of individual areas.
- The relationship between those individual areas, the ginnels and the underlying land form.
- The retention of sharp edges to much of the historic older town.
- Open views across the town and valley from within the town and views between buildings, both linking the town to the surrounding landscape.
2.4 DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN (DDLP)

2.4.1 This section summarises the draft DDLP policies, leading to an understanding of why it is necessary to have additional “quality and character” policies for Wirksworth.

2.4.2 The local plan policies seek to secure high quality, locally distinctive design and to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment. They require development to “preserve” or “enhance” the character and appearance of the settlement or countryside. However, they mainly address the high quality of the environment of the plan area and situations where the locality has quality and local distinctiveness.

2.4.3 The local plan policies do not directly address situations which occur in Wirksworth where a locality is in poor condition (for example, a derelict site) and is actually in need of a development which improves its appearance or gives it a new character, perhaps reflecting a nearby, more admired part of the town or countryside. In such a case, “preserve” would not be an option and “improve” would be more appropriate than “enhance”. The layout and design of development in such locations should take its lead from the characteristics of Wirksworth recognised in the Character Guidance, which has been especially written for this plan 10.

2.4.4 It is clear that the emerging local plan considerably improves local policy guidance in line with the NPPF but, of course, its policies are designed to address the local plan area as a whole. The neighbourhood plan policies address specific Wirksworth requirements.

2.4.5 The significant development sites in the local plan’s proposals for Wirksworth, with an associated extension of the settlement boundary, will impact on the balance between settlement and landscape.

2.5 ACHIEVING HIGH STANDARDS AND AVOIDING MEDIOCRITY

2.5.1 Any new development must honour the settlement’s qualities and characteristics. Future growth of the settlement, or extension of the settlement boundary, should not contradict the defining landscape and settlement qualities and wherever possible should seek to strengthen and improve them.

2.5.2 Wirksworth should receive only the very best development. That applies as much to the areas which are currently undistinguished as to those which display the distinctiveness of which we are proud. We should always seek improvement.

2.5.3 The NPPF gives support to this view, saying that planning policies should aim to ensure that development should add to the overall quality of the area and should avoid mediocrity.

2.5.4 An excellent way of getting residential development to add to the overall quality of the area and avoid mediocrity is to apply Building for Life 12 11, a Government-backed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods which can help ensure that a high standard of design is achieved for new development. Building for Life 12 (BfL12) sets out twelve criteria

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10 See Appendix 1
to assess the quality of a development scheme. Proposals coming forward in Wirksworth should be exemplary, ideally scoring twelve out of twelve greens when assessed against these criteria.

2.5.5 The DDLP does not make BfL12 mandatory. Because it is looking at the local plan area as a whole and making policy for such an extensive area, that decision is justifiable. For Wirksworth, BfL12 should be mandatory. In order to show that good design is at the heart of proposed new developments, applicants should include with their residential planning applications an assessment which clearly explains how they perform against each of the twelve criteria in BfL12. (Residential development is likely to be the majority of new development in the plan area; also, BfL12 does not apply to non-residential developments.)

2.6 CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

2.6.1 Wirksworth fosters innovation and local people understand that contemporary design could contribute diversity and interest to the town. It is often difficult for people, including decision-makers, to recognise quality in innovative forms of development and that may lead to developments being deemed unacceptable. In some circumstances, it can be as acceptable as more traditional forms and is often preferable to pastiche.

2.6.2 It will not necessarily be out of character in marginal cases to favour the innovative. There is a commitment to being a low-carbon town; designed with innovative, low carbon technology may help to move towards that aim. They may exceptionally be permitted in cases where the innovative technology requires innovative design. It will still be necessary for the development to take its lead from the Character Guidance and to seek to achieve twelve BfL12 greens. Quality and Character of Development Policy 2 allows for such cases.

2.7 QUALITY AND CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

2.7.1 Building for Life 12 and our Character Guidance will be used when deciding planning applications, along with the Concept Statement for the Middleton Road, Coneygreave House, Haarlem Mill and Wards sites which is published in Appendix 2. Applicants must have regard to them.

2.7.2 Policy NP1 confirms the characteristics which define the setting and shape of the settlement. Policy NP2 confirms the characteristics which define Wirksworth within the settlement area. To receive planning permission, developments must conform with both policies. References to Building for Life 12 refer also to any successor documents which may replace or modify BfL12.

2.7.3 The first part of NP2 requires applicants to submit certain information. Such a requirement is not normally contained within planning policy but is part of the planning authority’s “validation checklist”. The Evidence and Explanations Document explains why they are in this policy.

“Contemporary” is defined in the Evidence Document.

See Chapter 5 of this plan and the Consultation Statement.

See Vision, in Chapter 1 of this plan.

The Character Guidance is contained in Appendix 1. It describes the significant characteristics and qualities of the area.

Validation checklist is explained in the Evidence and Explanations Document.
**Policy NP1**  
**Setting and shape of the settlement**  
Planning permission will be granted for development which involves the growth of the settlement in conformity with the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan but only if it strengthens and improves on the defining landscape and settlement qualities identified in the Character Guidance.

**Policy NP2**  
**Quality and character of development within the settlement**  
Applications for development in the plan area must explain:

1. How the development relates to the site and the wider area, in the context of the Character Guidance, and how that has affected the design of the proposed development;

2. How the scheme, if it includes residential development, performs against each of the 12 criteria set out in Building for Life 12;

3. How the development and its proposed soft and/or hard landscape design will contribute positively to the quality of development in Wirksworth.

Planning permission will be granted only if the proposal accords with A or B below:

**A**

i. It respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area and takes every opportunity, through its use of appropriate materials and landscape design, to reinforce local distinctiveness and a strong sense of place as identified in the Character Guidance; and

ii. It takes every opportunity to achieve ecological sustainability and a carbon neutral development, including the use of energy efficiency measures and low-carbon energy generation; and

iii. it scores 12 greens under BfL12 criteria if it includes residential development; and,

iv. in cases where there is a concept statement or design guide\(^{17}\), it is in line with the statement or guide.

**B**

In cases where the immediate environment of the site does not have a local distinctiveness or sense of place or where the proposed use of innovative technology requires innovative design, the development:

i. should take its lead from the characteristics of Wirksworth recognised in the Character Guidance;

ii. should contribute positively to the quality of development in Wirksworth; and

iii. should score 12 greens under BfL 12 criteria; and

iv. in cases where there is a concept statement or design guide for the site, it should be in line with the concept statement or design guide.

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\(^{17}\) This refers to the Concept Statement in Appendix 2 of this plan and to any guidelines for residential development that may be published by the local planning authority.
CHAPTER 3, contributing to our Vision by supporting the provision of new, well designed, low carbon housing to accommodate the needs of the community, across age and income levels and in particular encouraging young families to live here.

3.0 SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HOUSING

3.1 ACCOMMODATING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

3.1.1 Local people are concerned that Wirksworth is moving towards being a town which has an older population and an absent population. Although there is evidence that the trend is not as serious as in some other parts of Derbyshire Dales, people agreed that, if possible, the trend needs to be reversed in order to achieve a socially mixed and vibrant town where a large proportion of the population comprises families with children.

3.1.2 It is not easy to establish the most desirable housing mix nor is it easy to persuade developers to provide a particular housing mix which may be less profitable than the one that they prefer. Also, it is currently not legally possible to prevent people from buying existing houses to use as second homes.

3.1.3 In view of the importance attached to those issues by local people and with a view to preventing them from getting more serious in the future, it is strongly in the interests of localism that there should be policies addressing them in order to foster a socially sustainable town. Policies should encourage the building of family homes, starter homes and sheltered housing and seek to achieve a minimum increase in second homes.

3.1.4 The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan addresses the issue of social sustainability and seeks “a mix of housing that contributes positively to the promotion of sustainable and inclusive communities” … including “a proportion of housing suitable for newly forming local households”. Policy DMP 17 seeks “to maximise the delivery of affordable housing” and sets out clearly the proportions of affordable housing which will be required in new residential developments. Strongly supporting that policy, we consider that it is not necessary for the neighbourhood plan to have a suite of new policies addressing affordable housing or housing mix. In order that the opportunities which arise to provide affordable housing on development sites are fully exploited, the possibility of setting up a Community Land Trust is put forward as a means to provide affordable homes for local people.

3.1.5 However, it is necessary to have a policy that aims for a high proportion of family homes. Complementary to that policy, there must be a policy ensuring that homes that are intended as family homes are large enough to be so. It is possible to build a four-bedroom house which is actually too small for a family to live in. For example, if the bedrooms are small, the downstairs living rooms may be too cramped for a
family to share easily. Such homes would be prime targets for second homes or for retired people moving into the area, in conflict with the purpose of our proposed policy. There is evidence that this is happening in Wirksworth.  

3.1.6 There are no national standards for space within dwellings but the issue is being considered at a national level because it is an important factor in the social and educational development of residents. Dwellings built using public money (affordable and social housing) and dwellings built in the area covered by the Greater London Authority are built to mandatory space standards. In 2011 the RIBA published an important report which says that space standards set in Greater London are “the best available benchmark from which to assess whether a home is big enough”. This plan adopts those standards as suitable for new housing built in Wirksworth.

3.1.7 It would be unreasonable and might prejudice viability to impose the highest standards on small-site developments and on the entire area of large-site developments. Therefore, paragraphs A and B of Policy NP3 apply only to larger site developments and to 65% of the dwellings to be built (thus, in a three-dwellings development, one dwelling can be smaller size and the paragraphs do not apply to developments of one or two dwellings). Such apportionment has the benefit of enabling a satisfactory housing mix because up to 35% of dwellings may be two-bedroom or smaller and, for example, suitable for retired or single people. The requirements relating to marketing material in paragraph C can reasonably be required of all housing developments and will ensure that young families and others buying or renting a home will be clearer about what exactly they will be getting.

3.1.8 The policy sets a figure of 65% because that is the current proportion of 3+ bedroom dwellings in the area and it should be maintained.

3.1.9 The policy does not seek to prevent special residential developments, such as sheltered housing with extra care for the elderly. Such schemes are adequately covered by the draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.

3.1.10 Part B of NP3 requires applicants to submit certain information. Such a requirement is not normally contained within planning policy but is part of the planning authority’s “validation checklist”. The Evidence and Explanations Document explains the checklist and why the requirement is in this policy.

Policy NP3

Size of new homes and space standards

A
Residential developments of three dwellings or more must include a high proportion of family homes, to the following requirements:-

1 At least 65% of the dwellings must have three bedrooms or more.
2 The dwellings to which sub-paragraph A.1 refers must be of a size equal to or greater than the Greater London standards.

B
Planning applications for residential developments of three dwellings or more must include the following information about each dwelling in the application:-

1 The number of bedrooms.

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18 See Evidence Document
20 Census 2011
21 A hyperlink to and a paper copy of the Greater London standards can be found in Appendix 4
2 The number of people the dwelling is designed to house/number of bedspaces (bunk type beds cannot be included).
3 The gross internal area (measured using the RICS Code of Measuring Practice).
4 The net internal area (measured using the RICS Code of Measuring Practice).

C
Planning permissions for all residential developments shall include a condition requiring that the information to which paragraph B refers must be included in all marketing material (printed and electronic) supplied to people who may wish to purchase the dwellings. The condition shall also require that the marketing material must include the table in Appendix 4 of this plan, which sets out the Greater London standards.

3.2 LIMITING THE NUMBERS OF SECOND HOMES

3.2.1 The phrase “second homes” does not adequately describe the kind of houses that stand empty in the plan area during a high proportion of the year. The empty houses include houses bought by people for their own occasional use and houses that are rented out as holiday lets. A term that is often used is “intermittently occupied houses” but we will use the phrase “second homes” for all these situations.

3.2.2 There is no official figure for the number of second homes in the plan area. There is some data for council tax purposes and some other data for business rates purposes but it is likely that the numbers registered for those purposes (4 to 5% of the homes in the plan area) underestimates the actual number of second homes.

3.2.3 There are residential areas in Wirksworth which contain older, more quaint properties, where the proportion of second homes in a particular street is well above the apparent

4 to 5% average for the town. These areas include Wash Green, The Puzzle Gardens and North End. This can be unpleasantly isolating for people who live on a street where they are surrounded by empty houses.

3.2.4 This plan aims to have a sustained, varied and vibrant community that uses local shops and community facilities throughout the year. To achieve this, new opportunities must be provided for people to live in the plan area. This plan restricts new development to “principal residence homes”: homes which have to be used as the principal residence of the household living in it.

3.2.5 Chapter 5 makes a case for encouraging tourism, which benefits the local economy and Chapter 7 addresses concerns about the local retail economy. In that regard, holiday homes in particular and second homes to some extent do help the local economy by spending in the shops and on local attractions. However, principal residents are a more reliable economic resource and are more likely to play a part in the life in the community and help us to maintain the shops and services which depend on a resident population.

3.2.6 A policy restricting the use of residences to “principal residence only” can apply only to new planning applications. Nevertheless it is useful. There are a number of cases where new houses, particularly houses designed with some respect to the local distinctiveness of Wirksworth, have been bought as second homes. As the policies of both the draft local plan and the neighbourhood plan are likely to encourage the building of more dwellings which respect the local distinctiveness, that trend may increase. A policy is necessary, if only to stabilise the current balance of principal and intermittently occupied homes, even though it may apply only to new developments.
3.2.7 There is an understandable tendency for estate agents to advertise properties as ideal for investment as holiday lets. It may be that sellers would sometimes prefer to sell their homes to others who would like to live with them as a main residence but leave the issue in the hands of the estate agents. It will be a Town Council Action Point to enter into a dialogue with the local estate agents to seek to change attitudes.

3.2.8 There may be a few cases where developments are specifically intended to be for other residential type uses, e.g. log cabins as holiday homes. The policy will not apply to such developments.

Policy NP4
Principal Residence Homes
Planning permission for new dwellings will be subject to a restriction to ensure their occupation only as principal residence homes.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Visual Impact
3.3.1 As housing development is likely to be the largest new use of land during the plan period, its impact on Wirksworth’s visual environment will be significant. Therefore, it is important that the quality and character of new housing is of a high standard, has a beneficial impact on Wirksworth’s townscape and provides a proportionate share of the plan area’s open space. Chapters 2 and 4 address those matters and therefore this chapter does not contain a policy on visual impact or open space.

The Impact of Carbon Emissions
3.3.2 One of the aims of this plan is to minimise the use of carbon fuels. It aspires to set a high standard for the energy rating of new homes, up to the highest level – conformity with Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. However, there are concerns expressed in the local plan and a warning in the NPPF to ensure deliverability.

3.3.3 The NPPF says that development identified in the plan should not be subject to such obligations and policy burdens that their viability is threatened. Draft DDLP policy SP 9 requires new homes, except for those on small sites, to achieve the highest viable Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) rating, to meet or exceed, it says, the Building Regulations requirements. It does not set a specific standard. The highest CSH rating of sustainability for a new home is Level 6. The local plan says that, because ratings above Level 3 involve extra costs, to demand such ratings could affect the viability of other plan policies, such as those for affordable homes. That is why it uses the phrase “highest viable” and relies on the Building Regulations requirements, which do not require a higher rate than Level 3.

3.3.4 There is evidence that higher levels would (in the same way envisaged by the Green Deal) produce savings which could be set against the initial cost of the development and also attract grant and/or loan facilities. Furthermore, it is the government’s ambition, expressed in Next Steps to Zero Carbon Homes and elsewhere, to implement zero carbon homes from 2016. Therefore, during the neighbourhood plan period, it will be necessary and increasingly possible for developers gradually to improve the energy-saving performance of the dwellings they build.

22 NPPF paragraph 173.
23 There is a hyperlink to and a paper copy of the source of the CSH ratings in Appendix 5.
24 See Evidence Document.
25 Department for Communities and Local Government, 6 August 2013.
3.3.5 New-build homes will have a lifetime of perhaps 100 years. If new homes in Wirksworth are built to a lower than achievable standard, they will be consuming energy in a less than optimal way throughout their lifetime at a cost to the finances of the residents and to our local environment. They will not constitute the “sustainable development” which the NPPF seeks. The retrofitting of improvements is difficult and expensive. The extra costs of building for a high standard will be more than recouped over the lifetime of the houses.

3.3.6 To achieve our aim of making the neighbourhood plan area a low-carbon area, the neighbourhood plan can be more demanding than the local plan and can still be realistic. The neighbourhood plan policies cannot require existing buildings to be upgraded and therefore it must set ambitious targets for new buildings, to be met through planning permission requirements, and it must set a context for land in the plan area to be developed for renewable or low carbon energy production.

3.3.7 How is that to be done? Rather than introduce the highest standards immediately, the plan phases their introduction. The phasing seeks to achieve Level 6 before the end of the plan period in our plan area, to help promote the government’s ambition of eventually implementing zero carbon homes nationally. The evidence document explains that we consider the proposed standards to be viable. If an applicant considers the standards would make the development unviable, the policy requires the applicant to provide open-book evidence of that.

### Policy NP5

**Energy-saving standards for new dwellings**

All new dwellings must achieve the following standards:
- In the period ending June 2017, CSH L4;
- In the period from July 2017 to June 2020, CSH L5;
- In the period from July 2020 onwards, CSH L6.

Proposals for development which will not achieve those standards will be refused unless the applicant submits open-book evidence which explains and justifies the proposal.

3.4 **COMPLEMENTARY SITES AND SELF-HELP DEVELOPMENT**

3.4.1 The two main sites identified for housing development in the DDLP, Middleton Road and Coneygreave House, have constraints which could cause development to be slower than anticipated or result in fewer homes being built. It is wise to consider whether there are other sites which could provide some housing to help achieve the DDLP housing target for this area. Possible candidates for selection as “complementary sites” include land in the curtilage of Haarlem Mill at Derby Road/Cinder Lane, the former Ward’s Nursery on the east side of Derby Road and land at Station Yard.

3.4.2 The district council is satisfied that the two main sites make adequate provision. If this neighbourhood plan was to allocate the additional complementary sites for residential development, that could encourage the early development of housing on those sites, resulting in the delaying of development on the DDLP sites. There is much to commend the development of the sites but, to avoid such conflict with the DDLP, this plan does not allocate them for residential development.

3.4.3 Whatever the policies may be, they have to be implemented. There is a feeling amongst the local community that the best way to get the houses you want is to build
them yourselves. The town council will pursue means of achieving the community construction of affordable and low carbon homes, including the possibility of creating a Community Land Trust or other social benefit organisation; this will be a Town Council Action Point.

3.5 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS

- To foster housing diversity, e.g. set up a Community Land Trust.
- To enter into a dialogue with the local estate agents about not advertising properties as ideal for holiday lets.
CHAPTER 4, contributing to our Vision by sustaining and improving a range of recreational and community facilities to support the health, education and well-being of all local people.

4.0 COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

4.1 NEEDS

4.1.1 This chapter seeks to improve the health and social well-being of the community and therefore deals with open space, sport and recreation and with places and buildings which are important to local people living and working in Wirksworth and the surrounding rural area.

4.1.2 The Consultation Statement identifies: -

- a desire amongst local people that there should be an indoor place for young people to get together;
- a need for more community open space, playgrounds, playing fields and sports facilities;
- a list of community spaces and places which should be protected;
- a resurgence of demand for allotments;
- the importance of the local school provision;
- the importance of the local health service provision.

4.2 YOUTH CENTRE

4.2.1 Since the closure of the part-time youth club at Anthony Gell School, there has been no indoor place where young people can gather, other than the cafes and pubs which are perceived as a preserve of adults. The Consultation Statement shows that local people consider that it is important to the future of the community that young people have a positive attitude towards Wirksworth and that they and their families wish to stay here. Providing places where they feel comfortable will be a major contribution to that future.

4.2.2 The school students who participated in the consultations clearly want a local youth centre, a young people’s cafe and other means of enjoying positive leisure time outside school through access to recreation, arts and heritage and digital communication technology. Anthony Gell School no longer has space and the county council now offers only a mobile service in the plan area. The town council respects the qualities of our young people and agrees with OFSTED that they have ‘a highly developed sense of moral values and tolerance’. Helping to provide a youth centre will be a Town Council Action Point.

4.3 COMMUNITY SPACE AND SPORTS FACILITIES

4.3.1 The town council considers that existing community spaces do not fully serve the needs of the parish. There is not enough provision and a high proportion of those that there are need improvement. The Consultation Statement says that people consider that current provision should be given specific protection and, indeed, additional facilities especially for children’s play and sports clubs, are necessary.
4.3.2 There are four large community open spaces in the parish. They are at Bolehill, Cromford Road (“Fanny Shaw’s”), Gorsey Bank and Kingsfield. There are small playgrounds at The Dale and Yokecliffe, both in need of upgrade and improvement. These are of importance to the community by virtue of their recreational and amenity value, and the proximity to people served by them.

4.3.3 Opportunities should be sought and encouraged to improve the existing spaces and playgrounds. Built development should not be allowed on them except for small scale development that would help enhance their value to the community as recreational spaces. Permissible development might include a youth facility, such as a coffee bar, at a one of the larger open spaces, such as Fanny Shaw’s, where there is a skateboard park. This will be a Town Council Action Point. The NPPF, at paragraph 70, provides authority for the retention, promotion and development of community facilities such as shared space, community facilities, meeting places and sports venues and requires us to “guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services …. ”

4.3.4 Whilst protecting the existing provision it is essential that new community recreation space be created. There are no play facilities east of the town centre in the residential area from Wash Green to King Edward Street and provision south of the town centre, perhaps on The Meadows, would serve a large population in the Yokecliffe area and families visiting the town centre.

4.3.5 The activities of our sports clubs make a vital contribution to the social life, health and prosperity of the community. The arrival of the Leisure Centre and other improvements have shown how local people can benefit from sports-related activities. The recent increase in demand is so great that the sports hall, climbing wall and artificial pitches are already oversubscribed. There are not enough football or hockey pitches to meet demand.

4.3.6 There must be sustained growth in facilities to match the rising demand. There is a need for new developments to contribute proportionally to the provision of such facilities.

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Policy NP6
Providing for new community facilities

In cases where there is a requirement or agreement that a developer should provide or contribute towards community facilities, the provision or contribution should be made towards the following facilities:

1. Facilities which may be sought by the concept statement or design guidance for the site or, in the absence of such a statement or guidance, which would be in line with Derbyshire Dales Local Plan Policy DMP 23; and

2. A Youth Centre or youth facility

Policy NP7
Providing for new sports facilities

Planning permission will be granted for proposals to provide new sports facilities. The inclusion in new developments of additional sports facilities beyond that which would normally be required by the local planning authority will be permitted.

Policy NP8
New play provision

Planning permission will be granted for improvements to existing recreation facilities and playgrounds and for new children’s play provision, particularly at Wash Green and in the south of the town.

Note that, as with all the neighbourhood plan policies, this policy applies so long as the location and development do not conflict with the policies on quality and character.
4.4 PROTECTING EXISTING COMMUNITY PLACES

4.4.1 There are many places in the plan area, buildings and open spaces, which are important to the community and should be protected. The first steps in protecting them are being taken by the draft DDLP (policies DMP 15, SP 10, DMP 20 and DMP 21). The local plan policies strongly resist the loss of community facilities and recreational areas and other open spaces but do not identify those places in a list or on the Proposals Map (other than the National Stone Centre and The Meadows); this neighbourhood plan does so, in policy NP9.

4.4.2 The Evidence Document contains descriptions of the sites and the reasons for seeking their protection. It should be noted that the list in policy NP9 is not necessarily an exhaustive list; unlisted facilities and spaces are equally protected by the local plan.

4.4.3 However, in some cases, the change of use of a building to another use does not require planning permission. For example, the Post Office could legally be changed to any type of shop. For the community to require the owner to make a planning application, it will have to persuade Derbyshire Dales District Council to issue a Direction removing the owner’s right to make the change unhindered. It is a Town Council Action Point to be vigilant and, if such a situation looks likely to arise, to consider whether to request a Direction. The town council will also consider whether to seek the registration as Assets of Community Value of some or all the facilities and spaces.

The Meadows

4.4.3 There is considerable community interest in the future of The Meadows, which is close to and south of the town centre and is privately owned. It is identified by Derbyshire County Council and designated in the local plan as a potential site for a combined infant school (to replace the two infant schools north of the town centre) with nursery provision. A few years ago, there were funds available for the proposed school development. However, the financial situation changed. It may change again within the plan period and therefore it is important that the designation remains. In view of the local plan designation it is not necessary for the neighbourhood plan to make any specific provision.

Policy NP9

Loss of existing facilities and open spaces
Planning permission for the redevelopment or change of use of community assets, facilities and open spaces will be granted only if all possible options have been explored to maintain a community use and if the proposal accords with local plan policies DMP 15, SP 10, DMP 20 and DMP 21. The buildings, uses and sites protected by this policy and the local plan policies include those listed here.

Buildings, their uses and their curtilages:

Open spaces:

4.5 ALLOTMENTS

4.5.1 The plan area has no allotment sites. The nearest site is at Middleton but currently there are no vacancies and a long waiting list. The demand for allotments is growing; this appears to be not just for recreational reasons but because more people believe they should be more self-sufficient in the context of global threats to the environment and food supplies.

4.5.2 The local plan states that across the Derbyshire Dales the demand for allotments far exceeds provision and that demand for allotments is likely to increase. It adds that the shortage in provision will need to be addressed. The local plan acknowledges that allotments are a community service or facility and that they can be an important part of the district’s green infrastructure. It seeks to enhance that infrastructure partly by providing allotments. The local plan says that new housing developments will be required to make a financial contribution towards allotment provision.

4.5.3 It is estimated that the neighbourhood plan area needs a minimum of 9750m² (say, a hectare) of allotment land. Allotments need access, water and normally a communal shed and they can be expensive to provide. Although there are possible sites on the edge of Wirksworth, land close to the settlement often has residential hope value, so landowners are not keen to sell for allotment use. While there is no land currently owned by the town council which is suitable for the purpose, there is a statutory requirement for the council to provide allotment space and it can even compulsorily purchase private land under the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908.

4.5.4 Equating that requirement with the increasing demand recognised by the local planning authority, it is likely that, given a favorable financial situation at some time during the plan period, the town council will provide more allotments. That will be addressed as a Town Council Action Point. Policy NP10 of this plan seeks to permit the development of statutory or private allotments should such proposals come forward.

4.5.5 As allotments are a form of agriculture and horticulture, the use of land for allotments does not require planning permission. The associated road access, sheds and fences above a certain height usually will require permission. The policy encourages the
granting of permission for these associated developments. Because of the very limited supply, it is important that allotments land, when provided, is used efficiently, primarily for the production of food and flowers.

**Policy NP10**

*Allotments*

Planning permission will be granted for development associated with and necessary to the use of land as allotments, provided that the development is of an appropriate scale and is necessary to the agricultural or horticultural use of the allotment site.

4.6 **SCHOOLS**

4.6.1 In the plan period, the infant and junior schools may need modern accommodation: they are in buildings over 100 years old. The Meadows is a probable site for new educational development. An all-through education pattern, involving the youngest children through to Year 6, may be an appropriate way forward. The issue will need to be addressed at some point in the future. It is necessary to keep a watching brief on policy changes affecting education. The schools make important employment and financial contributions. The town council will continue to support our schools in their work: in maintaining their high standards of academic achievement and personal development.

4.7 **HEALTH**

4.7.1 Wirksworth is served by a GP practice which is highly valued in our community. As GPs take on further responsibilities additional buildings may be needed. The medical practice makes important employment and financial contributions. The town council will be active in supporting the Hannage Brook Medical Practice and other local health service providers, especially as more community based services develop.

4.8 **TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS**

- To work towards the provision of a youth centre or other youth facility, perhaps linked to existing youth provision such as the skate park.
- To work towards the new sports facilities which the sports group say are needed.
- To make or help to facilitate new play provision where it is lacking.
- To be vigilant towards loss of community facilities and discuss with the local planning authority the removal of permitted development rights in appropriate cases.
- To consider whether to seek the registration as Assets of Community Value of some or all the protected facilities and spaces.
- To find ways of providing allotments.
CHAPTER 5, contributing to our Vision by encouraging development and investment to build the local tourist economy; Supporting growth and innovation within the local economy, in particular building on the area’s distinctive strengths, including its creative entrepreneurial community; Striving to become a more energy efficient/low carbon town.

5.0 ECONOMY, TOURISM AND ENERGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 Our ambition for economy and tourism in the plan area is that by 2028 Wirksworth will have a vibrant local, low-carbon economy providing a broad range of employment opportunities for local people. The town will capitalise on its creative entrepreneurial community, its heritage and its tourism potential to create a supportive environment for small start-up business and to encourage community-led initiatives. Wirksworth will be a place that enables local people to work flexibly and combine home and work life.

5.1.2 There are several important factors which contribute to the economy of Wirksworth and the well-being of its people. They include our very special town centre, our traditional and creative industries and tourism, which is becoming more significant. We can concentrate on those important factors in an attempt to enhance the local economy but, if we do nothing, there is potential for decline.

5.1.3 This chapter is in three parts: Tourism; Business and Employment; and Renewable Energy. Chapter 7 addresses town centre issues.

5.2 TOURISM

5.2.1 The plan area is ideally placed to capitalise on its tourism potential. It contains stunning countryside, is on the edge of the Peak District National Park and is close to a large number of other visitor attractions. Wirksworth’s exceptional built environment coupled with its retail offer and the area’s year-round offer of events, including Wirksworth’s annual Carnival and Well Dressing and its Arts Festival, make the plan area all the more attractive.

5.2.2 The National Stone Centre, Eco Centre and the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway are all in the plan area and provide significant tourism potential. The High Peak Trail connects Wirksworth with other national and local footpaths and gives access to the National Cycle Network. “Destination Wirksworth” is an initiative which markets Wirksworth as a tourist destination linked with the railway. There is evidence that it has increased the number of visitors to the town and area.

Benefiting the local economy

Tourism has shown itself to benefit the economy of the plan area and is likely to become increasingly important.

Advantages and disadvantages of tourism

It is well documented that tourist development and the growth of visitors can damage the attractions themselves. Locally, bed and breakfast and holiday lets are rising. Although helpful to the area’s tourism potential, this can be seen to be
detrimental, increasing house prices and affecting the strong sense of community that is vital to Wirksworth. Also, the potential for income from tourists can lead to demand for more cafes, gift shops and antique shops, potentially replacing the “day-to-day” retailers and adversely affecting the retail balance in the town centre, which, as explained in the Town Centre chapter, is one of Wirksworth’s main assets.

**Strengthening the tourism offer**

5.2.5 Because tourism will increasingly become important to the local economy, the neighbourhood plan will try to strengthen and consolidate the area’s tourism offer. Because there are some disadvantages, the neighbourhood plan should aim to balance tourism growth with the need to conserve the assets of the plan area – countryside, built environment, sense of community and unique town centre.

**Derbyshire Dales Local Plan**

5.2.6 Derbyshire Dales Local Plan Policy SP6 states that the district council will support the development of tourism and culture and gives a list of nine ways in which this will be done. They include “supporting and supplementing the tourism offer of the Peak District National Park” and “supporting measures... which would relieve tourist pressures on the most sensitive areas of the... National Park, (etc)”. Although the policy does not mention Wirksworth by name, the neighbourhood plan area could be significant in providing attractions and facilities which might relieve tourist pressures on the National Park.

5.2.7 Policy DMP 12 sets out the limitations on tourism development and says that it prefers the use of existing, permanent buildings (presumably it means that they are preferable to new buildings). In view of the intention of SP 6 to support and relieve pressure on the national park and because the neighbourhood plan area could play a role in that, the neighbourhood plan should have a policy which enables new tourism development. In the neighbourhood plan area, new buildings at the National Stone Centre and Eco-Centre, by informing and interpreting the Peak District, add to the tourist role of the plan area and potentially relieve tourist pressures on the national park. Therefore, this plan adapts DMP12 to enable new buildings providing information and interpretation.

5.2.8 Para 6.22 of the plan refers to the “hotel demand survey for Derbyshire and the Peak District”, which says that Buxton, Ashbourne, Matlock and Belper are suitable locations for additional hotels. Wirksworth, at times such as the Arts Festival and Well Dressings and special events organised by Ecclesbourne Valley Railway and others, has a shortage of overnight accommodation. Indeed, it has only a few B&Bs, including pub accommodation, and no hotels. If Wirksworth is to capitalise on its tourism potential, there must be provision for a greater amount and wider range of accommodation for overnight stays.

5.2.9 DMP 13 has strict requirements for new chalet, caravan and campsite developments, mainly to do with visual impact but also requiring the site to be “accessible by a variety of modes of transport”. Because the main purpose of the requirements is to protect the environment and because that is also one of the main purposes of the neighbourhood plan, no new policies are added on this topic.

**Neighbourhood Plan tourism policies**

5.2.10 To promote the growth of the tourism economy in Wirksworth and to add to

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28 It seems that Wirksworth was excluded from consideration because it did not have a Tourist Information Centre providing data for the survey.
Derbyshire Dales Local Plan Policy SP6's intention to support the development of tourism, this plan has the following policies, which address specifically the characteristics of the plan area.

**Policy NP11**  
*Overnight accommodation and tourism developments*

**A**  
Planning permission will be granted for changes of use to hotel and other overnight accommodation and for extensions to existing hotels or bed and breakfasts, provided that they would not have significant harmful impacts on the local community, the wider visitor experience or the character and appearance of Wirksworth’s natural and historic environment.

**B**  
Planning permission will be granted for new buildings for other tourism development provided that:

1. the main purpose of the building is to inform and interpret the plan area and the Peak District; and
2. the building would not have significant harmful impacts on the local community, the wider visitor experience or the character and appearance of the plan area’s natural and historic environment.

### 5.3 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS
- Coordination of tourism information and calendar of events.
- To help marketing through Destination Wirksworth.

### 5.4 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

**Wirksworth is a creative entrepreneurial community.**

**5.4.1** The Derbyshire Dales Local Plan has a set of business and employment policies which go a long way towards addressing the problems and opportunities present in Wirksworth. It seeks to retain as much existing employment land as is reasonably possible and to provide opportunities for new employment development. In this neighbourhood plan the main aim is to address opportunities which are perhaps more relevant to Wirksworth than to some other parts of the Dales.

**5.4.2** A 2006 report found that the cluster of communities centred around Wirksworth is home to a prolific and exceptionally talented mix of innovative, imaginative and creative companies and individuals. These individuals, organisations and companies have grown up and developed in the Wirksworth area over the last 20 years and many are now well established, respected, skilled and experienced in their fields of activity.

**5.4.3** The report identified 139 creative enterprises (businesses or individual sole traders), supporting previous figures published regarding the size of the local creative community in the area. These enterprises employ over 251 people on a full or part-time basis. Wirksworth and its surrounding area has an unusually large creative community for such a

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29 Report by NOW and Creative Futures. Dec 2006. See Evidence Document for information about NOW.
One step would be to provide facilities aimed at start-up businesses. Start-up businesses would include small-scale manufacturing, local construction and refurbishment and the creative industries, where the skills and expertise of the local workforce can add significant value. They require low cost facilities for the critical first 18 months, ideally located with other start-ups or service businesses, to promote local co-operation. Such facilities are absent at the moment. This is to be a Town Council Action Point.

At the heart of the remarkable past and future ambition for Wirksworth is a close integration of living and working, in a compact, dense, active and socially inclusive urban environment. This again is a key element of Wirksworth’s character which the town council wishes to promote through encouraging mixed use development (residential development close to B1-type development) and working from home, including alterations, extensions and small, new workshops or studios.

The majority of the working population is not directly involved in the creative industries. Most depend on traditional work opportunities. In the rural parts of the plan area, where local wages are below the national average coupled with limited public transport, finding accessible work is problematic especially for young people and those with new families. This problem was raised by local people in our consultations. The plan area needs local and well-paid jobs, which are important to providing a vibrant and robust economy. As these are issues throughout Derbyshire Dales, the draft DDLP has policies addressing them and it would not be appropriate for the neighbourhood plan to duplicate those policies.

It is important that local people have opportunities to retrain because there has been a general decline in traditional work opportunities and because of the Town Council’s vision that Wirksworth should continue to be a socially sustainable community. One way to do this would be to enable the provision of training facilities on new employment developments. This is to be a Town Council Action Point.

5.5 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN

NPPF

5.5.1 The NPPF, para 21, requires planning authorities to “facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit”. As that requirement has not been interpreted into a local plan policy, this neighbourhood plan makes some provision through policy and a Town Council Action Point.

DDLP

5.5.2 Draft DDLP Policy SP1 says that one of the means of achieving sustainable development will be to support the local

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30 B1 is explained in the Evidence and Explanations Document.

31 See the Consultation Statement.
economy by enabling the integration of a mix of uses “suitable for local people in environmentally, socially and economically sustainable locations”. At paragraph 6.29 it says that the Sustainable Community Strategy Economy Action Plan identifies the need to support micro-businesses in the local plan area.

5.5.3 Because those are important suggestions for the neighbourhood plan area, without specific policies in the draft DDLP, this neighbourhood plan makes some provision through policy and a Town Council Action Point. The other policies in the draft local plan tend to support our vision:

5.5.4 SP5 encourages developments that contribute to jobs and educational and re-skilling opportunities, the redevelopment or intensification of existing employment sites, particularly to update them to modern employment standards, and a greater presence of high value and knowledge-based businesses.

5.5.5 DMP 10 identifies 4 ha at Middleton Road for employment development. Housing and industry can be incompatible neighbours. The Middleton Road concept statement addresses the difficult issue of the potential relationship between houses and industry.

5.5.6 DMP 11 seeks to restrict the loss of existing employment and industrial premises unless there are particular justifications for the loss.

5.5.7 Referring to development outside the settlement framework, where new development would not normally be permitted, DMP 2 enables “small-scale industrial or business development that is appropriate to its location”. This policy also justifies development to enable working from home in rural locations but does not make specific provision in urban areas.

Overview of sites in the Neighbourhood Plan

5.5.8 This section looks at some sites which offer good opportunities to support the area’s creative and knowledge based industries. Most are centrally located and those which are not have suitable characteristics. They tend to be small in size, most have potential to be integrated with residential use and some are in buildings of heritage value that could sympathetically be converted for small business uses. The sites are at Haarlem Mill, Middleton Road (a strategic allocation in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan), Willowbath Mill, Stones Builders, Station Yard, the Parish Rooms and Mountains Yard.

Haarlem Mill

5.5.9 This site contains a Grade 2 star listed building on the Buildings at Risk register. Because it is a former industrial site and contains a number of small spaces in the existing buildings, it is an ideal candidate for small businesses or industry linked to residential. It is on the edge of town, close to half hourly bus services. Haarlem Mill presents a unique opportunity to bring forward a heritage-led and high quality development that could improve the image of Wirksworth at the important point of arrival and departure at the southern gateway.

Middleton Road

5.5.10 This is the main residential and employment allocation in the draft DDLP. Because there will be a large number of homes nearby, the site is likely to be suitable only for business and industry (B1) use. A mixed development of the Middleton Road site could, without difficulty, provide for the small scale, knowledge-driven, creative businesses which we perceive as being important for the future of the plan area and enable “living above the shop”.

5.5.11
**Willowbath Mill**  
5.5.11 This site is in easy walking distance of the town centre. It is currently occupied by several small, creative industries.

**Stones Builders**  
5.5.12 In the town centre and currently a builder’s yard. The employment which will be lost if the site ceases to be a builder’s yard could be partially replaced if the site were to be redeveloped or converted for use by creative and craft industries, integrated with residential use and small-scale retail. This site is discussed also in Chapter 7 of this plan.

**Station Yard**  
5.5.13 The draft local plan does not recognise the significance or potential of Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. This neighbourhood plan recognises it as a tourist attraction. The operator, Wyvern Rail, is a key stakeholder in employment through tourism in Wirksworth. Beyond this, Wyvern Rail has ambitions to extend its land ownership and create further employment opportunities. Such development would be more deliverable and sustainable if mixed-use opportunities with residential use were also identified. There is an exceptional opportunity here to create a remarkable working and living environment within the town. Chapter 3 refers to the possible use of the site partially for residential development. Chapter 4 lists the railway and station as a protected facility, so it is important that any employment or residential development does not hinder that activity.

**The Parish Rooms**  
5.5.14 A two-storey 19th century building in St Mary’s Gate, the Parish Rooms was used in the second half of the 20th century as a clothes factory. The upper floor is currently in office use and the ground floor is let out to community groups. Because it is central to Wirksworth and because it has a history as a place of employment, the owners consider that the upper floor would make an excellent location for small-scale start-up businesses and we propose that it be converted to use as a work hub.

**Mountains’ Yard**  
5.5.16 Mountains’ Yard is a haulage yard on the edge of the conservation area, close to very attractive parts of Wirksworth. It is an unattractive site in its current use and draws HGVs through the town centre and streets lined with homes. It provides employment which Wirksworth cannot afford to lose. Historically, quarry wagons transporting stone have provided significant employment for drivers and others in the industry and may still be important in the future when local quarries reopen. Whilst this site could be developed more sympathetically to its surroundings, it
should be only if an alternative location can be found for the lorry depot.

Policies for business and employment

Policy NP12
Provision for new and small businesses

A Subject to the provisions of part B of this policy, planning permission will be granted for developments on the sites of Haarlem Mill, Middleton Road, Willowbath Mill, Stones Builders, Station Yard, the Parish Rooms and Mountains Yard which provide for:
1 start-up businesses by enabling low cost facilities in cooperative clusters;
2 businesses to operate from integrated home/work locations;
3 working from home, enabling extensions and small new buildings;
4 enabling micro-businesses.

B Permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the Listed status of Haarlem Mill, the strategic housing and employment allocation in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan at Middleton Road or the use for railway purposes of Station Yard. Permission will be granted at Mountains Yard only if an alternative site is provided for the haulage business.

Policy NP13
Parish Rooms work hub
The upper floor of the Parish Rooms which is shown on the proposals map is identified for use as a work hub. Planning permission will not be granted for uses which would conflict with or prevent development of a work hub.

5.6 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS
- To provide incentives for start-ups.
- To encourage apprenticeship and education.
- To encourage self-build, with training.
- To provide for training facilities in employment developments.
- To work with the owners of Haarlem Mill, Middleton Road, Willowbath Mill, Stones Builders, Station Yard, Parish Rooms and Mountains Yard to try to provide workspaces for small-scale manufacturing, local construction and refurbishment and the creative industries.

5.7 RENEWABLE ENERGY

5.7.1 This section discusses renewable energy sources and our aim of achieving a low carbon plan area. It concentrates mainly on non-residential development because Chapter 3 covers residential development.

5.7.2 Wirksworth is an active Transition Town which aspires to be carbon neutral. We consider that the neighbourhood plan should seek to achieve a level of renewable energy provision at least equal to the government’s aim for the country of 15% by 2020. We draw some encouragement from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (DDLP).

National Planning Policy Framework

5.7.3 The NPPF encourages neighbourhood plans to identify opportunities for community energy-saving initiatives. It says: “97. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. They should … consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting
infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources; ... support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside such areas being taken forward through neighbourhood planning; and identify opportunities where development can draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers."

**Derbyshire Dales Local Plan**

5.7.4 The draft DDLP summarises a feasibility study which assessed the potential in the Peak District and Dales for renewable and low carbon technologies. The study concluded that there is potential for a wide range of technologies, including combined heat and power schemes and decentralised district heating schemes, especially in larger developments.

5.7.5 The study made a number of recommendations, including that all developments should have an energy statement that targets should be set for renewable energy consumption based on achieving certain approved levels and that there should be a policy for stand-alone energy development that could be used to export energy to the National Grid or district heating schemes. DDLP policy SP 9 reflects the recommendations of the feasibility study. For example, it seeks high standards for commercial developments.

5.7.6 If Wirksworth is to achieve the local ambition of 15% renewable energy by 2020, with the higher aspiration of becoming a carbon neutral area, the neighbourhood plan must be more demanding than the local plan. It must set ambitious targets for new buildings, to be met through planning permission requirements, find ways to improve the existing building stock and encourage land in the plan area developed for renewable energy production.

**The BREEAM standards**

5.7.7 Regarding targets for new buildings, the plan should demand the highest BREEAM standards for non-residential development. However, in compliance with the government’s understandable insistence that development should be deliverable (NPPF paragraph 173), the neighbourhood plan policies are less demanding than would be necessary to move quickly towards a low carbon community. The residential requirements are set out in Chapter 3. The non-residential requirements follow in this chapter. They are based on the BREEAM standards. Applicants who consider that they cannot meet those standards will have to provide open-book evidence that the development would not be viable.

5.7.8 Regarding improvements of the existing stock, the neighbourhood plan cannot require existing buildings to be upgraded. Those buildings, even by 2028, will continue to be the majority in the plan area and to be the main stumbling block for our aspirations and ambitions. The plan includes a policy which will enable upgrading, where it might need planning permission. (The policy applies to residential and non-residential development.) Importantly, the town council will work with local people and relevant bodies to find ways of encouraging energy-saving improvements to the existing building stock. This is to be a Town Council Action Point.

5.7.9 Regarding renewable energy production, there are many opportunities in the plan area. They include worked out quarries.
which would be capable of taking large scale solar electric installations (they face in the right direction and are in the right place to enable easy access to the plan area) and there is wind on the hills. Because this is a neighbourhood plan, the main purpose of a policy permitting such developments would be to ensure that the plan area would be the main beneficiary. The scale of the developments should be appropriate to the scale of the locality.

**Neighbourhood plan policies on sustainable energy**

**Policy NP14**
*Energy-saving standards for non-residential developments*

All new non-residential buildings must achieve the following standards:

- In the period ending June 2017, BREEAM Good;
- In the period from July 2017 to June 2020, BREEAM Very Good;
- In the period from July 2020 onwards, BREEAM Excellent.

Proposals for development which will not achieve those standards will be refused unless the applicant submits open-book evidence which explains and justifies the proposal.

**NP15**
*Upgrading existing buildings*

Planning permission will be granted for improvements to the energy conservation qualities of existing buildings in cases where permission is necessary.

**NP16**
*Enabling renewable energy developments*

Planning permission will be granted for developments the main purpose of which is to provide power from renewable energy sources primarily for use in the plan area, but only if the scale of the development is appropriate to the locality.

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5.8 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS

- To work with local people and relevant bodies to find ways of encouraging energy-saving improvements to the existing building stock.
CHAPTER 6, contributing to our Vision by promoting sustainable transport that links to surrounding areas and includes a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

6.0 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 This chapter is structured as follows:
Section 6.2 sets out our objectives for transport and movement (the objectives address the three main issues which the neighbourhood plan can address with land use policies) and discusses the policy background to the topic of transport and movement;
Section 6.3 looks at the plan area, lists people’s concerns about transport and movement in the area as a whole and suggests some solutions;
Section 6.4 makes provision for pedestrians and cyclists;
Section 6.5 lists Town Council Action Points relevant to the topic “transport and movement”.

6.2 OBJECTIVES & BACKGROUND

Objectives for transport and movement
6.2.1 The three objectives build on the plan’s vision (Chapter 1) and are the result of public consultations and assessments of the issues raised. They are:

- To improve the townscape of central Wirksworth so that it complements the existing buildings which provide the town’s unique character, thus making it a more attractive place to live and/or work in and to visit, and to change the balance between pedestrians and vehicles to significantly favour pedestrians.
- To provide additional parking space and protect existing parking and reorganise it where possible to work more effectively.
- To improve, extend and enhance provision for pedestrians and cyclists so as to discourage use of vehicles, reduce pollution and congestion while promoting health and wellbeing.

Policy background
6.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says that the transport system should be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and that encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

6.2.3 The NPPF has five priorities for the location and design of developments. They include giving priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and creating safe and secure layouts which minimise conflict between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. The NPPF adds that local planning authorities should protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.

6.2.4 It is apparent that the NPPF has much the same approach to sustainable transport as Wirksworth people have supported in our consultations. That is the context for this discussion of what the neighbourhood plan needs to do.

6.2.5 The draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan follows the NPPF guidance. It does not identify many sites and routes but it does have general policies which set a background for this neighbourhood plan. They cover most of the plan area’s policy needs but the neighbourhood plan can make useful contributions to policy on the following topics: town centre character and streetscape; parking; and provision for pedestrians and cyclists.
6.3 THE PLAN AREA

6.3.1 Because of the local topography, many of the roads in the plan area are difficult for vehicles. Wirksworth’s street pattern has evolved over many centuries and is not designed to accommodate modern vehicular traffic. There is congestion in the town centre, with associated noise and pollution, and significant challenges for cyclists and pedestrians. Those problems affect drivers, shoppers, residents, public health and the local economy. Some of them cannot be directly addressed by the neighbourhood plan but will be taken forward by the town council as Town Council Action Points.

6.3.2 In our consultations people have expressed a number of concerns:

- The public transport links, particularly to and from the rural area, are poor. There are not enough buses, not enough places served and poor evening provision.
- There are not enough footpath links giving access between residential areas, schools, community facilities and the town centre.
- New residential developments, even in recent years, have not provided pedestrian-friendly footpath links and routes, avoiding busy roads, narrow footways, steep inclines and other difficulties for pedestrians, especially with children and shopping bags. Where there are footpaths, they are often hidden behind high fences or hedges.
- The pedestrian pavements (footways) on the roads linking residential areas with the town centre are sometimes too narrow and sometimes non-existent. Walking is dangerous because pedestrians are close to fast-moving vehicles.
- There is insufficient parking provision in some residential parts of Wirksworth.
- There is no agreed plan for how to deal with quarry traffic and the routes it should take.
- There is little or no provision for cyclists, for either shopping or leisure purposes, except on the High Peak Trail37.
- In Wirksworth town centre specifically:
  - There is vehicular / pedestrian conflict, arising from the following main problems:
  - There is insufficient parking provision.
  - The main shopping streets are also the main through roads.
  - There are inadequate pavements.
  - In the middle of the town centre, there is a pinch point where people can walk only in single file.
  - There is parking on the pavement.
  - Traffic speeds are too high.
  - There is an uncoordinated jumble of street signs and other street furniture which has grown up incrementally for ad hoc purposes.
  - Wide road junctions and parking provision for vehicles create a townscape with too much black tarmac.
  - There is noise and dust from large vehicles.
  - Loading from delivery vehicles for shops is difficult.

6.4 PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

6.4.1 Several of the issues listed above are related to the topics ‘town centre’ and ‘parking’ and are addressed in a separate town centre chapter (Chapter 7). This section deals with the need to provide for pedestrians and cyclists.
6.4.2 Conflict between pedestrians and cyclists usually occurs where they are sharing the same path. With forethought and good design, most conflict can be avoided. In our plan area, as explained in Chapter 2, good design in development will be a policy requirement.

6.4.3 Behind and around Wirksworth town centre, there is a network of footpaths, often in areas that are inaccessible to motor vehicles. Many of the paths link to or continue as footpaths in the open countryside. However, the paths are usually narrow and unsuitable for shared use with cycling.

6.4.4 It is not easy to cycle in Wirksworth. There are no dedicated cycle lanes. Streets are of varying widths and the topography of frequent steep hills is discouraging. For many, cycling seems unsafe and unappealing.

6.4.5 Local people have described difficulties and dangers where pedestrian pavements are narrow or non-existent and there is genuine fear of them or their children being hit by vehicles, combined with the inconvenience of negotiating difficult routes. Footways should be at least wide enough to enable ‘two abreast’ walking.

6.4.6 There is considerable vehicular traffic associated with the four schools, causing congestion, encouraging parking on pavements and restricted areas and creating hazards for pedestrians and cyclists. In some places near the primary schools, pedestrian pavements are non-existent. Improvement of footpath routes to the schools is essential. Creation of safe cycling routes from the residential areas would improve safety and encourage children to cycle to school.

6.4.7 There is a good pedestrian route from Gorsey Bank and the residential areas in the south eastern sector of Wirksworth, along The Hannages to Coldwell Street, from where all four schools can be accessed. However, it needs improving and extending so that the Junior School and the infant schools can be more safely accessed. The same route could be used by cyclists if it was widened or paralleled. This is achievable and is included in policy NP17 and is also a Town Council Action Point.

6.4.8 Other Town Council Action Points include investigating the potential for linking the south of the town, particularly Alderwasley Hall School’s Callow Park campus, with the town centre, linking the tourist attraction of the railway station with Carsington Water (a major attraction) and with the High Peak Trail (part of National Cycle Network 54) via Old Lane.

Policy NP17
Provision for pedestrians and cyclists

A
In this policy, “pedestrian friendly route” means avoiding busy roads, narrow footways, steep inclines and other difficulties for pedestrians, especially with children and shopping bags.

B
Applications for development must show how they will make it easy for pedestrian users of the development to take a pedestrian friendly route to and from the town centre. Developments must also cater for people walking to and from...
It will not be acceptable to provide a pedestrian link simply to the nearest roadside footway unless that is the most pedestrian friendly route which the developer is able to provide.

C
Planning permission will be granted for development which improves conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

D
Planning permission will be granted for developing the new footpath and cycle route shown on the proposals map.

E
New development which is located where it can help to provide or improve footpath and cycle routes will be required to do so. Development which would hinder the provision of the footpath and cycle route shown on the map or adversely affect other existing footpath and cycling links will be refused.

6.5 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS
- These action points will require the town council to involve other agencies, such as the Highway Authority.
- Investigating a variety of options for improving the town centre, as described in Chapter 7.
- Additional parking provision in both the centre and some residential parts of Wirksworth and in Bolehill.
- Provision for pedestrians and cyclists: enabling improvements, links and routes; providing secure cycle stands, etc.
- Improving bus routes and provision, particularly to the villages.
- Prevention of parking on pedestrian pavements.
- The widening of pedestrian pavements in various parts of the plan area.
- Routes for quarry traffic and/or access-only weight limits.
- Investigate potential for pedestrian and cycle links between the Callow Park campus and the town centre.
- Investigate potential for linking railway station with Cersington Water.
- Investigate potential for linking railway station with High Peak Trail via Old Lane.
- In addition to the policies affecting new development, the town council will pursue with the county council and district council opportunities to improve existing, inadequate pedestrian and cycle links.
Our ambition for the town centre in 2028 is that Wirksworth should be a town with a distinctive, independent retail offer, at least as strong as that of today, which will ensure that the day-to-day needs of local people are met, will enhance the town’s tourism offer and will contribute to local jobs and economic prosperity. However, to achieve that ambition, we face major challenges.

In accordance with one of the themes of the plan, growth is necessary to achieve stability. The plan proposes modest growth in the town centre’s retail offer in order to challenge the decline which might otherwise happen in the competitive retail economy of the future.

This distinctive mix of independents alongside the town’s historic townscape makes it a very attractive shopping offer for residents and tourists. Wirksworth Town Council, New Opportunities Wirksworth and the town’s traders’ association actively promote the town centre and organise a number of events, including Christmas late night shopping.

There is competition and choice. For example, there are two butchers and others selling meat products; and similar competition applies to most of the other traders. There is a weekly Tuesday market. Large supermarkets are within reach of most people. 200 metres from the town centre there is a Co-op store and it is just 5 miles to Sainsburys in Matlock and 8 miles to Morrisons at Belper; both towns are on main bus routes from Wirksworth. There is also a Sainsburys at Ashbourne, 9 miles away, and all three of those towns have Co-op stores.

However, there are problems which need addressing by positive action. The following paragraphs discuss them under four headings: Retail; Market; Tarmac; Parking.

There has recently been a decline in the proportion of shops providing for "day-to-day needs", selling the sort of goods which people require to feed or clothe themselves. Day-to-day shops both attract local people to frequent the town centre on a weekly or daily basis and contribute to our other main theme of becoming a low carbon town by keeping down the necessity of travelling out of town to shop.
7.3.3 There is an increasing range of excellent artists’ outlets, gift shops, antique shops and cafes. Such shops service local shoppers and boost the tourist offer but Wirksworth will cease to be what it is if the number and choice of day-to-day shops is not maintained or increased.

7.3.4 Nationally, the proportion of independent shops is reducing and being replaced by chains. All our shops are small; the largest (Ken’s supermarket) has about 100 m² retail floorspace (gross, 200 m²). Whilst they do compete for trade amongst themselves and with the Co-op store, their size makes them vulnerable to competition. The plan cannot assume that national chains will not arrive in Wirksworth town centre but it can take positive measures to support our independent traders.

7.3.5 The local businesses provide a living for the shopkeepers and staff and are the main contributors to a fantastic social ambience for local people and visitors but there is evidence that profit margins are not high. For example, in August 2013, the town’s traditional bakery, which appeared to be popular and successful, closed and became a dwelling-house because, according to the baker / shopkeeper, it was trading at a loss. There is therefore concern that, given a small downturn in local trade, our treasured variety and character could be lost.

7.3.6 It is important to understand that, in seeking to retain the town centre’s character, the Town Council does not want to inhibit necessary change. For example, it may be necessary to press for better access to the shops for older and less able people, even though that may conflict with the highest building conservation ideals. This will be a Town Council Action Point.

Market

7.3.7 The Tuesday market, once prosperous and popular, currently has just seven regular traders and sometimes only three. The district council’s Town Centre Study provides evidence that improvements to the range of goods sold and to the market stalls themselves would persuade people to visit the town centre more regularly. The market is sited on the town’s most central car park, which reduces spaces available to those shoppers who need to drive into town.

Appearance of town centre

7.3.8 Central Wirksworth is composed of characterful buildings set in an historic street pattern but is to some extent spoilt by the appearance of the streetscape (that is, by the poor quality of the space between buildings at street level) and its usability.

7.3.9 The visual coherence and overall character of the town centre is undermined by the inconsistent and unattractive appearance of the vehicular and pedestrian pavements of the town centre, where areas of black tarmac are mixed with sections of historic stone paving. The tarmac areas mainly serve vehicular traffic and parking. Signage, street furniture and the clutter of service providers, such as control boxes for electrical equipment, are untidy, having been provided piecemeal and apparently without thought for shoppers and others using the town centre. Much could be done to improve the appearance of the area.

Usability of the streets

7.3.10 Narrow or very narrow footways occur in some areas, most notably in the pinch
point between the Hope and Anchor PH and Weston’s electrical shop where footway width allows pedestrians to walk only in single file on each side of the road with vehicular traffic between. Accidents happen when pedestrians are forced onto the road or large vehicles oversail the footway. Road junctions on Coldwell Street and the Market Place are wide, forming significant barriers to the free flow of pedestrians. Ironically, one of the narrowest sections of road and busiest of footways, close to the pinch point, hosts an important loading point for local shops.

**Packing**

7.3.11 Our consultations have revealed that many Wirksworth residents, shoppers, workers and shopkeepers, believe that there is insufficient parking space in the town. Indeed, in our survey of local traders, parking was revealed to be the main issue. With the proposed extension of the Co-op store on Harrison Drive and the additional parking provision for the store customers, which is on the side of the store remote from the town centre, car borne shoppers are going to be tempted by the easy parking at the Co-op, possibly to the detriment of town centre shops.

7.3.12 A strategy to improve the way in which town centre car parks were used was put in place in the 1980’s, as part of the Wirksworth Project. Parking charges were introduced, partly to ensure that the town centre spaces in the Market Place and at Barmote Croft would be available for shoppers and not occupied by residents or town centre workers. Residents and town centre workers were found space to park in small-scale car parks on the perimeter of the town centre.

7.4. **ACTION TO ACHIEVE OUR AMBITION**

7.4.1 How can the plan deal with those problems, to ensure the continuation of a distinctive, independent town centre providing for day-to-day needs and contributing to local prosperity? This ambition can be achieved if the provisions of the local plan are successful and the following action is taken.

- Do more to retain the viability of our established independents.
- Provide more space for new traders to come into the town.
- Help to retain important community facilities in the town centre.
- Improve the Tuesday market and enable it to move to a new site.
- Improve the appearance and usability of the town centre streets.
- Maintain and increase car parking provision.

7.4.2 Those six things to do are discussed below, after a look at the local plan.

**Draft Derbyshire Dales Local Plan town centre and retail policies**

7.4.3 The Town Centre Study advised that the district council should:

- Plan for more and better quality food retail floor space in the town centre, in order to reduce the amount of food shopping that residents currently have to do in Matlock and elsewhere;
- Not seek an increase in the provision for non-food shopping; and
- Focus on protecting Wirksworth’s existing retail provision.

7.4.4 Because it appeared, at the time of preparing the draft, that there were no available sites in the town centre or “edge of centre” which might provide for a significant new food shop, the local plan does not provide for one.
7.4.5 The local plan’s retail and town centre policies set out a positive approach to protecting and enhancing town centres and a more negative approach, in line with national policy, to development which is outside town centres. They say that the district council will “maintain and where possible enhance the vitality and viability of town centres in accordance with their function, scale and development needs.” They require proposals for non-A1\textsuperscript{39} uses to be “complementary to adjacent shopping uses”.

7.4.6 Actions offered by the local plan to maintain and enhance the town centre’s vitality and viability include “resisting development elsewhere unless there are no sequentially preferable sites”. Actions also include creating attractive centres with a good range of shops, services and public spaces and promoting them as the “focus for retail, leisure and office development”.

7.4.7 The “resisting” of development elsewhere is not explained in detail in the local plan, so the NPPF policy is relevant. The NPPF requires that, for any proposal for a new shop outside town centres with a floor space of more than a certain size (“a proportionate, locally set floor space threshold”), there should be an assessment of its impact on the town centre. It would look at, amongst other things, the impact of the proposed new shop on “town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre”.

7.5 SIX THINGS TO DO

\textbf{Do more to maintain the viability of our established independents}

7.5.1 The draft local plan summarises the Town Centre Study but, because it is a district-wide plan, does not aim to address the specific Wirksworth problems discussed above. There is a need for more specific policies, including a Wirksworth-specific impact assessment. The distinctiveness of Wirksworth can be considerably enhanced if, at the same time as protecting its small independents from overwhelming competition, we can work towards major enhancements to the town centre.

7.5.2 The NPPF (see paragraph 7.4.7 above) offers a default floorspace of 2500m\textsuperscript{2} for triggering impact assessments. Of course, the NPPF has in mind town centres of all sizes. Because Wirksworth has a small town centre\textsuperscript{40} which already loses most of its trade to Matlock and other larger towns, 2500m\textsuperscript{2} is far too high a threshold. A proportionate threshold for Wirksworth should be equivalent to the largest existing shop in the town centre, which is less than 200m\textsuperscript{2} in size. Therefore, the neighbourhood plan sets the threshold at 200m\textsuperscript{2} (gross internal floorspace).

7.5.3 In order to assess the impact of the proposed new shop on consumer choice and trade (as advised by NPPF) and because Wirksworth’s special ‘offer’ is based on the number and variety of local, independent traders, the impact assessment should be able to show that the independent traders will not have to close as a direct consequence of the proposed new shop. The proposed policy would not require new floorspace to be refused because a particular trader might go out of business, which would be unreasonable and anti-competitive; it would require the applicant to show that the proposal for the new shop would not take up so much trade that there would be insufficient remaining for all the existing traders to continue in business.

7.5.4 Because such impacts might be caused by the development of a large new shop in the town centre, the policy would apply in that location also.

\textsuperscript{39} For the definition of A1 and other uses, see Evidence Document.

\textsuperscript{40} Less than 1/10 of the size of many shopping centres.
Provide more space for new traders to come into the town

7.5.5  The town centre study seeks more food retail floor space. Although the draft local plan does not provide for a significant new store in Wirksworth, there is scope for expanding the town’s unique ‘small shops’ offer. It is one of Wirksworth’s main attractions and could be enhanced by a variety of new shops selling all types of goods, food and non-food. Expanding the choice will help the ambition to be realised. Indeed, growth in choice as in most economies is necessary, to avoid a decline.

7.5.6  There are town centre properties situated outside the currently defined primary frontage which have been shops and could return to being so. Also there are some remaining shops and services in similar locations which, under current policies, would not be protected from change to other uses. To include them in the primary frontage would benefit the shopping offer and reduce the temptation to convert one’s low performing shop to residential. It is possible that an extensive primary frontage, preventing changes of use from retail, could lead to vacancies if shops are forced to close but then cannot find a new retailing replacement. However, because vacancy rates are low in Wirksworth, it is worth taking the risk. The policy, as with the rest of the plan, will be subject to continuous review.

7.5.7  Although vacancy rates are low at present, there will still be short periods when there are vacancies. To try to ensure that shop units do not remain empty at such times, which might affect the vitality of the town centre, and to foster community activity, the plan includes a policy which enables temporary changes of use to non-retail. The policy would set a maximum period of six months. In some cases, the operator may wish to continue the use after the six months. At that time it will be possible to see whether the use is harming the town centre’s vitality and viability, the wider visitor experience or local residential amenities; if it is not, that may be justification for the local planning authority to grant permanent permission.

Help to retain important community facilities in the town centre.

7.5.8  Facilities such as a post office, pharmacy and library are important elements in Wirksworth’s town centre offer. The neighbourhood plan includes them in Policy NP9 as community facilities needing protection.

Improve the Tuesday market and enable it to move to a new site.

7.5.9  If the Tuesday market was to move it would free up the town centre car park. There is a credible alternative location. On St John’s Street at the Memorial Gardens and Memorial Hall, a farmers’ market takes place once a month on Saturday mornings. St John’s Street is quite wide at that point. The farmers’ market has attractive stalls and 14 or more traders. Whilst the traders’ cars and vans do take up space, they do not occupy the 30 central spaces which the Tuesday market currently uses.

7.5.10  The Memorial Hall and adjoining former cinema (Stone’s building) have potential for redevelopment, which may take place early in the plan period. Redevelopment could affect the potential for moving the

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41 The primary frontage is entirely within the conservation area and therefore there is no permitted development to convert to residential use.
market. It should address the possibility of having a market as its neighbour. However, because the idea of moving the market is in its infancy, this plan is not able to impose any relevant policy requirements on the redevelopment.

7.5.11 The town council and other agencies will investigate the potential for moving the Tuesday market to the St John's Street location or to another town centre location if that proves to be preferable. This will be a Town Council Action Point but, in addition, the neighbourhood plan should have a policy enabling the move in case any planning permissions are necessary.

7.5.12 The Town Council Action Points include seeking opportunities to re-invigorate our existing market, drawing together the interests and characteristics of the town, such as local food production, arts and crafts, second-hand goods and fairtrade, to produce a more varied and vibrant series of markets. The town council will engage the district council and other agencies in the development and promotion of a markets plan and timetable, including the regular Tuesday and farmers' markets and arts and crafts, bric-a-brac and second-hand markets, and will investigate providing pop-up market stalls. It will aim to support local food production and use the market for promotion of community groups and facilities. It will also consider whether there is potential for a parking policy for traders which might permit them to park on yellow lines and on St John's Street.

**Improve the appearance and usability of town centre streets**

7.5.13 Much could be done to improve the usability of the town centre whilst at the same time improving its appearance. The most attractive proposition is a shared surface scheme along The Market Place, St John's Street, West End and Coldwell Street. In such schemes, the street is available to pedestrians and vehicles so that, although still separated from one another, pedestrians have priority over vehicles.

7.5.14 In Wirksworth, a shared surface approach would overcome the main obstacle to improving the pedestrian/traffic relationship, which is the narrowness of the road and the pedestrian pavements at the pinch point and at some of the entries into the town centre. It would also enable a completely fresh look at the road junctions, speed limits, the road surface materials and the street furniture. It would improve pedestrian and cyclists’ ease of movement and safety along and across the street, discourage unnecessary HGV journeys through the town and improve the legibility, use, visual coherence and character of Wirksworth’s historic shopping centre.

7.5.15 Other possibilities for improving the usability and appearance of the town centre include:

- Widening pedestrian pavements;
- Reducing traffic speed by design alterations to the highways and/or speed reduction measures;
- Introducing an access-only weight restriction;
- Changing the surface materials in key areas;
- Rationalising signage and reviewing the type and distribution of street furniture;
- Improving disabled access to the town centre and shops.

7.5.16 Those will be Town Council Action Points but if the shared surface scheme or any of the other possibilities proves to be workable and is found to require planning permission for all or part, Policy NP 21 will enable it.

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42 See the Evidence Document for further information about shared surface schemes.
**Improve and increase parking provision**

7.5.17 It is essential that the existing car parks, particularly in the way that they provide for residents, workers and shoppers in a variety of accessible locations, should be retained. It is also essential to provide additional parking spaces with easy access to the town centre shops. It may be possible to make more provision by redesigning or re-marking the existing car parks but it seems that there is only one potential site for a significant number of additional spaces.

7.5.18 The site is at Wood Street and Canterbury Road, adjoining an existing public car park. It is currently used partly as the garden of a private house and partly as private garages. It is clear from the layout of the site and from ordnance survey maps that the area which is now garden once gave access to the garages.

7.5.19 The Wood Street site would link very well with the proposed southwards extension of the town centre's primary frontage (in policy NP 19). Whilst it is not immediately available for car parking, it should be protected from any other form of development, so that eventually in the plan period it can provide additional parking with good accessibility to the town centre.

**Policy NP18**  
*Impact policy (viability of established independent traders)*

1. This policy applies to proposals anywhere in the neighbourhood plan area for retail development exceeding 200 m² gross retail floorspace.

2. All planning applications for new retail floorspace exceeding 200 m² must be accompanied by an impact assessment. The impact assessment must show that there is sufficient expenditure in the town centre (or that there will be sufficient clawback of expenditure which is currently leaving Wirksworth) for existing traders who sell similar goods to those of the proposed new floorspace to be able to continue trading when the new floorspace is operational. Permission will be granted only if the impact assessment satisfactorily shows sufficient expenditure.

**Policy NP19**  
*Primary frontage policy (space for new traders)*

1. The primary shopping frontage is defined on the proposals map, replacing the defined area in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.

2. Within the primary shopping frontage, permission will be granted for the temporary change of use (six months maximum) of empty shops to small business, community or organised events but only if the temporary use will not have significant harmful impacts on the wider visitor experience or on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

**Policy NP20**  
*Tuesday market policy*

1. Permission will be granted for proposals to improve and expand the Tuesday market.

2. Permission will be granted for proposals to relocate the Tuesday market to another location in the town centre but only if the relocation is likely to improve or expand the market.
Policy NP21
Pedestrian/traffic relationship in town centre
Planning permission will be granted for developments which enable the implementation of a scheme to improve the pedestrian/traffic relationship in Wirksworth town centre whilst enhancing the special character of the area.

Policy NP22
Protecting existing car parks
Planning permission will not be granted for developments which would replace the existing car parks at Canterbury Road, The Market Place, West End, Rydes Yard, The Dale, Barmote Croft, North End and Old Lane unless alternative provision is made for the car parking needs of the dwellings, businesses and visitors which they serve, which will include as a minimum:

1. The alternative provision must be made in the immediate vicinity.
2. The alternative provision must offer the same or better levels of accessibility and number of parking spaces.
   If such provision is not made, permission will be refused.

Policy NP23
Canterbury Road car park site
The land at Wood Street and Canterbury Road shown on the Proposals Map should not be developed for any purpose other than a town centre car park. Planning permission for any other form of development will be refused.

7.6 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS
- To take action to improve the quality and variety of Wirksworth markets. In particular, the council will consider how to improve the Tuesday market and whether to move its location. The council will also engage the district council and other agencies in the development and promotion of the markets.
- To lobby for better car parking provision in the town centre.
- To find ways of improving the pedestrian/traffic relationship in the town centre and, in particular, to consider a shared surface scheme.
- To find ways of improving disabled access to the town centre and shops, which is constrained by listed building and conservation policy.
CHAPTER 8, explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan policies can be delivered.

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION
The Wirksworth Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented through a combination of planning decisions by Derbyshire Dales District Council and action by Wirksworth Town Council, landowners, developers, highways and utilities providers and local people.

8.2 WIRKSWORTH TOWN COUNCIL
Wirksworth Town Council, the local council responsible for the plan area, will play its part in implementation in the following ways.

- The town council will agree a programme for pursuing the Town Council Action Points which are listed in the neighbourhood plan. That programme will be called “Wirksworth Town Plan”. It will take several years to implement because there are many action points, most of which will need the involvement of a number of agencies. Some will require the raising of substantial funds.

- The town council will use the neighbourhood plan as its main reference point when it is passing its comments on planning applications to the local planning authority.

8.3 HOW EACH OF THE POLICIES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED
- Policy NP1
Setting and shape of settlement
- Policy NP2
Development within the settlement

8.3.1 These policies do not identify land for development. They set criteria for all development. They are an extension of draft local plan policies and will be applied by the local planning authority in the same way.

- Policy NP3
Space standards for new homes
- Policy NP5
Energy-saving standards for new dwellings

8.3.2 These policies do not identify land for development. They establish standards for residential development. In addition to the cost of site preparation and other costs normally associated with residential development, the main factors affecting the viability of homes which are built to reach these standards are likely to be: government policy; the appeal to purchasers; and the state of the housing market.

8.3.3 Government policy
On matters such as energy-saving and a low-carbon economy, government policy, as expressed in government policy documents, through the building regulations and in special schemes such as government-funded grants, directly influences the minimum standards which developers incorporate into the homes they build. Government policy changes over time, tending to reflect the aspirations of a more affluent society and usually becoming more demanding rather than less demanding of developers. At present (September 2014), the ultimate standard set by Neighbourhood Plan Policy NP5 (CSH Level 6) is equivalent to the standard that the government is seeking to achieve. The Evidence and Explanations Document submitted with this plan discusses this matter further.

8.3.4 The appeal to purchasers
People are becoming more aware of the costs of energy in their homes and the environmental impact of using energy. There is also a tendency for people to need
more space in their homes, rather than less. Improving standards in both these regards therefore improves the marketability of new development. If this plan’s Quality and Character policies are implemented successfully new homes will also be more characteristic and saleable and therefore, even with higher building costs due to these policies, an attractive proposition for developers.

8.3.5 The state of the housing market
House prices usually go up, but not always. Until a site and its development potential are addressed by an applicant and the local planning authority, it will not be possible to say whether the cost of dwellings built to the neighbourhood plan standards can be profitably covered by the price at which they might sell. A recent feasibility study of the Middleton Road site had to assume several different housing market scenarios.

8.3.6 Conclusion
The requirements which the policies set are achievable. To ensure that they do not prevent the essential growth of the town, the policies provide flexibility, giving developers the opportunity to show that the requirements of the policies at a particular time would make their development unviable.

- Policy NP4
Principal residence homes

8.3.7 Dwellings which are used as holiday homes and second homes are usually built as principal residence homes. The attachment of a condition to maintain their principal purpose is likely to make little difference to the price or viability of the new development. Similar policies are in use elsewhere, for example in the Lynton and Lynmouth Neighbourhood Plan (Housing Policy 3). The policy will be implemented by the local planning authority every time it grants permission for a dwelling. The Evidence and Explanations Document explains why the condition serves a valid planning purpose and is necessary for the social wellbeing of the community.

- Policy NP6
Providing for new community facilities
- Policy NP7
Providing for new sports facilities

These policies make no extra demands on developers. Instead, they indicate our priorities for the expenditure to which developers will already be committed. This policy will be implemented as and when development takes place and funds (commuted sums) are available and the development of new community and sports facilities might be hastened by the proposed Wirksworth Town Plan.

- Policy NP8
New play provision
- Policy NP10
Allotments
- Policy NP11
Overnight accommodation and Tourism developments
- Policy NP12
Provision for new and small businesses
- Policy NP15
(Energy-saving) Upgrading existing buildings
- Policy NP16
Renewable energy developments
- Policy NP17
Provision for pedestrians and cyclists (paragraphs 3 and 4 of the policy)

These policies do not require development to take place nor do they directly protect sites from other forms of development. They will be implemented as and when funds are available or sites are found. The development of those sites which are not in public ownership will depend on the attitude of the owner. The policies will help the owner to see a green light towards planning permission. Implementation of the policies might also be hastened by
the proposed Wirksworth Town Plan and by positive action by their owners and/or partners of the town council.

- **Policy NP9**
  Loss of existing facilities

- **Policy NP22**
  Protecting existing car parks

8.3.10 Our local community facilities will be kept in their current uses except in circumstances permitted by the policies of the local plan and the neighbourhood plan. Unfortunately, in some cases, permitted development rights might permit change in conflict with the policies. It may be necessary for the local planning authority to withdraw some of those rights.

- **Policy NP13**
  Parish Rooms work hub

8.3.11 This policy identifies the site for a specific change of use and restricts other changes. It will be implemented by the owners, who favour the neighbourhood plan proposal to use the site as a work hub, and by the local planning authority when granting planning permission. The owners may seek grant aid to facilitate the development.

- **Policy NP14**
  Energy-saving standards for non-residential developments

8.3.12 There are 200,000 buildings across Europe which are built to BREEAM standards, many to the "Excellent" standard. There is much evidence that industrial and commercial buildings sell better and command higher rents if they have a BREEAM certification because companies can be confident of the quality, energy efficiency and comfort of the buildings and often consider that the certification enhances their reputation. The "Good" standard is not too challenging, being probably slightly higher than existing building regulations (it is not possible directly to compare the two standards).

Therefore, the standards in the policy are likely to be achievable.

- **Policy NP17**
  Provision for pedestrians and cyclists (paragraphs 1, 2 and 5 of the policy)

8.3.13 Although these paragraphs have the potential to impose burdens on developments whose main purpose is not to provide for pedestrians and cyclists, they do not require the developer to carry out any works off-site. Paragraph 2 will normally be quite easily implemented through straightforward provision in the design of the site layout. Paragraph 5 requires the development to accommodate and/or improve footpaths and cycle routes. Accommodation of public footpaths is a normal, legal requirement and is usually achievable without great difficulty. Paragraph 5 will normally impose similar, minor burdens. These paragraphs of the policy will also be implemented by the decisions of the local planning authority and by the efforts of the town council through the Wirksworth Town Plan.

- **Policy NP18**
  Retail impact & viability policy

- **Policy NP19**
  Primary frontage policy

8.3.14 These policies are entirely dependent for their implementation on the planning decisions of the local planning authority, in consultation with others, including Wirksworth Town Council. However, the effects of the policies will depend on other factors, including the successful implementation of the other town centre policies of the local plan, the neighbourhood plan (policies NP21, 22, 23&24) and the Wirksworth Town Plan (carrying through the Town Council Action Points).
8.3.15 These are primarily enabling policies which depend for their implementation on the planning decisions of the local planning authority and on the hard work and cooperation of local traders, Wirksworth Town Council, local landowners and statutory agencies. If the effort is not made, the overall purpose of the policies will not be achieved. The associated Town Council Action Points will be high priorities in the Wirksworth Town Plan. Policy NP23 limits what the landowners may do with their properties. Because they at present have not said that they have early plans to change the current situation, it is unlikely that the positive side of the policy (use as car park) will be implemented immediately. This is a plan for the long-term as well as the short term and it is probable that, by preventing development for other purposes, the policy will be implemented during the plan period.

8.4 TOWN COUNCIL ACTION POINTS WHICH ARE TO BE INCORPORATED IN A NEW WIRKSWORTH TOWN PLAN

The following box contains the complete list of the action points described in the topic chapters.

Social sustainability and housing
- To foster housing diversity, e.g. set up a Community Land Trust.
- To enter into a dialogue with the local estate agents about not advertising properties as ideal for holiday lets.

Community well-being
- To work towards the provision of a youth centre or other youth facility, perhaps linked to existing youth provision such as the skate park.
- To work towards the new sports facilities which the sports group say are needed.
- To make or help to facilitate new play provision where it is lacking.
- To be vigilant towards loss of community facilities and discuss with the local planning authority the removal of development rights in appropriate cases.
- To consider whether to seek the registration as Assets of Community Value of some or all the protected facilities and spaces.
- To find ways of providing allotments.
- To support our schools in maintaining their high standards of academic achievement and personal development and to help find ways of providing for new education provision when needed.
- To keep a watching brief on policy changes in health and to be active in supporting the Hannage Brook Medical Practice and other local health service providers, especially as more community based services develop.
Tourism
- Coordination of tourism information and calendar of events.
- To help marketing through Destination Wirksworth.

Economy
- To provide incentives for start-ups.
- To encourage apprenticeship and education.
- To encourage self-build, with training.
- To provide for training facilities in employment developments.
- To work with the owners of Haarlem Mill, Middleton Road, Willowbath Mill, Stones Builders, Station Yard, Parish Rooms and Mountains Yard to try to provide workspaces for small-scale manufacturing, local construction and refurbishment and the creative industries.

Energy
- To work with local people and relevant bodies to find ways of encouraging energy-saving improvements to the existing building stock.

Transport and movement
- Investigating a variety of options for improving the town centre, as described in Chapter 7.
- Additional parking provision in both the centre and some residential parts of Wirksworth and in Bolehill.
- Provision for pedestrians and cyclists: enabling the improvements, links and routes on the Proposals Map. Providing secure cycle stands, etc.
- Improving bus routes and provision, particularly to the villages.
- Prevention of parking on pedestrian pavements.
- The widening of pedestrian pavements in various parts of the plan area.
- Routes for quarry traffic and/or access-only weight limits.
- Investigate potential for linking railway station with Carsington Water.
- Investigate potential for linking railway station with High Peak Trail via Old Lane.
- In addition to the policies affecting new development, the town council will pursue with the county council and district council opportunities to improve existing, inadequate pedestrian and cycle links.

Town centre
- To take action to improve the quality and variety of Wirksworth markets. In particular, the Council will consider how to improve the Tuesday market and whether to move its location. The council will also engage the district council and other agencies in the development and promotion of the markets.
- To lobby for better car parking provision in the town centre.
- To find ways of improving the pedestrian/traffic relationship in the town centre and, in particular, to consider a shared surface scheme.
- To find ways of improving disabled access to the town centre and shops, which is constrained by listed building and conservation policy.