

**WORKING WITH THE
SOUTH WEST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY under the
MARKET & COASTAL TOWN INITIATIVE**

MA2K Chairman: Sue Sewell

Vice Chairman: Kevin Venison

**A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR
SOUTH MOLTON TOWN AND PARISHES
TO THE YEAR 2023**

***From a rich past –
a bright future***

**Prepared by the Market & Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group within
Molton Area 2000**

Version 1.0 - December 2003



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Chairman's Comments

This is the South Molton Market & Coastal Town Initiative's Strategic Action Plan.

The Market and Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group was made up of members from South Molton and the surrounding Parishes following the inaugural meeting in South Molton in July 2001. Since April 2003 the work of the Steering Group has been continued by the Management Board of Molton Area 2000, a Company Limited by Guarantee whose remit is to deliver the regeneration programme for the South Molton area.

As Chairman of both the Market and Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group and Molton Area 2000, I have been privileged to work with so many people, all sharing the common aim of encouraging social and economic regeneration of our market town and its district. Under the banner of the MCTI we have a marvellous opportunity for rural regeneration.

It is important to recognise the hard work of the volunteers who have given their time on the Market and Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group and Molton Area 2000 Management Board as well as those who have been co-opted and freely given their invaluable advice, time and expertise. Thanks to you all. Most members of the group have not been involved in this type of Community Planning before. We have therefore relied on expertise of the District and County Council's in gathering information and assisting us. Many thanks to them all, especially to Jan Kennedy of Community Development Unit, North Devon District Council. Thanks also to the numerous organisations in the town including the Town Council who have given much support and to the South Molton community who have participated fully in bringing their ideas to the plan.

The future of South Molton looks very positive –

From a rich past to a bright future

Sue Sewell - October 2003

MP's Comments

This Strategic Action Plan is the culmination of several years of hard work on the part of many people in South Molton and the surrounding area. It expresses the hopes and aspirations of the community for the next couple of decades. And it sets out to capitalise on the available sources of public funding – supported by the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative – to help make those plans become a reality.

South Molton is rightly proud of its history and tradition as a market town. And, despite the fast-changing shape of livestock marketing, I firmly believe that there will continue to be a need for a modern and efficient market in North Devon indefinitely. With Barnstaple's market now closed, South Molton is the obvious place to host that modern facility, and it is essential to the town's future that this be located out of the town centre. This will free up the existing market site for a range of new uses, and also be more accessible for farmers and traders transporting animals from the whole of North Devon and further afield. So I am right behind the plan to put a new market alongside the A361 link road.

The plan also identifies correctly the lack of facilities for youngsters in South Molton, as well as the limited economic opportunities for young people to find work, build careers and prosper without having to leave the area. Liaising with young people as to what facilities they want is the key, and the plans to build a new centre, a skate park and to improve sporting and recreational amenities seem to me to be on the right lines – and of the highest importance.

Economic regeneration, including business and marketing strategies, increasing the supply of housing, and improving transport links are the necessary ingredients for future prosperity – and complete the ambitious programmes set out here.

I am confident that this plan points the way forward to a brighter future for South Molton and the many parishes which look to it as their focal point. If the partnerships which have been formed in creating the plan can grow, and rise to the challenge of implementing it over the years to come, then I believe it will come to be looked back on as a crucial turning point in South Molton's fortunes.

Nick Harvey
MP for North Devon

2.0 Executive Summary

2.1 Background

South Molton was historically famous for its wool trade, with agriculture and tourism playing a big part in its economy. The economy of the town was stagnating and it was hit badly by the Foot & Mouth outbreak from February 2001. In recognition of this, South Molton was selected as one of the 9 Devon towns to take part in the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI), an opportunity given to us by the South West Regional Development Agency (SWERDA). The MCTI process began in July 2001 and built on work previously done by the community group, MA2K, as described below. It included South Molton and 25 surrounding parishes. The Steering Group held a series of Community Consultation events later in the year to identify the Vision, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and key issues for the area. It then established seven 'issue' action groups to develop the ideas expressed at the Community events. It wrote its Constitution and developed the local organisation Molton Area 2000 (MA2K) into a Company Limited by Guarantee in order to become its accountable body.

Our MCTI Strategic Action Plan is developed by bringing together previous work of Molton Area 2000, national, regional and local regeneration strategies and partnership working involving public, private and voluntary sectors and the community itself.

Through our healthcheck we established base data to enable us to recognise our strengths and weaknesses, our location being one of our strongest points and lack of facilities for young people one of our weakest.

From this we gave our vision:

To encourage social and economic regeneration of the Market Town in such a way to exploit our uniqueness, environment and heritage and to improve the quality of life of those who live, work, play and visit for Today and Tomorrow

The Action Plan outlines a programme of development including, as a first priority, the relocation of the Livestock Market from the town centre to Pathfields Business Park, thus freeing up the central area for future development. This area is known as the Central Development Area. The Plan also seeks to offer outreach services to the hinterland of South Molton and will, in particular, support Community Groups by building capacity and support villages in the Vital Villages' programme. Working with the Chamber of Trade, the company will establish a strategy for the economic development of the area.

2.2 Maps

The maps on the following pages show:

1. North Devon showing South Molton as the hub of the rural hinterland
2. The South Molton Market and Coastal Town Initiative hinterland
3. South Molton Town
4. The Central Development Area (CDA)
5. Pathfields Business Park

Map 1



Map 2



Map 3



Map 4 – To Follow

Map 5



2.3 Thematic Objectives

In order to achieve the vision, the following thematic objectives have been developed:

1. To develop the infrastructure of the area such that it is capable of supporting the planned development and to enhance the provision of good quality affordable housing in the area
2. To improve the economy of the area by production of a Small Business Strategy, an 'Image-based' Marketing Strategy and the expansion of Pathfields Industrial Estate. This also looks at the skills of the people of the area to ensure that they meet the demands of the local economy both for the present and future development and encouraging full employment
3. To improve transport services by provision of an integrated transport plan covering commercial, private, public and sustainable transport and encouraging access to services and employment for the town and hinterland
4. To enhance the magnificent heritage of the town and encourage their use by complementary development. To bring sporting, recreational and cultural facilities to the community
5. To achieve integrated development of the town centre with all other projects and policies
6. To improve services and facilities for young people, including provision of a youth resource centre and a skateboard park and to improve and expand community facilities that are capable of servicing the current and future development in a holistic manner
7. To deliver the regeneration programme in a co-ordinated manner through MA2K, a town centre co-ordinator and promotion of community participation at all stages

A series of projects have been identified to achieve these objectives. These have been prioritised and are at varying stages of development.

2.4 Themes and Projects identified

Priority	INFRASTRUCTURE	ECONOMY & SKILLS	TRAFFIC & SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	HERITAGE & RECREATION	CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT AREA (CDA)	YOUTH & COMMUNITY	DELIVERING THE PLAN
One	<p>Increase capacity of water, drainage and sewage system</p> <p>Carry out housing needs survey</p> <p>Relocate medical centre</p>	<p>Produce short-term Small Business Strategy including</p> <p>Produce Marketing Strategy</p> <p>Align business and marketing strategies to meet regional and national schemes</p> <p>Provide incubation business units/ managed workspace with business support provision</p> <p>Relocate or close Livestock Market</p> <p>Support skill development in rural areas</p>	<p>Carry out traffic assessment</p> <p>Relocate lorry park</p> <p>Improve cycle and walking routes</p> <p>Improve traffic flow around town</p> <p>Produce car parking strategy</p>	<p>Investigate use of existing buildings including Pannier Market/Town Hall complex</p> <p>Carry out Conservation Area Character Assessment</p>	<p>Complete land assembly map</p> <p>Determine optimum layout for central car park/existing Square areas</p> <p>Investigate 'Designing Out Crime'</p> <p>Investigate gateway entrances to town</p> <p>Manage the supermarket process</p>	<p>Provide Skateboard park</p> <p>Provide temporary youth base</p> <p>Identify needs and possible relocation sites for Community Facilities</p>	<p>Employ town centre co-ordinator</p> <p>Improve communication and information exchange</p> <p>Develop MA2K to deliver regeneration and as trading company</p> <p>Establish monitoring/ evaluation data</p>

South Molton Market and Coastal Town Initiative

Two	<p>Provide adequate housing</p> <p>Provide adequate affordable housing</p> <p>Improve Public Convenience provision</p> <p>Investigate and implement District Heating system</p>	<p>Relocate Tourist Information Centre</p> <p>Investigate Broadband provision</p> <p>Research commercial property needs</p>	<p>Provide coach / bus setdown point in central carpark area / Relocate school bus stops</p> <p>Provide sufficient car parking spaces</p>	<p>Carry out feasibility study into improved sports provision including: swimming pool, community college and football club</p> <p>Relocate museum and archive</p>	<p>Relocate police station to town centre location</p> <p>Improve pedestrian linkages</p> <p>Relocate recycling operations</p> <p>Provide rear servicing routes</p>	<p>Relocate library</p> <p>Relocate Community Information Centre</p> <p>Relocate town and district council offices</p>	<p>Improve community skills (capacity building)</p> <p>Work with surrounding parishes to develop parish plans</p>
Three	<p>Build new Junior School</p> <p>Extend community woodlands</p>	<p>Provide sufficient IT access/training facilities</p> <p>Investigate and develop Skills & Training needs</p> <p>Utilise community projects to influence local USP</p>	<p>Investigate alternative freight routing</p>	<p>Provide arts and leisure facilities</p> <p>Extend green space provision including safe play areas</p>		<p>Provide youth resource centre</p>	
Four		<p>Provide vocational training based on local employment</p> <p>Provide transferable/core skills training</p>				<p>Provide additional Facilities for the Elderly</p> <p>Provide sufficient facilities for Under-5s/after school clubs</p>	
Five		<p>Provide for investment opportunities</p>					

2.5 Delivering the projects

The Plan outlines the steps in the process to deliver the projects within the regeneration programme. The process of development and action planning is not a static one and ongoing consultation and discussion will take place to further refine and develop project ideas. This will include consultations with professionals associated with the specific projects regarding content and costings, local residents in parishes and, in particular, young people who will be involved in the development of youth provision.

The MCTI steering group has come under the umbrella of Molton Area 2000, a community association open to membership, and thus accountable to, anyone resident or working in the South Molton area.

A Project Co-ordinator will be required to ensure projects are delivered and a process for monitoring progress will be developed. Finally, in relation to the next steps, the Plan outlines arrangements for the Brokering Table. This is a crucial part of the process for the South Molton Market and Coastal Town Initiative as it brings together some of the key regional partners and funding providers that can support the development of the Action Plan.

Work carried out by the South Molton MCTI group has underpinned earlier work by Molton Area 2000, which has been in existence since 1997. In this time both MA2K and the MCTI group have come to a better understanding of the needs of the area, have developed the skills to interpret the needs into real projects and the ability to engage with key stakeholders so they understand the benefits of such projects. The group is now ready to move onto the next phase of development and implementation of its Action Plan and calls on the support of other people and organisations with an interest in South Molton and its hinterland – people who are living, working and volunteering along with potential funding providers for the regeneration of the area.

3.0 The Plan

3.1 The Community Facing Change

South Molton is an ancient market town, noted for its elegant Georgian buildings, its markets and its woollen industry. It is 11 miles from Barnstaple, 18 miles from Tiverton, and 28 miles from Exeter. During the 16th century and 17th century it was granted royal charters to hold both cattle and produce markets. The town's population rose steadily during the 18th and 19th centuries until it reached its peak in the 1850's with 5000 people. During this time, South Molton was a flourishing woollen and coaching town.

Whites Directory of 1850 describes the town thus:

The principal streets are spacious and well paved, and contain several good inns and neat public buildings, and many handsome and well stocked shops... The soil is generally fertile and well cultivated, and rises in bold undulations from the river Mole on the east, and the Bray on the west. The Mole, from which the town has its name, gives motion to several woollen and corn mills.

The town has several wool combing establishments, and was formerly noted for the manufacture of serges, shalloons, and pelts. There is still one large woollen mill in the parish, employing about 150 hands; and in the neighbourhood are several other coarse woollen factories, and quarries of limestone, flagstones, &c. In the north part of the parish is a lead mine, which yields a considerable portion of silver.

The town is rich in traditional architecture and a town trail directs visitors to the main points of interest including the award-winning town museum and two fine churches. More recently the town has developed a reputation for its antique shops, fine arts and crafts and its selection of local produce, particularly honey and luxurious chocolates both made within the town. The current main employment activities within the town are the medium sized manufacturing companies, agricultural outlets and a range of retail and other services. There is an above average number of small to medium enterprises including many sole traders or partnerships.

The South Molton area covers 26 parishes, either side of South Molton, and from Exmoor to Chulmleigh. A 'Healthcheck' shows key statistics for the South Molton Rural Area (which covers Bishops Nympton, Chittlehampton, Chulmleigh, North Molton, South Molton and Witheridge wards) to include:

- A gently increasing population, which in 2001 was approximately 13,700 (up from 13300 in 1991), although this is due to increase through new development identified in the Local Plan, First Deposit to 2011, which shows an increase over five hundred new homes.
- The main employment sector within the area is agriculture with an estimated 17% (North Devon 10.4%, England & Wales 2%);
- 56% of households within the area have an income of less than £15,000 per year (England & Wales 43%).

3.2 The MCTI process in South Molton

A Regeneration Initiative has been running for eight years and has already had a number of events and some projects are underway. An appraisal was undertaken in 1997 and more of the Healthcheck has been completed. However, to date, most of the projects are focussed on the South Molton area, being the service centre for the area. The Management Board has been established which is managing the MCTI and this consists of 18 people drawn from private, public and voluntary sector organisations with people co-opted for their specialist skills. The MCTI process consolidates the previous work of Molton Area 2000, the needs and aspirations of the community and the work of statutory agencies driving the programme of change.

3.3 Drivers for Change

There are many factors driving the change agenda, including:

- The Devon Structure Plan and in turn the North Devon Local Plan to the year 2011, allocate over five hundred new homes to South Molton town, as well as further allocations in many of the parishes within the MCTI area. This generates the need for improvements to infrastructure, employment opportunities, health provision and community facilities
- The South Molton MCTI area is predominantly rural with a large percentage of inhabitants employed in the agricultural sector. The decline in the sector produces a need for alternative employment opportunities along with associated skill requirements. Accessibility is also an issue for the rural parishes
- Similarly, lack of opportunities and low income is producing a widening gap between salaries and housing affordability, resulting in a gradual migration of Young People out of the area, and especially the parishes. There is a need for new employment opportunities, promoting local talent and helping new and existing businesses
- Following the closure of livestock markets during the Foot and Mouth outbreak of 2001, several markets were unable to recover. SWeRDA commissioned a report recommending strategic sites for livestock markets in the South West, one of which was identified as South Molton. Public consultation supported the relocation of the town centre market to an out of town location at Pathfields Business Park
- A report produced on behalf of North Devon District Council on retail provision in North Devon recommends a medium sized supermarket for South Molton town. MA2K and NDDC have been in talks with prospective retailers and their plans will be incorporated into the Central Development Area. The Disability Discrimination Act will bring pressures for community facilities to be accessible by all by October 2004. Whilst it allows for dispensations where it is not practical, MA2K is working with the South Molton Access Group to upgrade facilities as widely as possible

3.4 Setting Priorities

When setting priorities for project delivery within the Action Plan, the drivers for change are influenced by other factors:

- It is important that project priorities are not funding led, but projects are more likely to succeed where funding is available or potentially available. This includes funding for up-front at risk costs, which may be lost if a project is proved not to be feasible. Timing of funding availability can influence priorities, especially where partners and funding providers are working to different financial time-scales
- Molton Area 2000 management board is able to facilitate project delivery, but a person or organisation must be identified to lead on the delivery of projects. Projects for which a project manager is identified may take a higher priority than one where no project leader is available
- Working in partnership with all stakeholders, priorities may change if partner organisations have conflicting priorities
- Community aspirations should not be a wish list; health-check data should reflect a need for the project and project evaluation used to show how delivery of the project has improved the situation

3.5 Achievements to Date

A lot has been achieved in the two years since the start of the MCTI process in the South Molton area. This has kick-started the regeneration process and allowed for closer working between the MA2K management board and members, the people of the community and public, private and voluntary organisations. Examples of the work carried out so far are:

Quick win projects including:

- Feasibility study into a Youth Resource Centre
- Business advice sessions for existing and potential small businesses
- Development of small business database
- Street furniture refurbishment and new dog litter bins
- Xmas brochure and lighting
- Pannier market display brackets
- Enhancement to the area around New Walk Steps

Capacity Building:

- Training sessions and workshops for community groups (e.g. Funding applications, motivating volunteers)
- Increase of skills of people in the community through involvement in project work
- Increase in publishing capacity and skills

Closer links with the community:

- Newsletters delivered to all stakeholders and majority of households
- Four page tabloid-style newspaper delivered to 6,600 households with consultation response tear-off section
- Exhibitions in South Molton pannier market on market day to enable face to face communication
- Exhibitions in South Molton, Chulmleigh and mobile libraries
- Regular updates to parishes via the South Molton Community Information Centre Newsletter
- MA2K membership for representatives of many community groups (Youth Strategy Group, Skateboard park group, Pathfields Business Forum, Chamber of Trade, U3A, Access Group etc)

Feasibility Studies:

- South Molton Regeneration Study
- Future of South Molton Livestock Market
- Youth Resource Centre
- Conservation Area Character Assessment

3.6 The Big Plan

This Strategic Action Plan forms the Business Plan for the future of South Molton. This could also be known as a 'Community Plan'. It aims to pull together all known elements of the regeneration and ensure this is not achieved by piecemeal development. It recognises, and is recognised by, members of the public, who have been constantly involved through consultation and supports the MCTI principle of holistic generation.

It aims to make South Molton self reliant, such that private investment is encouraged and return on investment will ensure future viability. Once the town centre plans are underway, the programme will continue to roll out to the hinterland.

3.7 The Projects in Detail

The following section describes more fully the themes and projects that make up the project plan, their inter-relationships, the expected outputs, outcomes and time scales, This is followed the full project plan showing responsibilities and time-scales.

3.8 Key Themes

There are six key themes to bring about the regeneration programme, along with a seventh designed to make the themes become a reality:

1. INFRASTRUCTURE

South Molton is expanding rapidly and the current infrastructure is not sufficient to support sustainable growth:

- There needs to be investment in the water supply and drainage and sewage systems in the town
- The Junior School has reached capacity and does not have easy access. Ideally the new Infants School, along with a new Junior School could be utilised to provide combined Primary Schools at either end of the town
- The current housing market situation is detrimental to Young People who wish to remain in the town and start families of their own. A housing needs survey would provide evidence to allow building of housing stock including sufficient affordable housing
- The Doctor's Surgeries in their current position are neither of a sufficient size nor accessibility for the people of the town and surrounding villages. A suitable site for relocation is being sought
- Overlying all projects is the desire to provide sustainable development including a district heating system. The sustainable housing development at Livarot Walk and the innovative South Molton Recycling Centre have paved the way for South Molton to become a flagship of Sustainable Development

2. ECONOMY AND SKILLS

Working with the South Molton Chamber of Trade, strategies are being developed for both the futures of Small Businesses and Marketing in the area:

- We are completing a database of all known small businesses in the area, and from this we are establishing what are the priorities and barriers to progress
- South Molton has been designated a satellite business start-up site for the Caddesdown Business Park and will provide short-

term lease premises along with business support to businesses which show they have the calibre to succeed

- Pathfields Business Park is developing to the capacity permitted under the Local Structure Plan and demand is high. A major element will be the relocation of the Livestock Market from its current town centre site to a site identified on Pathfields
- To ensure the long-term future of the area as a viable business option, it is paramount that Broadband is available
- To enable the economy to strengthen, and to provide year-round employment, skills of the workforce must be developed to meet the demands of employers. This includes hi-tech industries, traditional rural crafts and tradesmen
- We will encourage Lifelong Learning by ensuring access is available to basic and core skills, IT skills and continuing to include the University of the Third Age (U3A) in all consultation

3. TRAFFIC AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Whilst there are no major blockages or accident blackspots, there are issues that need to be addressed to enable the area to be made safer, cleaner and more accessible:

- A traffic survey is required to ascertain the extent of the problems
- There is a problem with freight vehicles travelling through the town centre. It is planned to move the central Lorry Park to Pathfields Business Park. Alternative routings for freight vehicles must also be investigated
- Areas of particular concern are the A361 junction at Bourners Bridge, the routing of freight vehicles through the village of Filleigh to the factory at Hill village and the A399 junction at Brayford. We are working with the County Council to find solutions or compromises to these issues.
- Sustainable travel will be encouraged by improving pedestrian and cycle routes in and around town and providing cycle parking areas; working with the North Devon Community Transport Association to encourage parish travel initiatives; providing a coach and bus drop-off point in a suitable location and ensuring there is adequate parking for those for whom public transport is not an option
- We are investigating ways in which changes to the flow of traffic around town can help safety, accessibility and the

general pleasing aspect of the town and how sustainable transport can help with this.

4. HERITAGE AND RECREATION

The town comprises many magnificent old buildings. Regeneration of the town must include a mix of new buildings along with preserving the fabric of buildings whilst encouraging uses that will bring the heritage to all. Further, it is recognised that sports provision in the area is insufficient if people are to be encouraged to use South Molton as the service centre for its vast hinterland:

- The group is commissioning a Conservation Area Character Assessment to ascertain the current condition and potential uses of buildings
- A group is working specifically on the future of the Town Hall and Pannier Market complex. They are discussing both traditional and creative ways of bringing the heritage to those who may not have ventured into these areas before. One current user of the Town Hall complex is the museum, which is not working to its full potential due to its location.
- The Swimming Pool Trust is working with us to extend their provision and potentially that of other sports organisations. South Molton Community College is also extending its provision and the Football Club has plans for improvements. One overall Sports Forum should be formed to bring improved sporting facilities to the town
- Working with the District and Town Councils and developers, we are looking at the overall green and amenity space provision of the town. It is intended to extend this remit to include the hinterland

5. CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT AREA

We are working with all groups to ensure a holistic approach and to discourage piecemeal development. To this end, organisations that are looking at development are encouraged to put their plans to us to be included in the Strategic Action Plan:

- We are completing a land assembly map to ensure that land acquisition is as painless as possible and can be negotiated to the maximum benefit of all

- In line with the revised deposit of the North Devon Local Plan and current government thinking, the Central Development Area is being developed as a mixed use area
- Plans are afoot for a new medium sized supermarket on the central car park site
- Management of the Doctor's Surgeries and Police Station wish to relocate to larger and more accessible premises
- We hope to provide a one-stop shop to house some or all of: the Library, Community Information Centre, Tourist Information Centre, Museum, District and Town Councils. This is being achieved by working with the group who are looking at the use of existing buildings to provide a mix and match solution
- The recycling centre site can potentially be split such that the retail centre and recycling bins are in the central area and the operations are relocated to an out of town site
- Good linkages between the current main shopping area on the Square and streets around with the proposed developments in the Central Development Area are paramount to ensure both areas remain vibrant

6. YOUTH AND COMMUNITY

- There are currently no facilities specifically for the
- Young People of the town and community facilities are poorly housed in small inaccessible buildings: -
- We are working with the Youth Recreation Group to provide a Skateboard Park in the central park area
- A feasibility study has been carried out to find the best solution for a Youth Resource Centre for the town. This recommends a stand-alone new building in the central car park area and Young People of the town await this with baited breath
- Until a permanent Youth Resource Centre is built, a temporary youth base must be found. We are working with the South Molton Youth Strategy Group to find a suitable site/premises
- As shown (in section 5) above, Town Centre Development, a combination of one-stop shop new build and using existing buildings will house the community facilities of the town
- In the longer term, we must continue to ensure that there is sufficient provision for the Elderly, Under-Fives and After-School clubs

7. DELIVERING THE PLAN




























The projects shown above cannot become a reality without a co-ordinated effort to bring together the agencies and organisations that will bring about change. MA2K state in their Business Plan that the aim of the Company is to deliver the regeneration programme for South Molton by:

- Operating as a Company Limited by Guarantee, ensuring all dealings are ethical and legal and cause no hardship to any person or organisation
- Securing the employment of a Town Centre Co-ordinator to oversee the projects and liaise with the various organisations and contractors involved
- Improving communication between the Company and the 11,000 people who make up the area of benefit and would potentially look to South Molton as their service centre
- Continue to help build the capacity of the people of the area to ensure sustainability
- Establish monitoring and evaluation data to show that the projects are not being carried out for projects sake, but are achieving real change in the regeneration of South Molton and the hinterland
- Calling together the MCTI Brokering Table – this plan, along with the MA2K Business Plan, is designed to show the ‘Big Picture’ for the future of South Molton. MA2K will use the plan to deliver the regeneration programme for South Molton, thus:
- The plan was first published in December 2003 and will be reviewed and updated periodically. Copies of the plan have been seen by all relevant agencies and stakeholders prior to the first sitting of the South Molton MCTI Brokering Table in January 2004. At this stage, projects will be prioritised and organisations will sign-up to the plan and, in some cases, commit funding where it fits their own current plans. The project delivery timetables will be amended.

All projects will be worked up by a project leader, or the agency responsible for delivery of that part of the plan. At this stage further Brokering Tables will be called to secure funding for individual projects. The project leader and/or agency will then see the project through to delivery and implementation. It is imperative that the sustainability of each project is written into the project plan along with an exit strategy, if appropriate.

The Project Plan – showing milestones

PROJECT	LEAD ORGANISATION	Dec 2003	Jun 2004	Dec 2004	Dec 2005	Dec 2007	Dec 2010
Engage town centre co-ordinator	NDDC/SMTC/MA2K/ RDA	xxxxxxxxxxx					
Improve communication/info xchge	MA2K						
Develop MA2K as trading company	MA2K						
Establish monitoring/evaluat'n data	MA2K						
Improve community skills	MA2K						
Develop parish plans	NDDC/DCC						
Increase water/sewage capacity	SWW	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Relocate medical centre	PCT						
Provide adequate housing	NDDC						
Provide district heating system	NDDC						
Build new junior school	DCC/Trustees						
Extend community woodlands	SWF/NDDC						
Produce short-term business strtgy	MA2K						
Produce marketing strategy / USP	MA2K						
Provide business start-up units	NDDC/RDA	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Provide business support	RDA	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Relocate/close livestock market	NDDC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxx				
Support rural area skill developmt	LSC						
Relocate Tourist Info Centre	MA2K	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxx				
Investigate Broadband provision	MA2K						
Provide t/centre base for IT/training	LSC						
Provide for skills & training needs	LSC						
Provide vocational training	LSC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx				
Provide core skills training	LSC						
Relocate lorry park	NDDC						
Improve cycle and walking routes	DCC						
Improve traffic flow / incl assessmt	DCC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Produce car parking strategy	NDDC						
Provide coach/bus set-down point / move school bus stops	DCC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					

PROJECT	LEAD ORGANISATION	Dec 2003	Jun 2004	Dec 2004	Dec 2005	Dec 2007	Dec 2010
Relocate school bus stops	DCC						
Provide sufficient car parking	NDDC/DCC/SMTC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Investigate alternate freight routes	DCC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Investigate use of existing buildings	MA2K/SMTC						
Do Conservation Area Assessment	MA2K/NDDC						
Extend sports facilities	NDDC/SMTC						
Relocate museum / archive	MA2K/SMTC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx				
Provide arts & leisure facilities	MA2K	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx				
Extend green space provision	NDDC/SMTC						
Complete land assembly map	MA2K						
Determine optimum physical layout	MA2K						
Investigate 'gateways' to town	DCC						
Manage the supermarket process	NDDC/MA2K						
Relocate the police station	D&C Police	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Improve pedestrian linkages	MA2K	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Relocate CDA recycling operations	MA2K	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Provide rear servicing routes	DCC/NDDC						
Investigate 'Design out crime'	D&C Police						
Provide skateboard park	MA2K/NDDC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Investigate temporary youth base	MA2K/DCC						
Relocate library	DCC						
Relocate Community Info centre	MA2K	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Relocate town/district council office	MA2K/NDDC/SMTC	xxxxxxxxxxxxxx					
Provide Youth Resource Centre	DCC						
Provide more facilities for elderly	DCC						
Provide more facilities for <5s	DCC						
Provide after school clubs	DCC						

3.10 Accessing Funding via the 'Brokering Table' and the Local Strategic Partnership

The MCTI process culminates in a gathering together of agencies and funding providers to gain in principle support for the Action Plan and the projects therein. Support may include commitment to funding, inclusion in capital programmes or in forward plans for the organisation. This gathering is known as a Brokering Table. The first meeting of the Brokering Table will introduce the Strategic Action Plan to gain endorsement. Subsequently the table will be called together as projects require up-front funding to look at the feasibility of projects or where feasibility studies have been carried out or are not required, the actual costs of the project.

Alongside the Brokering Table, MA2K is represented on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) known as North Devon Community Alliance. This is made up of agencies across North Devon who may be directly involved with the projects in the Action Plan. We have found it is important to open the channels of communication with the LSP Members. In this way, agencies will come to the Brokering Table prepared for specific projects, can ascertain how the projects fit with their own priorities and be able to give commitment to delivering projects, funding or other support within specific time-frames. A list of LSP member organisations can be found in Appendix E.

Appendix A

Background Information

Healthcheck

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

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

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

South Molton Community Appraisal 1997

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

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

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

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

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

The Community Events, 2001

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

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

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

The Workshops

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

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

Approximately 50 people attended the workshops.

Workshop 1: Themes and issues

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Issues

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

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

Project 'Issue' groups

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

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

Stakeholders' Workshop July 2003

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

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

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

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

Analysis of Consultation Data

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

Voting on projects at the Community Event days

Promotion & Marketing

- Develop a brand 24 yes 2 no

Business & Employment

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

Community

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

Education and training

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

Housing

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

Infrastructure

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

Environment

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

Youth

- Resource centre 61 yes 0 no

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

TABLE 1 – preferred option

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

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

TABLE 2 – major concerns

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

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

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

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

Technical Officers Feedback

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

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

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

Key issues identified

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

Relating to improving employment opportunities

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

Relating to skills

- Low numeracy/literacy
- Need for employment related training

Relating to traffic and sustainable transport

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

Relating to community facilities

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

Relating to infrastructure

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

Relating to marketing strategy

- Little in the way of marketing materials encouraging both locals and visitors to use local facilities/services

No Project Identified

- High Social Services client rate particularly in the youth and elderly categories
(We have been unable to engage the relevant partners therefore no project has been identified as yet).



Appendix B

Strategic Context and Area Profile

South Molton MCTI in Context

Policies and strategies exist at National, Regional, County and District levels, highlighting the need to improve social, economic and environmental conditions. These will be achieved by developing sustainable plans and strategies for the regeneration of areas by all relevant partners and stakeholders working together.

The National Context

Central Government, in passing the Local Government Act 2000, set the agenda for addressing issues of social inclusion and community partnership and placed a duty on local authorities to prepare Community Strategies. The purpose of these strategies should be to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of communities in an integral and sustainable way. They should be developed with the active involvement of local people and communities. The MCTI process in South Molton and district will, therefore, make a valuable contribution to the wider strategy across the District and County.

The County and District Context

In July 2002 Devon County Council and North Devon District Council, along with the North Devon Community Alliance, introduced the Community Strategy for the future of North Devon. This provides for the development of Community Action Plans at town or village level, with local communities setting their own priorities and identifying their own projects within this framework. Nine Community Alliances have been set up across North Devon, the MCTI group and latterly MA2K taking on this role in South Molton.

The South Molton MCTI area

This section highlights key statistics that underpin the development of Strategic Action Plan. Projects identified within the Plan are designed to improve the lives of the people of the area and these statistics highlight where priorities should lie. A detailed health-check report can be obtained from Molton Area 2000 or the Community Development Unit of North Devon District Council.

Parishes within the hinterland

Bishops Nympton
Brayford
Burrington
Chittlehamholt, Satterleigh & Warkleigh
Chittlehampton
Chulmleigh
East & West Buckland
East Anstey
East Worlington
Filleigh
George Nympton & Queens Nympton
Kings Nympton
Knowstone
Landkey
Mariansleigh
Meshaw
Molland
North Molton
Rackenford
Romansleigh
Rose Ash
South Molton
Swimbridge
Twitchen
West Anstey
Witheridge

Key statistics about the town and its hinterland (October 2001)

Population	Total pop'n	Growth 1991-1998	% under 16 years	% 16-59 years	% over 60 years
South Molton town & North Molton	5,700	0.2%	18%	52%	30%
Rural hinterland	7,600	0.8%	18%	54%	27%
South Molton catchment	13,300	0.6%	18%	53%	28%
Average household income					
Swimbridge	£21,900				
South Molton	£15,700				
Chulmleigh	£16,000				
Bishops Nympton	£13,900				
Employment sector					
Utilities/manufacturing/construction	27%				
Distribution, hotel & catering	25%				
Public admin, health and education	24%				
Banking, finance and insurance	18%				
Agriculture (data not available)	17% (estimate)				
Unemployment	Employee jobs	Claimant count	% Un-employment		
South Molton town & North Molton	2,700	75	3.05		
Rural hinterland	1,100	100	2.15 to 5.37		
South Molton catchment	3,800	175			

Key statistics about the town and its hinterland (October 2001)

Deprivation	Rank (of 8414)				
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Bishops Nympton 1855 (in the most deprived 25% nationally)

Chulmleigh 3337

North Molton 3625

South Molton 4108

Vital statistics	Live births	Deaths of residents			
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South Molton 29 58

North Molton 6 15

Bishops Nympton 12 22

Witheridge 18 26

Chulmleigh 23 21

Education	< level 4, key stage 2	Level 4 at key stage 2	> level 4, key stage 2	# pupils, key stage 2	Average key stage 2
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South Molton 10 20 10 35 3.99

Chittlehampton 20 25 5 50 3.69

Bishops Nympton 15 20 5 35 3.72

North Molton 55 95 15 165 3.73

Housing benefit / Council tax claimants					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Molland 10%

South Molton 9.5%

Bishops Nympton 9.5%

Filleigh 5%

Twitchen 2.3%

Social Services clients per 1000					
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North Molton 28

South Molton 22

Bishops Nympton 18

Witheridge 14

Swimbridge 10

Appendix C

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

Character and Culture

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Heritage foundation • Motivated and united • History of innovation • Strong local and civic pride • Vision • Low unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some resistance to change • Infrastructure in dire need of improvement • Lack of facilities discourages young families • Low average wages • High level of retirees • Lack of cultural centre
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Molton as regional agricultural centre • Investment in new technology (Broadband or equivalent) • Use of local talents and skills, especially those of Young People • Cultural and recreational opportunities to keep the town alive in the evenings • Inward retail investment • Year round tourism • Use of heritage and location as tourism promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transparency could undermine progress and germinate distrust • Over development and modernisation • Increase in tourism could result in more seasonal working • Increase in relatively well off incoming retirees prices local people out of housing market • Local agriculture suffers at the hand of cheap imports

Economy

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Pathfields Business Park rapidly expanding • There are many small and sole trader businesses • Some large manufacturing companies • Strong agriculture and distribution economy • Good position on North Devon Link Road • Active Tourist Association and Tourist Information Centre • Developing Chamber of Trade • Commutable to regional major cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current lack of premises for small businesses • Lack of Broadband or similar • Reliance on agriculture leaves town vulnerable • Lack of quality employment • High level of self-employment • Lack of business growth • Lack of Unique Selling Point (USP)

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed workspace on Pathfields Business Park • Chamber of Trade collating needs of small businesses to address issues (including premises, training, staffing, apprenticeships etc) • Develop Marketing Strategy to promote area • Development of hi-tech industry which is not reliant on national road network • Development of tourism linked to traditional pursuits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term gain must not compromise the long-term opportunities • National decline in agriculture • Small businesses vulnerable to closure on retirement

Public facilities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits from a number of public facilities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Swimming Pool ➢ Library ➢ Community Information Centre, allowing multi agency access ➢ Museum ➢ Playgroups and Nurseries ➢ Tourist Information ➢ Health Centre and Doctor's surgery ➢ Cottage hospital ➢ Town Hall / Assembly Rooms ➢ Churches ➢ Hotels and Public Houses ➢ Restaurants ➢ Open access centre for lifelong learning ➢ Bowling club • Local authorities are aware of the issues and supportive of improvements • Good schools • Community college has special status for technology • Active University of the Third Age (U3A) • Exeter University is within 1 hour travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The many existing facilities are housed in inadequate, inflexible, cramped conditions • Little provision for youth and young adults, including leisure, training and educational extensions • Few facilities have disabled access • Hospital too small for local need • Lack of police presence • No late/Sunday buses • Public convenience is very dirty • Lack of cycle-ways
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many existing buildings are under utilised • The size of the central car park, along with possible relocation of the Livestock Market, would enable appropriate new build • Funding is available to relocate the Medical Centres • The historic character of the town attracts funding for regeneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of investment will result in migration to neighbouring facilities • Lack of facilities for young people could result in boredom and vandalism, thus undermining the social framework • Residential developments taking place will add extra burden to the current over stretched facilities • Lack of awareness of facilities

The retail centre

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Many successful individual retail businesses • Able to provide majority of needs for town and hinterland • Rural links with natural and perishable goods • Specialist shops bring in trade from outside the area • Well supported Pannier Market on two days a week • Medium sized supermarket just off town centre • Good sized car park (free 6 days a week) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the A361 ND Link Road potential shoppers bypass the town • Lack of short-term parking on main shopping streets • No clear 'gateways' signifying entrance to the commercial heart of the town • Affected by recent rural economic problems, including foot and mouth disease and cheap imports • Lack of car parking in strategic places
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateways at entrance of town and features at main road junctions would show where to visit • Better use of existing car parking and changes in traffic flow would encourage walking • Better links from the central car park to the main shopping streets, especially in light of supermarket proposal (below) • Better use of existing buildings • Speculative interest in providing a new supermarket would encourage people of the town and hinterland to do their 'main shop' in town and not travel to Barnstaple • Promotion of local produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from other towns if South Molton has no primary shopping outlet • Parking and traffic strategies which detract from retail availability • Relocation of Livestock Market could result in reduced visitors • Decline in fabric of buildings detracts from attractiveness for shopping • Lack of quiet open spaces impacts shopping environment • Lack of amenity facilities may erode community spirit • Lack of youth facilities may impact on the level of crime and fear of crime and discourage young people

Transport and car parking

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate parking for current needs • Close to A361 • Free car park • Lack of congestion • Low accident levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large lorries use town centre to access non-town centre areas • Some streets have narrow pavements • Busy periods of traffic movement can cause dangerous conditions on some streets and junctions • Buses in the town centre cause obstructions and can be hazardous • Parking around the Square is inefficient and unattractive • South Street long-term parking discourages shoppers • Dropped kerbs are frequently blocked • Inconsiderate parking causes congestion • Lack of regular public transport • Car park too far from retail centre

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of one way traffic flows • Alterations to traffic flows on the Square in favour of pedestrian environment • Relocating main bus stop to a small bus station/stand in the central car park • More sustainable travel – car share, cycle etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car parking and transport strategies need to develop with a strong link to the regeneration programme. Failure to do so would compromise proposed improvements • ‘Boy racers’

Town Centre

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich tapestry of Listed Buildings and a strong identity to its Conservation Area • Examples of cob structures, timber framed buildings, attractive stone buildings with elaborate details and attractively proportioned brick built Georgian facades with key buildings forming attractive landmarks around the Square • The central car park is a large area dominated by parking, lorry parks, recycling centre, open fields and cattle market. From here there are good views across the rear buildings of the main streets and the Pannier Market. • There are a variety of attractive spaces in the town, some streets are wide and would allow for a variety of uses to spill out onto the street. The spaces around St Mary Magdalene Church and the Pannier Market are particularly attractive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking and bus routes compromise the structure and possibility of public uses on the street and in places dominates the pedestrian experience • The rear of the main street buildings are unattractive in many places and the recycling centre dominates what could be an attractive open area • The central park green spaces are under utilised • The car park coach and lorry park is unattractive • Pedestrian links from the central car park area to the main streets are unattractive and inaccessible in places • Poor listing of buildings
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance shop frontages • Promote town as Farm Gate with a link to local produce • Farmers market • Environmental improvements to street pavements, squares and mews • Promote better use of second and third floor accommodation • Listing of buildings would preserve heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate alterations to historic buildings could undermine development opportunities • Elements of modern living, parking, traffic flows, shop signs etc are unsympathetic to the character of the town

Agriculture

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Strong agricultural history • Tenacity shown as farmers are restocking after FMD • Many local outlets for local produce • Good position on North Devon Link Road • Local authorities support promotion of town as regional centre • SWeRDA report on livestock markets in South West supports relocation of livestock market due to resultant opportunities in CDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current livestock market needs investment to meet bio-security requirements • Any new livestock market facility will struggle to be economically viable • Low income • High start-up costs
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of livestock market to out of town site and development as regional centre with bio-security requirements met • Development of a new livestock market facility to include managed workspace and training facilities • Promotion of local produce through quality food programme • New facility to include environmental improvements (rainwater for wash off, reed beds, wind power etc) • Relocation of livestock market would free up land for regeneration of the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without further investment in the current livestock market it may continue to decline until closure is the only option • Creation of new and better facilities in rival facilities in other areas • Lack of investment in infrastructure • Government agricultural policy • Young People unwilling to take on business

The hinterland

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Tourism generator (walking etc) • Increases viability of regional centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of young people and families • Unable to provide expected services locally • Inaccessibility
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village appraisals • Funding streams • Community plans • Developing rural issues initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current legislation discourages new development including housing that is not infill • Lack of affordable housing is making local services unviable

Geographical location

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On A361 North Devon Link Road • Close to Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty • Centre of rural road network • Within thirty minutes of M5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rail link • Poor local bus service • Poor road junctions • Bypassed by and not visible from A361
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better cycle and footpaths connected to existing networks supported by town centre cycle security • Marketing as gateway to the Atlantic Highway, North Devon beaches, Exmoor • Attract industry and new employment • Allocation of employment land in emerging Local Plan • Introduction of Broadband would enable hi-tech industry investment which is not dependant on physical location within UK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development without necessary infrastructure improvements • Threats from other centres • Lack of Broadband

Appendix D

Recent History

1995: The North Devon Local Plan (Deposit November 95) looked at the future of Employment, Shopping, Tourism, Community Facilities, Sport and Recreation and Leisure in the South Molton and its hinterland.

It recommended the promotion of the area as the District's Agricultural Centre, in accordance with the Local Authority's employment strategy for the District.

1996: The South Molton Regeneration Steering Group brought forward a proposal entitled 'Developing a Blueprint'. This was designed as a method of developing initiatives in the Town and its surrounding area by bringing together different groups, which may act as a catalyst for initiating actions and mobilising development.

1997: Molton Area 2000 was born. Its mission is to enable and encourage communities and organisations across the project area to work in partnership to put together a package of individual and group projects that support economic, social and environmental regeneration in South Molton and its surrounding area. Its work includes Visioning Surveys and SWOT analysis.

1997: Community Governance Pilot for the South Molton area, summarised in the report on socio-economic characteristics based on deprivation and analysis of information available (produced by Joyce Halliday, Devon Research Fellow, Exeter University).

1997: Community Appraisals carried out in South Molton and several outlying parishes.

1998: Planning for Real exercise carried out by Molton Area 2000.

1998: South Molton Area Committee Locality Agenda was produced using 'information drawn from a multitude of sources including a statistical profile of the area, which was presented to Committee on 7 July 1998'.

2000: District wide retail study undertaken by G L Hearn, specialist retail consultants. This provides background on the retail situation in South Molton that will be useful in the preparation of the community strategic plan.

2000: Molton Area 2000 reported back to the community in an Open Forum, showing progress to date including projects identified to meet the needs and aspirations of the area.

2000: Formation of the South Molton Alliance to take forward the actions identified by Molton Area 2000, and consultation/healthcheck initiatives.

2001: The Market and Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group was formed following the identification as an area of need following the Foot and Mouth outbreak.

2001: Report commissioned by North Devon District Council Cabinet on the Future of Finished Stock Markets/Abattoirs in Northern Devon, including a reassessment of the conclusions following the Foot and Mouth crisis.

2001: North Devon Local Plan (First Deposit November 01).
Supports findings of all consultation, reports and healthchecks.

2001: Public Consultation events run in South Molton and four outlying parishes. These supported the previous findings with one major exception; previously it was felt that closure of the Livestock Market in the Town Centre would have major repercussions on the economic viability of the town. Experience has shown this not to be so, resulting in overwhelming support for its move to Pathfields Industrial Estate. The National Farmers Union and Farmers for Action are in support of the move.

2002: Stage One funding for the MCTI process was applied for and successfully achieved, with funding from South West Regional Development Agency (£54,000) South Molton Town Council (£15,000) and North Devon District Council (£6,000)

Issue groups were setup to deliver the projects identified to date. From these consultants were engaged to carry out feasibility studies on:

- The regeneration of the town centre (the Master Plan)
- The relocation of the Livestock Market to Pathfields Industrial Estate
- The provision of a new youth resource centre

Quick win projects were delivered, such as supply of new dog bins, landscaping on New Walk Steps and painting of bollards on the Square. Molton Area 2000 was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee

2003: MA2K invited residents, community groups and people who work in the area, to become members of the limited company by an annual £5 subscription. The results of the town centre regeneration feasibility study were received and findings presented to the public stakeholders, and technical officers of various statutory bodies via open meetings/workshops and three newsletters and newspapers. Funding bids were put together for the first deliverable projects. The idea of a town centre project co-ordinator was developed.

With many Market Towns seeking to improve livestock market provision, SWeRDA commissioned a report reviewing current provision and considering the future of the industry. This concluded that market forces would determine the future of specific sites, but that in the case of South Molton, relocation would be beneficial to the overall regeneration of the area.



Appendix E

Partnership Organisations

Over time, many partner organisations have been involved with South Molton initiatives. These organisations should be encouraged to be involved in developing Molton Area 2000 into a wider South Molton Partnership. All the organisations are important for the contribution they can potentially make to the achievement of particular aspects of the overall plan. These organisations include:

- South Molton Chamber of Trade
- North Devon Chamber of Commerce
- South Molton Town Council
- North Devon District Council
- Devon County Council
- Parish Councils of hinterland parishes
- Exmoor National Park
- The South Molton and District Tourist Association
- North Devon Homes
- Devon and Cornwall Housing Association
- Community Health Council
- Hospital League of Friends
- Primary Care Trust
- North and East Devon Health Authority
- South Molton Disabled/Access Group
- Devon & Cornwall Police
- Crime Prevention Panel
- South Molton and District Licensees Association
- South Molton Recycling
- The South Molton Academic Council
- South Molton Community College
- The Playgroup in the Park (PIP) Centre
- South Molton Youth Strategy Group
- Youth Recreation Initiative
- South Molton and Chulmleigh Youth Forum
- Connexions
- The Community Information Centre
- The Museum and the Friends of the Museum
- South Molton and District Archive Local History Society
- Amory House Trustees
- North Devon Community Transport
- Local Transport Group
- Public Transport Forum

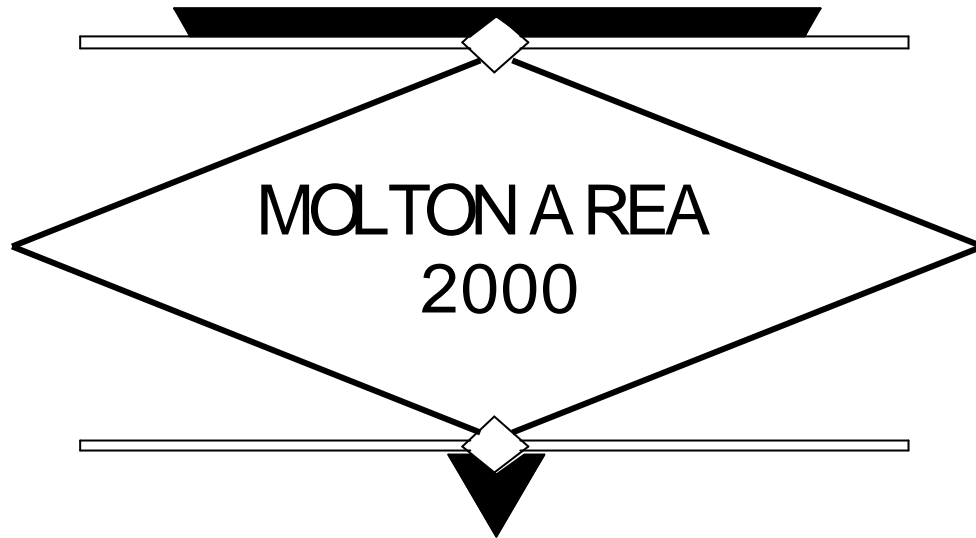
- National Farmers Union
- The Wool Board
- Meat and Livestock Commission – red meat survey
- Cartwheel Young Farmers Organisation
- Young Farmers Clubs
- Agricultural Development and Advisory Service
- Farmers For Action
- Devon Rural Recovery Partnership
- Devon & Cornwall Police
- Mole Valley Farmers
- South Molton Sheep Group
- Diocese
- The Methodist Church and/or Churches Together in South Molton
- The South Molton Area of the Devon Association of Parish Councils
- The Women's Institutes
- South Molton Bowling Club



Archdeaconry of Barnstaple
Barnstaple Town Council
Community Council of Devon
Connexions
Countryside Agency
Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Devon County Council
Devon and Cornwall Learning and Skills Council
Devon Health Forum
Devon Partnership NHS Trust
Devon Wildlife Trust
English Nature
Environment Agency
Exmoor National Park
Ilfracombe Town Council
Job Centre Plus
Local Community Alliances
Member of Parliament
National Trust
North Devon Academic Board
North Devon College
North Devon Homes
North Devon Volunteering Development Agency (as a Local Development Agency)
Northern Devon Healthcare Trust
North Devon District Council
North Devon Voluntary Action Forum
North West Devon Economic Partnership
North Devon Primary Care Trust
Parish Councils
Probation Service
South West Regional Development Agency
Torridge Local Strategic Partnership
Voluntary Sector
Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust

Appendix F

MA2K Business Plan



Chairman: Sue Sewell

Vice-chairman: Kevin Venison

Business Plan

2003 – 2008

(Version 1.0 – December 2003)

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1.0 Summary

1.1 The Company

Molton Area 2000 (herein after called 'MA2K') was formed as a company in November 2002 from a constituted community organisation of the same name. The company was formed with the intention of delivering projects identified by the South Molton Market & Coastal Town Initiative (MCTI) aimed at the regeneration of South Molton and its hinterland following the Foot and Mouth epidemic of 2001.

1.2 The Business Plan

This plan in its current form covers the years 2003 to 2008. It will be reviewed annually and will be in existence for at least the lifetime of the projects referred to in 1.1. (above). These are further described in section 1.4 (below) and detailed in the South Molton Strategic Action Plan to the year 2023.

1.3 Membership and Stakeholders

Membership of the Company is open to individuals aged eighteen and above who live or work in the area; organisations operating in the area; junior members, 14 to 18 years of age who are non-paying and non-voting members. Membership requires payment of £5.00 membership fee and completion of a registration form.

Stakeholders are Members of the Company plus all partner organisations listed in the South Molton Strategic Action Plan to the year 2023.

1.4 The Projects

Extensive consultation identified how the community of the area wishes to see South Molton develop as a prosperous town in the 21st Century. With reference to the national, regional and local strategies of statutory agencies, the consultation established a series of projects, since when feasibility studies have been carried out by consultants working on behalf of the MCTI steering group to identify the optimum physical layout required to bring about regeneration.

1.5 Delivering the projects

MA2K is a not-for-profit organisation that currently has no earned income. It has a small income from a nominal subscription paid annually by its members. It is therefore dependent on securing funding from a range of funding providers, some of which have been identified, whilst others will be identified as the projects roll out and as new initiatives are announced

2.0 Business Details

2.1 Contact details

The registered address for the company is:

Molton Area 2000
c/o Large Chartered Accounts
1 Duke Street
South Molton
Devon
EX36 3AL
Telephone: 01769 574874
Fax: 01769 574169

Contacts:

Chairman	Sue Sewell	01769 574522
Vice Chairman	Kevin Venison	07711 546265

2.2 Legal Status

MA2K is registered as a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee. This status may change over time; options include:

- (i) To enable the company to be eligible for certain funding initiatives, it may be expedient to seek registration as a Charity at some stage
- (ii) To enable the company to claim back VAT, an income in the form of lettings and training could be established. This would include all VAT expenditure 'in furtherance of the business'.

2.3 Structure

MA2K operates through Directors on a Management Committee made up of up to eighteen individuals elected by the Membership, up to five persons co-opted for their relevant skills and experience and up to two employees of the Company. The Management Committee is elected annually at an Annual General Meeting.

Currently, there is a voluntary Minutes' Secretary and a self-employed Administrator. Accountancy support is provided by Messrs Large and Auditing by Messrs Division's.

To ensure delivery of the regeneration programme it is imperative to employ a Town Co-ordinator who will be responsible for general project management.

This will ensure:

- A consistency of approach
- Momentum will be maintained
- Time-scales dictated by funding initiatives will be more easily met
- Strategy linkages will be maintained
- Problems inherent in regeneration programmes will be more easily overcome
- Expectations will be acknowledged and managed
- SWeRDA guidelines for MCTI will be followed

To enable this position to be secured, a Job Description / Person Specification is attached (Appendix A); funding must be secured; and Terms and Conditions established. Estimated costs for the position are £30,000 including on-costs (e.g. National Insurance at 13%). Additionally, an administrator will be required, initially on a part-time basis, but increasing to full-time as the programme progresses.

2.4 Organisational Development

Currently MA2K comprises:

A Management Committee made up of the previous Executive Members of the non-incorporated organisation, plus others from the Market & Coastal Town Initiative Steering Group and members co-opted for their professional skills.

Members of the Company, eligible by living or working in the South Molton administration area.

Professional advice provided by co-opted individuals and private and public organisations.

Paid and voluntary staff: a Minute Secretary attends every meeting on a voluntary basis; administration support is provided on an hourly paid basis.

To enable delivery of the regeneration projects, the Company will need to grow, as follows:

The Management Committee will be re-elected from paid up Members, co-opted Members and Employees at the Annual General Meeting on 18 June 2003 and annually thereafter.

Membership is growing daily – approximately 100 as of 3 June 2003.

Professional advice will continue to be supplied by co-option.

Employees will be required, as shown above in 2.3.

Future development will be dictated by the delivery of projects as defined in Section 2.7, Goals and Objectives.

Operational development is shown in Sections 3.1 – 3.6 under Operational details.

2.5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community commitment • Community 'own' the company • In existence for several years • Has Local Authority support • Feasibility studies have been completed for major projects • Access to local expertise in bid writing • Everyone 'singing from the same hymn sheet' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active members in full-time employment with little spare time who could not sustain the required level of input • No guaranteed income • Lack of professional expertise in some areas (e.g. finance, administration, capacity building) • No premises or resources
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering projects agreed in Strategic Action Plan • Securing full-time co-ordinator and full/part-time administrator • A co-ordinated approach to delivering projects is most likely to attract funding • Securing premises and resources • Securing technical expertise • Securing funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding streams available often have a short life-span and need targeted bid writing • If funds cannot be secured for a full-time co-ordinator, delivery of projects will be seriously compromised

2.6 Achievements to Date

Prior to becoming a Registered Company, Molton Area 2000 operated as a community organisation with the prime objective of establishing the needs of the people of the South Molton area. Public consultation events have taken place and a list of projects produced showing how these needs can be met. Several projects were carried out, but lack of funding hindered many projects from coming to fruition. However, with the introduction of the Market & Coastal Town Initiative, funding has enabled feasibility studies and the production of a Strategic Action Plan identifying project priorities, responsibilities, timescales and funding opportunities. A timeline is shown in Appendix B.

2.7 Goals and Objectives

The goals of the company are to:

- Take ownership and deliver the projects identified in the South Molton Strategic Action Plan to the year 2023. Specific objectives are outlined in the project plan in the same document
- Consolidate the work carried out by Molton Area 2000 prior to incorporation
- Increase networking

- Increase the number of paid-up members
- Increase consultation and public participation in Open Forum
- Undertake Capacity Building to increase the capability of the community to take forward projects without professional help

2.8 Mission Statement

The Company is for the benefit of the people of the defined area without distinction of gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, political or religious beliefs. It aims to bring about partnerships of the people with voluntary and statutory organisations so that they are able to identify and address the social and economic needs of the community, with a view to improving their lives.

3.0 Operational Details

3.1 Premises

As part of the start up of the project plan, premises must be identified along with funding to secure them. Ideally, this will be a shop-front situation, available to the community and manned throughout normal working hours. Premises rental will be approximately £3,000 p.a. and additional funding will be required if premises are in need of renovation.

3.2 Equipment

General office equipment and the funding thereof must be secured.

3.3 Finances

(i) Current situation

Receipts to the Company are in the form of:

- Monies transferred from the predecessor body
- Market & Coastal Town Initiative grants
- Membership subscriptions
- Receipts from Capacity Building workshops
- Additionally an operational grant has been applied for from North Devon District Council Community Grants budget

Payments from the Company are both operational and project delivery costs.

Appendix C shows the latest Treasurer's report.

(ii) Financial forecasts

Will be completed when project plans have been finalised.

(ii) Structure

The legal structure of the company may change in the future, as shown in 2.2 (above) to allow for financial flexibility.

3.4 Insurance

Insurance is currently provided by Zurich Municipal Policy Number XAO 122027-4903, the premium for which was paid by North Devon District Council, with additional cover for Business Advice and Capacity Building training sessions paid for by the South Molton Market & Coastal Town Initiative. A review of the cover provided will be required as changes occur in the operation of the Company.

3.5 Communication

Various forms of communication are employed to keep Members, Stakeholders and the general public abreast of developments. These include:

Open Fora: public meetings held at least quarterly to which Members, Stakeholders and the general public are invited.

Newsletters: double-sided A4 newsletters have been distributed via the Gazette & Advertiser free-press to their delivery addresses within the Molton Area 2000 catchment area and to surrounding villages via the Community Information Centre Village Reps.

Newspaper: a 4 page tabloid-style newspaper has been delivered to all households in the Molton Area 2000 catchment via Royal Mail Door-to-door service (EX36 addresses) and direct mail (non-EX36 addresses).

The media: press releases and interviews with the North Devon Journal South Molton reporter are used.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Project Monitoring and Evaluation is as detailed in the project delivery plan as outlined in the South Molton Strategic Action Plan to the year 2023.

3.7 Health and Safety

The Company will endeavour to carry out its duties in such a way as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of Members of the Company, employees and any other persons who may be affected by the Company's activities. Contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Company must be able to produce their health and safety policy as required.