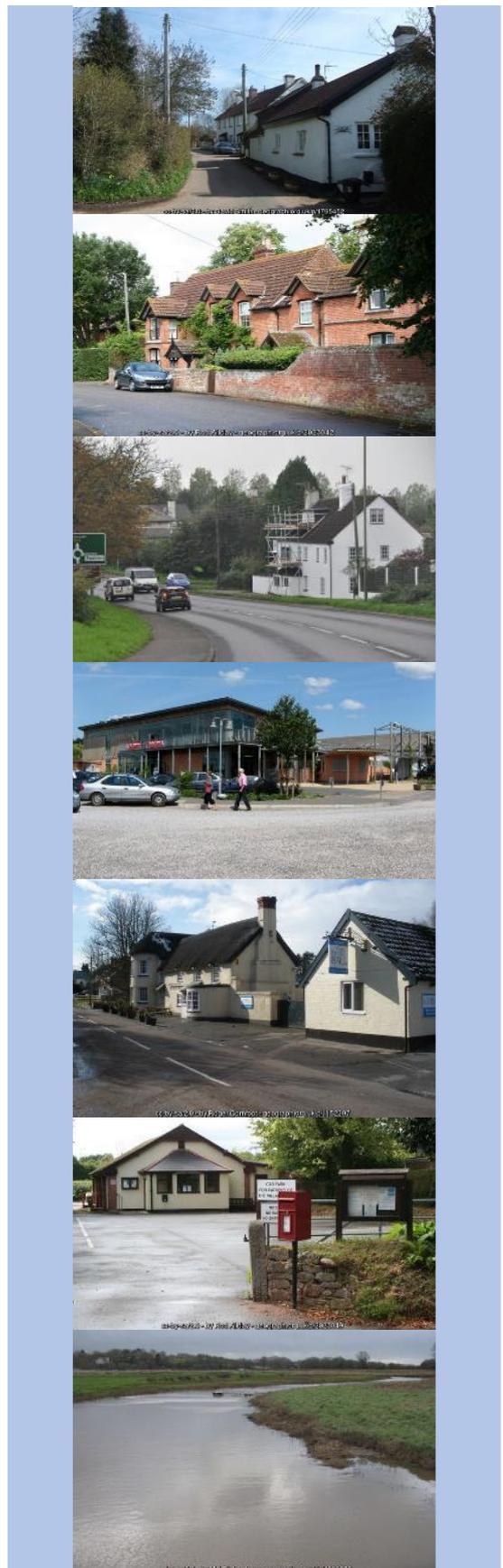


# Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan

2015-2031



Clyst St. George Parish Council  
July 2018

<b>Date of versions:</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Consultation version</b>	<b>May 2017</b>
<b>Pre-submission version</b>	<b>October 2017</b>
<b>Submission version</b>	<b>March 2018</b>
<b>Referendum version</b>	<b>July 2018</b>
<b>Approved version (made)</b>	

# Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan

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## Foreword

Neighbourhood planning for the Parish of Clyst St. George commenced in the autumn of 2014 following suggestions from residents. The Parish Council held a public meeting to gauge support and a Steering Group of local people was set-up with the full backing of the Parish Council. A formal application was made to East Devon District Council for a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of the Parish area.

After the Parish Council elections of May 2015 three Parish Councillors and five residents, from Ebford and Clyst St. George formed the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. We were successful in securing grants from the Department of Communities and Local Government, through 'Locality', and from East Devon District Council, which have helped fund consultation events and enabled us to have some valuable professional guidance.

A major influence on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan was a survey of residents, young and old, to ascertain the views of parishioners on a wide range of topics. We are grateful for the information and opinion they provided. We have kept in touch with local people and local businesses throughout the process via the website, the newsletter and 'feedback meetings' to test our conclusions and our draft proposals. The Steering Group has been much encouraged by the on-going support from all parts of the community.

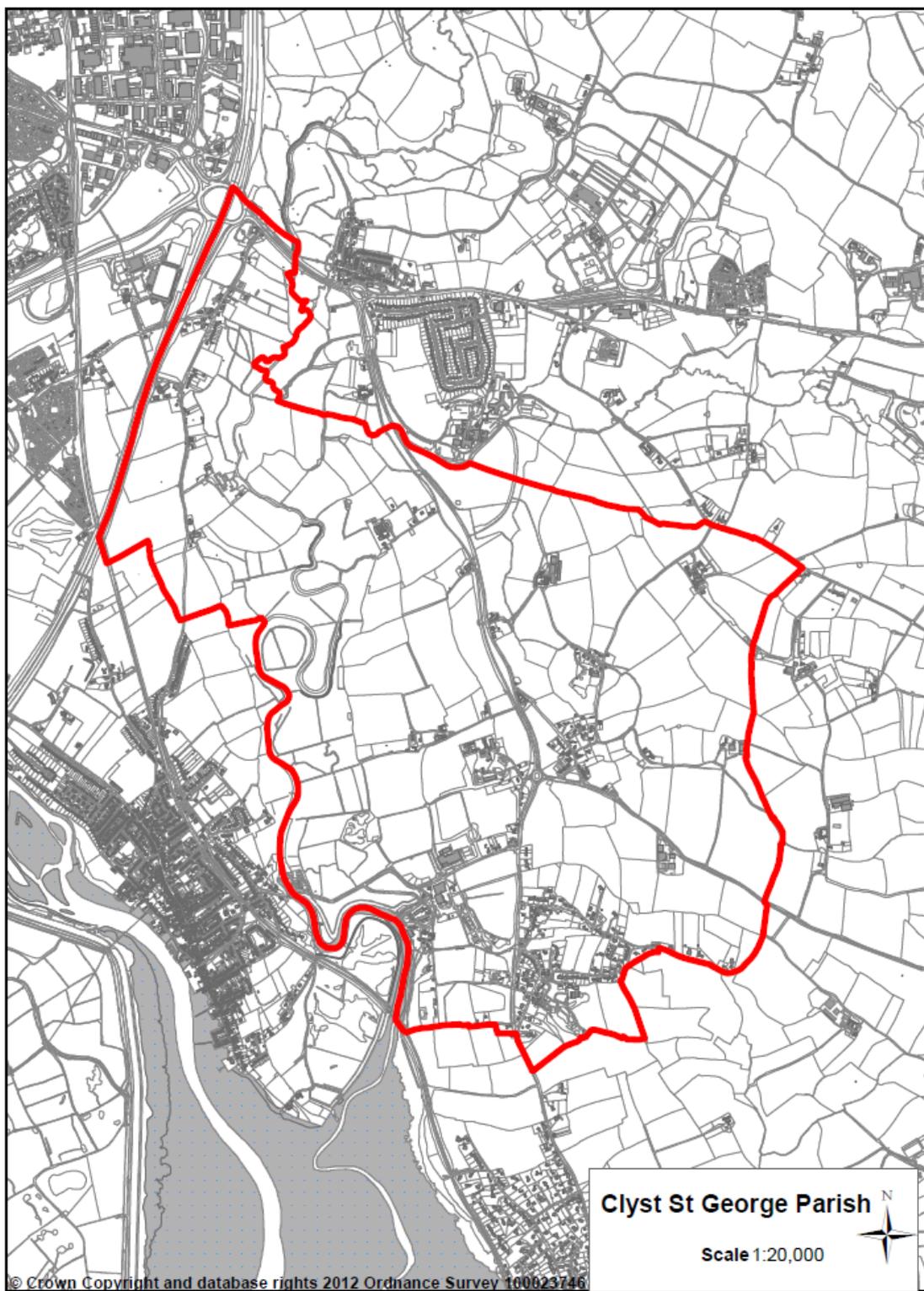
I would like to record my thanks to the members of the Steering Group who have helped develop the Plan, to members and staff at East Devon District Council for their encouragement and always constructive advice, and to all those parishioners and organisations that have shown an interest in what we have been trying to achieve and contributed in whatever way to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Clyst St. George.

John Manser  
Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

# 1. Introduction

## Plan Area

- 1.1 The Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan applies to the parish area that is under the jurisdiction of Clyst St. George Parish Council. The 'neighbourhood area' as designated by East Devon District Council on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 is shown on Map 1 below.



MAP 1 - Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area

## 2. Clyst St. George Parish

### Yesterday

- 2.1 Clyst St. George was mentioned in the Domesday book as Clystwick. The Church records the first vicar as being appointed in 1230. The local centre of administration for the area was Woodbury, and of course the City of Exeter as County Town and Headquarters. The current local government boundaries came into effect in 1974 following changes to local councils. Before then both Ebford and Clyst St. George were part of St. Thomas's Rural District Council (Exeter).
- 2.2 Clyst St. George village was affected by a main road traversing the village centre, until the A376 was upgraded. The main road which ran through the centre of Ebford was notorious with a very tight turn and steep hill up Old Ebford Lane. The present main road was built in 1937.
- 2.3 The Lady Seaward's School is a Grade II listed building unfortunately constrained by its site, with little room to expand. The Village Hall was built in the 1930's and is well used and cared for by its Trustees.
- 2.4 St. George's Church was largely destroyed by fire in 1940, caused by incendiary bombs dropped by enemy aircraft; it was rebuilt after the war on the same footprint but lighter and more modern.
- 2.5 Ebford was the lowest place that the River Clyst could be forded (only on the Ebb tide) until the bridge to Topsham was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.6 Clyst Road has been part of our Parish since the reorganisation of council boundaries in the 1970's and is a farming hamlet.

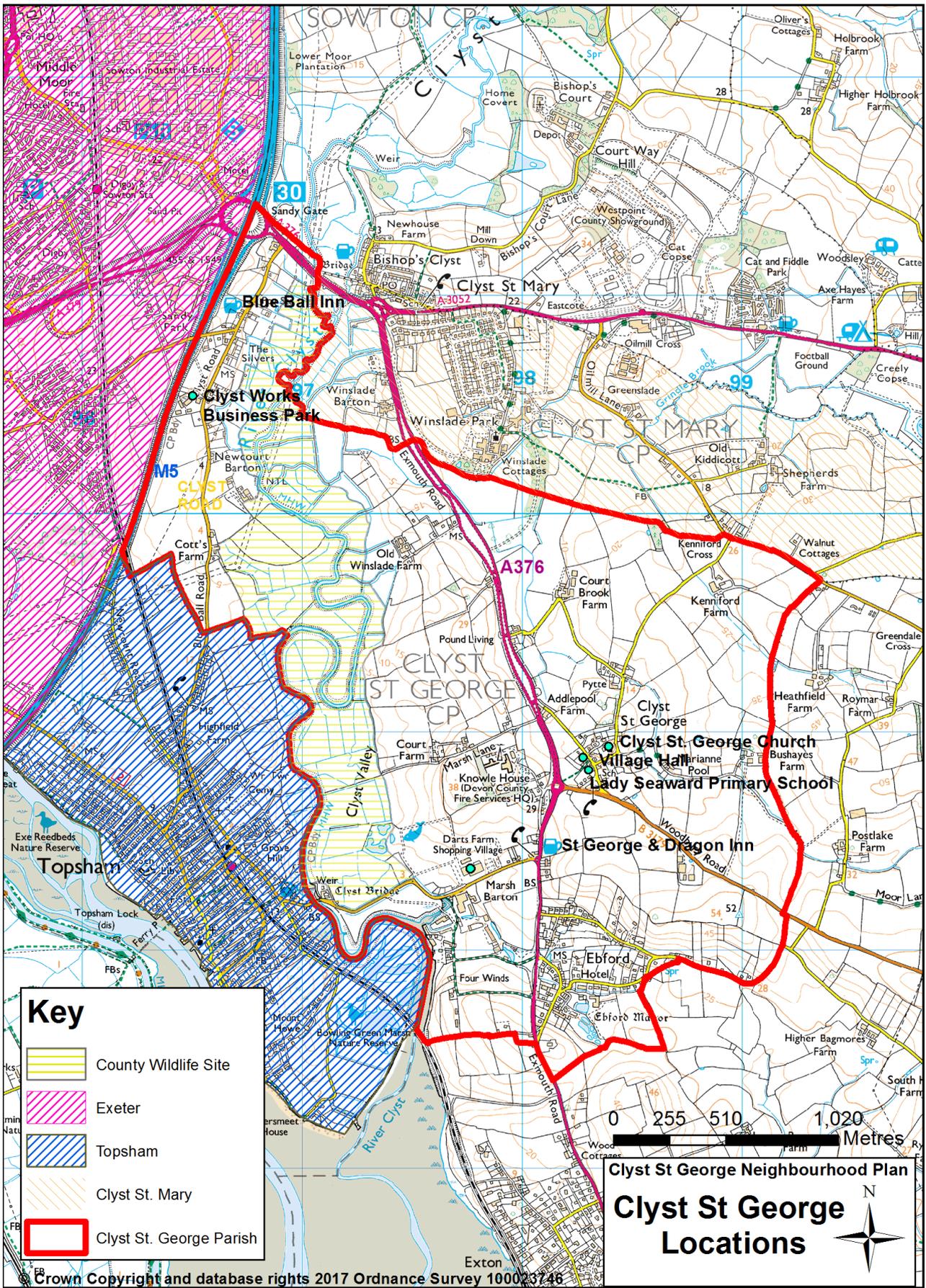
### Today

- 2.7 The Parish of Clyst St. George is south east of Exeter and east of Topsham. It is bounded by the M5 motorway. The Parish is bisected by the A376 which extends between Exeter and Exmouth.
- 2.8 The River Clyst forms part of our Parish's western boundary and is tidal for most of its course through the Parish. The river and Grindle Brook are also our boundary with Clyst St. Mary to the north. To the south is Exton, part of Woodbury Parish. Our eastern boundary is also with Woodbury. A small but significant part of the Parish lies to the west of the River Clyst and east of the M5, which forms the boundary with Exeter. This area is known as Clyst Road or 'the Blue Ball area', named after the Inn.
- 2.9 The Parish has three main settlement areas, the largest being Ebford, which lies mainly east of the A376. Whilst having the most houses, Ebford has no community facilities. The village of Clyst St. George has only 38 dwellings (at the end of 2016), yet is the location of our only Village Hall, the Parish Church (St. George's) and Lady Seawards Church of England Primary School (recently Ofsted inspected and rated as "outstanding"). The third settlement area, the Clyst Road area, is closest to Exeter and Topsham. It has the Blue Ball Inn and the Clyst Works Business Park, as well as housing and farms. The St. George & Dragon Inn is our other pub. It is located close to Dart's Farm shop and a business park, outside of the village of Clyst St. George.
- 2.10 Much of the Parish remains farmland. The River Clyst regularly floods and its floodplain is used as summer grazing for cattle. It is designated as a County Wildlife Site which, during the winter, attracts geese and wading birds. Away from the floodplain, farming is on the red clay soil typical of much of East Devon. Whilst mixed farming predominates, a notable innovation of recent years are the vineyards on a south facing slope in Ebford and a sheltered area in Clyst St. George village.
- 2.11 A relatively high proportion of adult parishioners are retired. Those in employment, work mainly in Exeter and often in professional occupations. In fact, our business survey showed only 1% of people working for a business in the Parish, actually reside in the Parish.

- 2.12 The busy commuter routes through the Parish give rise to many of the comments we have received concerning road safety and “rat runs” through built-up areas. The narrow pavements, constant traffic and non-existent safe crossing points is a matter that needs addressing.
- 2.13 Poor broadband is also a major local concern. East Devon District Council is working on rural broadband improvements, but being so close to Exeter, it is a little annoying to pay the same rates as City residents whilst receiving an inferior service.

### Tomorrow - Clyst St. George Parish Council Statement

- 2.14 The Parish Council received feedback and residents’ responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Survey in 2015, which indicated robust opposition to any change in the rural character and nature of the Parish. In particular, there was a groundswell against becoming a suburb of Exeter. However, it is recognised by residents that small scale and appropriate development to meet a local need could be viewed more favourably.
- 2.15 In recent years, the Parish has been the subject of many planning applications. We welcome the new East Devon District Council Local Plan, which designates the whole of our Parish as “*countryside*” (Strategy 7). In addition, the Local Plan identifies land adjoining the Exe estuary and west of the A376 north of Lympstone to the Royal Marines site and north of Exton to Marsh Barton as Green Wedge, where development will not be permitted which would damage the identity of a settlement or encourage settlement coalescence (Strategy 8).
- 2.16 Recent house building has generated local concerns which have been raised with the Parish Council. Developers have attempted to build, what we consider to be, inappropriate housing in size, style and/or cost, which did not seem to meet local need. Such development proposals highlighted the lack of pavements and inadequacy of street lighting, which when combined with the narrow local lanes in the Parish, has led to parishioners becoming increasingly worried about road safety. Looking to the future, the Parish Council feels that small scale development of good and appropriate design that addresses a local demand is what is required.
- 2.17 Community concerns about these issues was fully debated over the proposal to develop 25 dwellings on land adjacent to Addlepool Farm off Woodbury Road. Against the wishes of many parishioners, the planning application for 25 dwellings was approved on appeal. The appeal was allowed in September 2015 largely because the local planning authority could not at that time demonstrate “*a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites*” across the district of East Devon; and the new East Devon Local Plan was not in place to protect rural locations such as ours. The Inspector concluded that, on balance, a development of this scale at Clyst St. George could be justified in sustainability terms, despite many representations having been made by parishioners to the contrary. With the new Local Plan in place, the feeling now is that sustainability and appropriateness on planning grounds must be the prime considerations.
- 2.18 The process of examining what parishioners want; how we can remain sustainable as a community; how we can ensure that infrastructure is more than adequate; and how the Parish Council can help and influence change; has been most demanding. Money is currently in short supply in local government, making long-term investment plans difficult to envisage. Improvements to local footpaths are much in demand; also, there are limited facilities for recreation in the Parish.
- 2.19 The Parish Council and parishioners agree that incremental growth and sensitive change is the right way forward. Clyst St. George Parish should not be swallowed up or overrun by Exeter; Clyst St. George Parish should retain its rural character with important wildlife habitats, green vistas and its agricultural heritage.



MAP 2 - Clyst St. George Parish Locations

### 3. The Strategic Context

- 3.1 In preparing our Neighbourhood Plan we are obliged, by law, to:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - ensure the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2 We have been cognisant of the current national planning framework as set out in the 2012 publication and supplemented by the Planning Practice Guidance relating to neighbourhood planning matters which is published by the Department for Communities and Local Government via a dedicated website<sup>1</sup>. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>2</sup> set out the Government's planning policy to which all plans and proposals for development should comply. The NPPF includes, at its heart, a "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*". It states that neighbourhood plans should "*...support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development...*" and "*...plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan*". The NPPF goes on to say that "*The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.*" We are also advised that neighbourhood plans should reflect these Local Plan policies and plan positively to support them, while not promoting less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermining its strategic policies. Outside of strategic policies, we are encouraged to shape and direct sustainable development in our area through our Neighbourhood Plan.

#### East Devon Local Plan

- 3.3 The more local strategic context is provided by the East Devon Local Plan 2013-31. The Local Plan was adopted on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016, with the purpose of guiding development in the district over the next 20 years. It comprises both strategic policies and development management policies. The strategic policies of the Local Plan, with which the Neighbourhood Plan must conform, are set out in Part 1 of the new Local Plan<sup>3</sup>. The strategic policies number up to 50. We have been mindful to ensure that our neighbourhood plan policies do conform and for each of our policies, where relevant, we have identified by number what strategic policy it relates to.
- 3.4 Our right to introduce local policies for the neighbourhood area is recognised in the Local Plan. It makes several references to the role of a neighbourhood plan including confirmation that "*through a Neighbourhood Plan a Parish Council or relevant neighbourhood group can produce a local plan for their area that supersedes some or all of the policies in this part<sup>4</sup> of the local plan*".

#### Allocation of Land for Development

- 3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has taken the view that allocating plots of land for development is unnecessary given that the East Devon Local Plan puts the whole Parish in open countryside. Major development within the Parish must be an exception to the Local Plan (policies S6, S7, S8 and S34). This approach has been endorsed by the public responses both to the Neighbourhood Plan Survey 2015 and the public consultation exercises we have undertaken as part of the neighbourhood planning process.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012

<sup>3</sup> <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1772841/local-plan-final-adopted-plan-2016.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Part Two – Development Management Policies, East Devon Local Plan, 2013-2031

## 4. Purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.1 Neighbourhood planning is intended to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of the local area. The National Planning Policy Guidance says that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, we are able to “choose where [we] want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have [our] say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings [we] want to see go ahead”.
- 4.2 We approached the task with an open mind as to what the Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan would cover and what its themes and purposes would be. We understood from the outset that it would have to meet the following basic conditions:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area, the East Devon Local Plan
  - does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations
- 4.3 With these constraints in mind, we have consulted widely and engaged with our local community to understand what is needed and what it is possible to influence and affect via a set of neighbourhood planning policies. We have considered carefully the policies of the Local Plan and assessed, on the basis of our agreed objectives, whether a more localised or detailed neighbourhood plan policy is required. In several policy areas, we have concluded that the Local Plan’s policies are sufficient. We have only introduced a Neighbourhood Plan policy where it will help ensure the area develops in the way we wish it to.
- 4.4 The resultant Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out the way we would like to see the neighbourhood area developed over the next 15 to 20 years and, through its policies, shape and direct sustainable development that will benefit those that live, work or visit in our area.

### The Neighbourhood Planning Process

- 4.5 The development and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken by a Steering Group comprised of local people and parish councillors.
- 4.6 It was understood from the outset that for the Neighbourhood Plan to be truly representative of the planning issues of relevance in the area and to be *the community’s plan*, we needed to carry out a thorough and on-going consultation process with those who live and work in the area and those that visit here on a regular basis. We also recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan could not be properly developed without the input of organisations and agencies with a district, county, sub-regional or national remit and an interest in the area.
- 4.7 The process and the types of consultation exercise and discussion that we have gone through is documented in detail in a **Consultation Statement** which accompanies the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The key methods we have used have included:
- Public exhibitions, meetings and events
  - Community Questionnaire
  - Regular articles in Clyst Valley News, distributed to homes across most of the Parish
  - A dedicated website<sup>5</sup> and links from the Parish website
  - Local noticeboards
  - Focus groups and workshops
  - Surveys and discussions with local businesses

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<sup>5</sup> [www.csgnp.org.uk/](http://www.csgnp.org.uk/)

- Correspondence with wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an interest in our planning issues
- Consultation ‘windows’ during which comments have been invited on draft documents

- 4.8 The development of the Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan was based on a desire to be open and to welcome comments and contributions from all quarters. Our aim has been to encourage and foster discussion and debate within the community about the issues and opportunities that face us and strive to achieve a community consensus. This Plan represents the product of this process.
- 4.9 The Regulations required us to carry out a formal consultation on the pre-submission version of the Plan with the community as well as with a range of statutory bodies and agencies. This is followed by formal submission to the local planning authority and examination of the Plan by an independent Examiner. After that point, assuming the Plan passes through the examination successfully, the Plan will be subject to a public referendum where parishioners on the electoral register will be asked if they support the final version of the Plan. If the referendum answer is a “yes” from a majority of voters turning out on the day, the Plan will be ‘made’ (i.e. adopted) by the local planning authority, East Devon District Council.

### Neighbourhood Plan Status

- 4.10 This Neighbourhood Plan, once ‘made’, will be a statutory development plan. This means that its policies will have significant weight when it comes to being used by the local planning authority to help determine proposals for development submitted through planning applications. It will form the local tier of planning policy in our Parish. It sits with the district-wide Local Plan, produced by East Devon District Council (also a statutory development plan) underneath the umbrella of national planning policy in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as the main planning policy documents relevant to the Clyst St. George ‘neighbourhood area’. Other important planning documents which govern specific issues are the Minerals and Waste Plans produced at the county-wide level.
- 4.11 When the Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan is made, its policies will be used by the local planning authority when it considers decisions that need to be made about development proposals submitted through the planning application process. The Neighbourhood Plan’s policies cannot guarantee that a proposal will be refused nor be granted permission, but the policies will carry significant weight, alongside policies of the NPPF and East Devon Local Plan when weighing up the appropriateness of the development proposal in question. It should also influence significantly development proposals as they are being formulated.

## 5. The Structure of Our Plan

- 5.1 Our Plan sets out the neighbourhood planning aims and objectives for the Clyst St. George neighbourhood area, which have been developed following a dialogue with the community and shaped by existing planning policies, plans and contributions of key organisations and agencies.
- 5.2 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out our local planning policies on a topic by topic basis. The topics have been derived by pulling together common aims and common key issues arising from consultation. The brief introduction to each topic, which includes a short description of the situation in Clyst St. George Parish today, is based on the findings of the research, surveys and consultations that have taken place as part of the neighbourhood planning process. More detail can be found in our Local Evidence Report of March 2015<sup>6</sup>.
- 5.3 Under each topic heading we summarise the characteristics of that topic and the key issues which have been identified and set out the agreed objectives the neighbourhood planning policies are seeking to achieve. Then, for each Neighbourhood Plan policy that follows we set out:
- the policy statement; and
  - our explanation of and justification for the policy, including reference to local evidence and to the other planning policies in national and district planning documents which relate to that policy
- 5.4 It is important to note that, while we have packaged policies under topic headings, when development proposals are being assessed, the whole plan (i.e. all policies) should be considered as policies in one topic, which may apply to proposals which naturally fit under another.
- 5.5 Our Plan finishes with an explanation of how we will monitor and review the Plan and a glossary which seeks to demystify some of the planning terminology used in our Plan.

### Companion Documents

- 5.6 Several other documents have been prepared to accompany the Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Plan. We are obliged to produce:
- Consultation Statement
  - Basic Conditions Statement
- 5.7 The Neighbourhood Plan is subject to testing as it is developed to help determine its positive or negative impact on the social, environmental and economic character of the neighbourhood area. If significant environmental effects are thought likely, an environmental report, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 5.8 A Screening Opinion was sought from the local planning authority. In June 2017, it confirmed that the Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan does not require either a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor a Habitat Regulation Assessment. *“The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact. It does not propose a level of development over and above that in the adopted Local Plan and is in accordance with the adopted Local Plan (which was itself subject to SEA)”*. The Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan was also adjudged as being unlikely to have an adverse effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d), alone or in combination with other plans and projects. *“It does not propose a level of development significantly over and above that in the adopted Local Plan (which was itself subject to HRA). The Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Habitat Regulation Assessment”*<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> See full report at <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CSGENP-Local-Context-Evidence-Report-vers.-2-mar15.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See SEA Screening Opinion <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/progress-reports>

## 6. Vision, Aims and Objectives

### Developing a Neighbourhood Plan framework

6.1 The framework for the Neighbourhood Plan comprises:

- a **vision** - for the long-term future of Clyst St. George
- the **aims** - that it is hoped that the Plan can help achieve
- the **objectives** - that we expect the Plan to attain by the application of appropriate neighbourhood planning policies

### Vision

6.2 A Neighbourhood Plan should set out a vision for the future of its neighbourhood. The vision should reflect a desired end state that is consistent with the values and overall priorities of the community.

#### Vision Statement

**To retain the 'rural Devon' feel of our Parish,  
whilst bringing the advantages of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to our homes and businesses.**

### Aims and Objectives

6.3 The process of arriving at an agreed set of aims and objectives started with a 'workshop' event in November 2015<sup>8</sup>. Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group took part in a session that examined the evidence and the response we had received to surveys and other forms of consultation, to derive a draft set of neighbourhood planning aims and objectives. Much of the community-based evidence came from the response to the Community Questionnaire that was distributed during June 2015.

6.4 The draft set of aims and objectives was the focus of a community consultation event in the Parish during January 2016. The response was positive and encouraging. Details of what local people said can be found in the Consultation Statement accompanying the Submission Version of the Plan. As a result of the reaction and comments at the consultation event, several revisions were made to the draft aims and objectives. A revised set was approved by Clyst St. George Parish Council on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016. We believe they reflect the community's neighbourhood planning and development agenda. It is this agenda that underpins the Neighbourhood Plan's policies.

6.5 The approved aims and objectives for each topic are set out as part of the introduction to the policies for that topic.

### Community Actions

6.6 Not all the objectives derived from the consultation are land use-related. Several have been categorised as 'community actions' and been referred to the Parish Council as matters of importance to the local community. Positive action in response to these would support the neighbourhood planning policies and be a significant contributory factor in achieving our aims. They include:

- *Carrying out a local bio-diversity audit*
- *Establishing a conservation working group*
- *Exploring the role of self-build housing*
- *Supporting the delivery of local services for the elderly and less mobile residents*
- *Promoting the use of community facilities*

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CSGNP-Workshop-Report-Nov15.pdf>

## 7. Sustainable Development

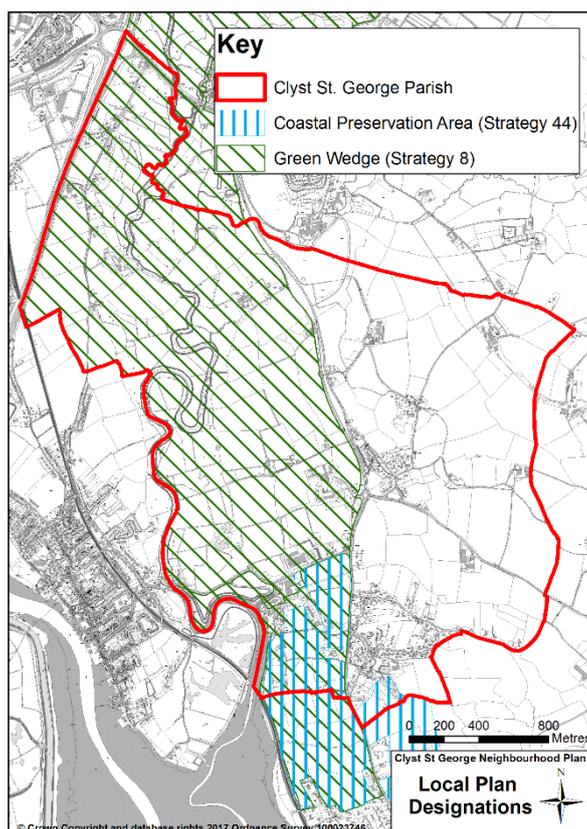
### Overview

7.1 There has been much discussion on the sustainability of the Parish. The present inadequacies have been confirmed by the Local Plan and highlighted in our consultations. We have few community and social facilities. What we have, are close to capacity and not conveniently located for most parishioners. The footpath system is poor, public transport inadequate and we are far too car-dependent. We are fortunate in several ways to have a shop in the Parish, in the form of Dart's Farm, but it does not aim to supply our everyday needs. Rather it supplies excellent local produce and niche products at a premium price. The Parish is unable to accommodate further major development without significant investment in local infrastructure.

7.2 The physical constraints on development are also substantial. The area of the Parish west of the A376 is classified as part of the 'Coastal Protection Zone' and is protected by Strategy 44 of East Devon Local Plan (see Map 3). Much of this area along with other parts of the Parish in proximity to the hamlet of Ebford and Clyst St. George are liable to flooding.

7.3 The Parish to the west of the A376 is designated as a 'Green Wedge' and protected from development by Strategy 8 of the Local Plan (see Map 3). This area has an important function in keeping our settlements separate and distinct, as well as having significant value as a wildlife habitat.

7.4 Each of the settlements in the Parish has its own character, which is defined in part by the built environment that has evolved over time but also its setting and relationship with the natural environment around it. The value of the local green spaces we have within the settlement areas has not been underestimated.



MAP 3 - Strategic Designations

<b>Sustainable Development</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide better links between our communities</li> <li>• Protect green spaces</li> <li>• Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of the private motor car</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Ensure development furthers equality and diversity</i></li> <li>2. <i>Ensure infrastructure improvements serve future needs and demands</i></li> <li>3. <i>Protect valuable green spaces, hedgerows and trees from development</i></li> <li>4. <i>Address flooding issues and minimise future flood risk</i></li> <li>5. <i>Maximise the use of alternative transport modes</i></li> <li>6. <i>Minimise any adverse impact of renewable energy</i></li> </ol>

**Development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they:**

- i. contribute to the sustainability of settlements and communities in the Parish;**
- ii. can be accommodated within the current settlement areas;**
- iii. have regard to the need to make efficient use of land by the reuse of previously developed land;**
- iv. are of a size and scale to minimise the impact on the character, infrastructure and environment of the settlement;**
- v. have safe and suitable access arrangements; and**
- vi. follow the principles of good quality design and conform to the requirements of policy CSG9 'Design Matters'.**

- 
- 7.5 In preparing a neighbourhood plan we are obliged to support the strategic approach set out in the NPPF and the Local Plan. Development should be sustainable or contribute to the sustainability of a neighbourhood. The Local Plan has determined that neither Clyst St. George or Ebford are sustainable settlements and the area is unable to accommodate major development. The Local Plan designates the whole of the Parish as 'countryside' and subject to Local Plan Policy S7 where development "*will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located*". It is the stated intention of the local planning authority that development in countryside areas such as the Parish of Clyst St. George will be resisted, unless on the merits of the specific case, there is a proven agricultural, forestry or horticultural need or it will meet a community need, or there is another clear policy justification.
- 7.6 Despite the 'countryside' designation of the whole Parish, policy CSG1 recognises that development may need to take place. It sets out the principles with which development proposals should conform. The over-riding consideration should be the impact of development proposals on the sustainability of: a parish that is predominantly precious countryside; rural settlement areas with distinct characteristics and facilities; and a community of people that want to be connected properly and safely with those around them. The focus of future development should be the existing settlement areas of the Parish and previously developed land. Policy CSG1 does not preclude extensions to existing buildings of an appropriate scale. The emphasis of policy CSG1 is on establishing local criteria by which the sustainability of development proposals should be judged.
- 7.7 Development in the neighbourhood area will be required to meet the appropriate quality of design, construction, layout and local distinctiveness as set out within the Clyst St. George Design Statement. The scale and density of development proposal and its relationship to its surroundings will be of significance.
- 7.8 Development proposals on land that is considered outside the confines of the settlement areas will usually only be supported if it relates to acceptable rural activities and is consistent with policy CSG5.

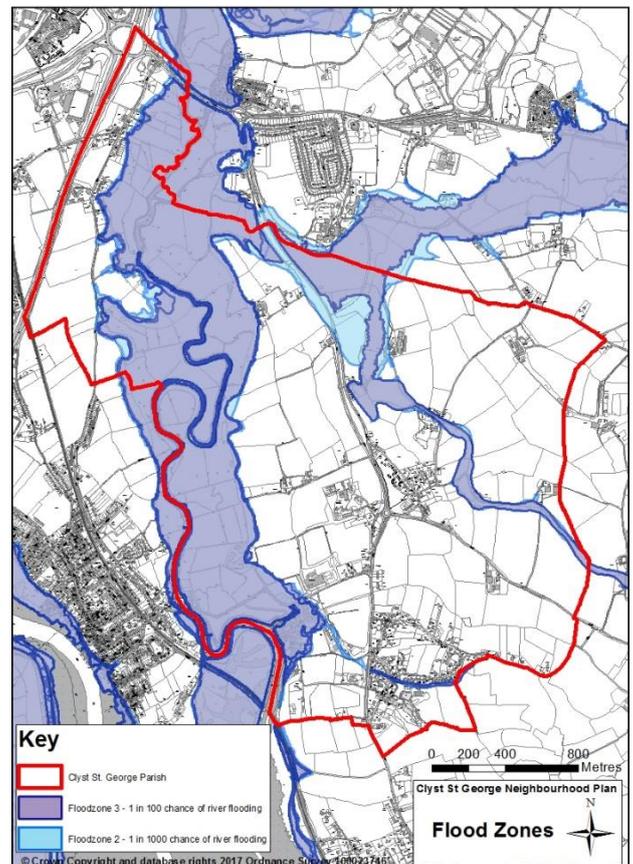


**Development proposals, where appropriate, should be accompanied by detailed drainage proposals setting out the approach to foul drainage, water run-off attenuation, to avoid increasing the risk of flooding and aiding improvements in water quality.**

7.13 Flooding is common and regular along the Clyst Valley. Steep slopes and high rainfall, especially in the upper catchment of the River Exe rising on Exmoor, mean that river levels can rise quickly following rainfall. The Clyst floodplain and water meadows in the Parish serve an important flood control function. This should not however be at the risk of local homes and businesses. Map 5 identifies the flood zones in proximity to the two villages.

7.14 The Exe Estuary Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy document published by the Environment Agency in 2013 highlighted the risks to flooding of agricultural land in the Parish especially around the road between Clyst St. George and Topsham. Around this area, whilst fewer than 20 properties currently have a 1 in 5, 20%, annual risk of tidal flooding, the report expects the number at this level of risk to rise to over 40 properties by 2030.

7.15 Flooding takes place within the hamlet of Ebford, where properties have experienced significant rain water run-off during periods of heavy rain.



Map 5 – Flood Zones

7.16 It is important that any future planning proposals ensure that the threat of flooding on adjacent properties is clearly mitigated. The NPPF (para. 106) states that “*inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk*” and, where development is necessary, it should not result in increased flood risk elsewhere.

7.17 Policy CSG3 requires any development proposal that may heighten the flood risk to land and properties in the Parish to provide detailed drainage proposals to ensure that flood risk is not increased. Where possible we expect development to contribute towards improved water quality. As the Environment Agency has told us: “*at present the lower River Clyst (in common with many of East Devon’s rivers) is only considered to be a moderate ecological status and is failing for phosphate and macrophytes/phyobenthos. These are elements which are indicative of high nutrient levels, which are derived primarily from agricultural pollution and discharges from sewage treatment facilities.*”<sup>9</sup> We have been encouraged by the Environment Agency to adopt a bold policy “*which seeks not just to ensure no increase flood risk but to seek better management and where possible a reduction in flood risks*”.

<sup>9</sup> Email, Regulation 14 Response, Environment Agency, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## 8. Natural Environment

### Overview

- 8.1 When asked, as part of the Parish Community Survey (2015), how people would like to see the Parish described in fifteen years' time, 64% of those surveyed identified that they wished to live in a tranquil area and 65% a rural environment. As far as possible therefore, whilst planning for the future, we seek to retain and enhance the existing key landscape features where possible.

### Geology

- 8.2 The lower-lying softer landscape of the Clyst Valley around Clyst St. George and Ebford has been gradually shaped by river erosion over the last 2 million years. The Clyst St. George and Ebford areas comprise of Exmouth Mudstone and Sandstone Formation formed from rivers depositing mainly sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form river terrace deposits, with fine silt and clay from overbank floods forming floodplain alluvium. This geology has helped shape the natural landscape of the Parish today. There is also clear evidence of the local landscape features being used for building materials in the Parish, for example Fisher Bridge was built using limestone and local quarried sand and the Lychgate of St. George Church, dated 1867, was built of coursed rubble and sandstone walls.

### Landscape Type

- 8.3 The East Devon District landscape character assessment identified that most of the Parish is landscape character type '4D Lowland Plains'. The key characteristics of this type of area are:
- Level to gently sloping landform
  - Mixed farmland, often in arable cultivation
  - Small discrete broadleaf woodlands
  - Regular medium to large field pattern with local variation
  - Wide low roadside hedges and banks with hedgerow oaks
  - Settled, with mixed pattern of large villages, hamlets or isolated farms
  - Some villages significantly enlarged and modified by 20th century expansion
  - Victorian estate cottages and large farm buildings
  - Commercial development
  - Long views over low hedges
  - Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts, despite general level of development
- 8.4 That part of the Parish dominated by the River Clyst falls within landscape character type '4B – Coastal Plains'. The key characteristics of this area are as follows:
- Flat land, usually bordering an estuary or within a flood plain, based on alluvial or tidal deposits
  - Vegetation influenced by coastal conditions with some hedges but limited tree cover
  - Marine levels comprise of wet pastures, reclaimed grazing marsh enclosed by reed fringed, often brackish drainage ditches and streams providing habitats and high biodiversity value
- 8.5 The western edge of the parish boundary running adjacent to the river Clyst falls within category '4A – Unsettled Farmed Valley Floors'. The key characteristics are as follows:
- Open flat land form, often with distinct vegetated field edges
  - Shallow watercourse screened by riparian vegetation
  - Hedges, not banks, generally on the boundary with rising land
  - Pastoral land use, with wet meadows and some arable, with variable field sizes
- 8.6 It was apparent from the findings of the Community Survey (June 2015) and the community consultation held in January 2016 that the community's overriding wish is to protect the character of the natural environment within the Parish. The following two statements encapsulates what the community feels is important to preserving the local environment and what is important to them:
- "We must ensure we protect wildlife and environmentally sensitive sites"*

*“We value our landscape and to this end we will aim to protect our rural setting”*

- 8.7 In order to protect what is important to the community it is important that all development proposals should robustly demonstrate that impact on the natural environment has been avoided or mitigated.

Natural Environment
<b>Aims</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect wildlife and environmentally sensitive sites</li> <li>• Protect our rural setting</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>New development proposals should be:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>based on full assessment of any likely impact on the natural environment,</i></li> <li>• <i>minimise potentially harmful impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, having regard for the status of sites of international, national and county ecological significance which are shown on Map 6, and</i></li> <li>• <i>achieve a net gain in biodiversity wherever possible</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <i>Minimise light and noise pollution from development</i></li> <li>3. <i>Define and protect key areas of landscape, countryside and agriculture</i></li> <li>4. <i>Protect trees and hedgerows</i></li> </ol>

**Policy No. CSG4**

**Areas of Ecological Significance**

**Areas of ecological significance should be protected from the impact of development.**

**Development proposals that adversely affect areas of ecological significance will be resisted.**

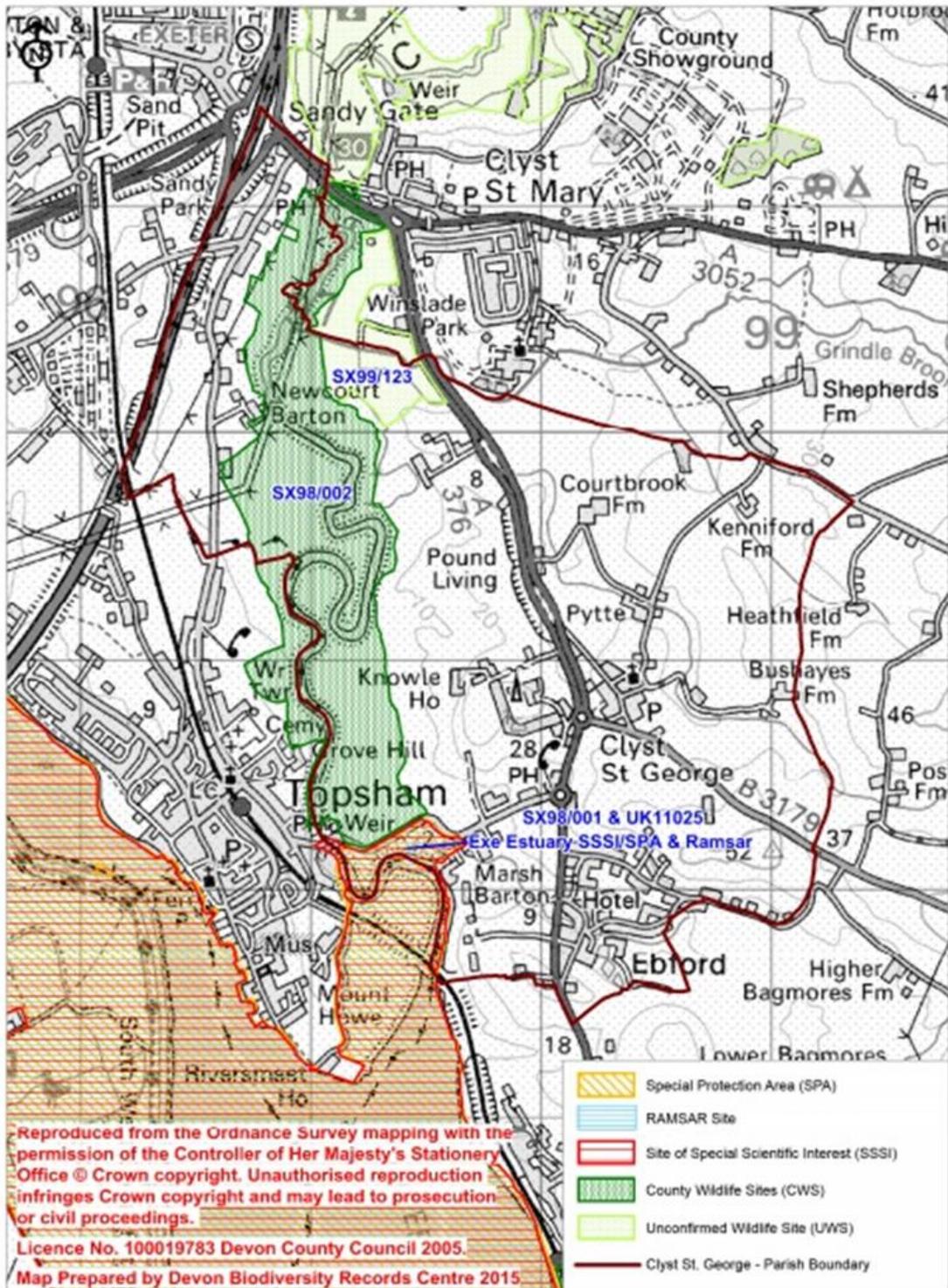
- 8.8 The River Clyst is flanked on both sides by land that has ecological significance, according to the latest report we have from the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre<sup>10</sup>. Much of the land alongside the river is designated as a county wildlife site. This is a non-statutory designation, but nevertheless important to protect from the impact of development and human activity. The designation, by a County Wildlife Site Panel, is generally based on habitat or known presence of specific species. We are advised by the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre that *“the best practice approach is to avoid locating development on designated sites as they have already been recognised for their high biodiversity value”*.
- 8.9 We are also mindful of the proximity of the Parish to the Coastal Preservation Area and the ‘Exe Estuary with its multiple statutory designations of Ramsar, SSSI and SPA<sup>11</sup>. These areas with their ‘priority habitats’ are recognised as special by policies S44 and S47 of the Local Plan.

<sup>10</sup> Wildlife Site Resource Map and Species Information for Neighbourhood Planning – Clyst St. George, Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, Mar 2015 <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Clyst-St-George-Biodiversity.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> **Ramsar** sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under Ramsar Convention (1971) these sites support vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities, or they support 20,000 or more water birds.

The Estuary is also recognised as Sites of Special Scientific Interest [**SSSI**], which are statutory designated sites notified by Natural England because of their plants, animals or geological features. Special Protection Areas[**SPA**], classified under the Bird Directive to provide increased protection and management for areas which are important for breeding, feeding, wintering or migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds. These include such species as the Avocet and the Slavonian Grebe.

8.10 The NPPF says we should identify and map components of the local ecological networks and promote their preservation (para 117). Map 6 has been provided by the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, it shows those areas that are regarded as having ecological status or significance in 2016. Policy CSG4 recognises the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites we live close to, emphasises how importantly we regard these areas and puts protection in place for all areas of the Parish that are considered of ecological significance, to complement the positive preservation work of local bodies and partnerships.



Map 6 – Areas of Ecological Significance 2016

Development proposals on land outside the confines of the settlement areas will usually be supported if they are necessary for the purposes of agriculture, or farm diversification or outdoor recreation, without harming the countryside. Such development proposals should make a positive contribution to the preservation of the countryside and its biodiversity and enhancing its setting, or its responsible use and enjoyment by the public.

Development proposals will not be supported that result in the net loss of:

- i. publicly accessible open space, footpaths or bridleways;
- ii. important views;
- iii. landscape features;
- iv. biodiversity features;
- v. higher grade agricultural land; or
- vi. damage to the essential character of the area.

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- 8.11 The Community Survey 2015 identified that the three things parishioners most like about the area where they live are: rurality, peace and quiet, and tranquillity. We are privileged to live in such a pleasant rural area. We have a responsibility to ensure that what makes it rural should be properly stewarded. We encourage the sympathetic management of the countryside and natural outdoor environment in and around the Parish to enhance the quality of the landscape, improve local biodiversity and provide other benefits to the community's quality of life. 62% of respondents to the Community Survey 2015 expressed a worry that we could lose some of our precious countryside.
- 8.12 We are not opposed to all development outside the settlement areas. The three main settlement areas as described in paragraph 2.9 of this Plan are shown indicatively on the map on Page 3 of the Clyst St George Parish Design Statement, adopted by the Parish Council in March 2018. Policy CSG5 will apply to all the land which is outside the built-up areas of these settlements. Local Plan Policy S7, which relates to the countryside, permits development consistent with policies in a neighbourhood plan where *"it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:*
1. Land form and patterns of settlement.
  2. Important natural and man-made features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings.
  3. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions".
- 8.13 Policy CSG5 recognises that development may be necessary to ensure that an existing rural business can continue to function, and the countryside is an appropriate location for some recreation activities. Consistent with the NPPF (para. 113) which says that we should set criteria-based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting landscape areas will be judged, its purpose is to ensure that development that does take place is relevant and necessary and does as little harm to our countryside assets as possible.

Development proposals should avoid the loss of or damage to trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute positively to the character, biodiversity and amenity of the area. Development proposals which could result in loss or damage to aged or veteran trees will not be supported. Where it is unavoidable, development proposals must provide for appropriate replacement planting on the site, together or as close as possible to it together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting. Such replacement planting should be in the ratio of three trees for the loss of a large tree, two for a medium sized tree and one for a small tree.

New development within the proximity of existing mature trees will be expected to have an arboricultural method statement in place before any development commences. This will detail tree protection strategies to be employed during construction.

The areas of woodland delineated on Map 7 are regarded as important natural features. Any development proposals that would result in the loss, damage or deterioration of these areas will be resisted.

- 8.14 Clyst St. George Parish covers a large area with three relatively small population centres. The mature woodlands and trees within the area form an integral part of the rural character of the Parish and are recognised as significant to the area by the East Devon Landscape Character Assessment carried out in 2008<sup>12</sup>.
- 8.15 The Community Survey 2015 highlighted the importance that parishioners place on the natural environment. 72% of respondents cited the rural nature of the area where they lived as being one of its most appealing aspects. Furthermore, nearly 95% of respondents felt that the rural feel of the Parish was fundamental to our quality of life and identity. However, 60% of respondents expressed concern about the potential loss of the countryside or the impact development could have on this.
- 8.16 The loss of trees and woodland would not just harm the character of the area. Many are important wildlife habitats. NPPF (para. 117) says we should be promoting the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks.
- 8.17 Policy CSG6 places a premium on existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, particularly those identified on Map 7, which we want to protect from the effects of development.



*Map 7 – Woodlands to Be Protected*

<sup>12</sup> Link to East Devon and Blackdown Hill Landscape Character Assessment, 2008  
<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/343463/2-lca-and-mg.pdf>

**The loss of hedgerows with visual, historic or wildlife importance will be resisted. Existing hedgerows should be retained, especially those on the side of roads and lanes within the Parish. Where loss of hedgerows is unavoidable, replacement planting of native hedgerow species to achieve a net gain in quantity will be required.**

**New hedgerows, using native hedgerow species, are preferred as boundary treatments around and within new developments.**

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- 8.18 Hedgerows are not only an integral part of the rural character of the Parish; they are a protected environment for native plants and habitat for animals. Because of their unique national importance, many of the longer lengths of countryside hedging in the Parish are protected under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997<sup>13</sup>, which is enforced by the local planning authority.
- 8.19 The respondents to the Community Survey 2015 highlighted the importance of the rural nature of the Parish to the community. The hedgerows are a major contributor to this sense of rurality. Together they form important wildlife corridors through the area.
- 8.20 The NPPF (para. 118) says that we should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks. For this reason, we would advocate the use of hedging as the preferred boundary treatment for new developments whenever possible. Policy S47 of the Local Plan states that all development proposals will need to conserve the biodiversity and geodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation of habitats and maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats.
- 8.21 The Clyst St. George Design Statement<sup>14</sup> addresses the issue and importance of local hedgerows. We expect developers to take heed of the advice offered in the Design Statement.

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<sup>13</sup> A countryside hedgerow is protected if it is: a boundary line of trees and shrubs that at one time was a continuous line; more than 20m long with gaps of 20m or less in its length; less than 20m long, but meets another hedge at each end; less than 5m at its base.

A countryside hedgerow is protected if it's on or next to: land used for agriculture or forestry; land used for keeping horses, ponies or donkeys; common land; a village green; a site of special scientific interest; a protected European site such as a special area of conservation or special protection area; a national nature reserve; a local nature reserve; a public right of way; Crown land

A hedgerow is also considered important if it or the hedgerow of which it is a stretch has existed for 30 years or more (The Hedgerows Regulations 1997)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.csgrp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CSG-Design-Statementv1.1.pdf>

## 9. Built Environment and Housing

### Overview

- 9.1 The Parish area has been settled for well over a thousand years. The buildings that make up our settlements have been added piece-meal down the years. The old farm houses and barns, workers' cottages and more recently in-fill dwellings create a tapestry of styles and designs.
- 9.2 In Clyst St. George there are several Grade 2 listed buildings, including the Church and its adjoining stocks. There are some 19th century stone houses, although the majority architectural style is modern. The church, with a red sandstone tower, was completely rebuilt in 1854-59; gutted by fire in an air raid in 1940; and rebuilt again in 1952. The Lady Seaward Primary School was endowed by Lady Hannah Seaward in 1705; it was rebuilt in 1859. It is described by Pevsner as "*unspoilt*" and "*picturesque*". The Old Rectory dates from the 18th century.
- 9.3 In Ebford there are also several Grade 2 listed buildings, although the dominant and majority architectural style is modern (20<sup>th</sup> century). It has some notable houses, including Ebford Manor which was constructed circa 1710 for Robert Venn a wealthy wool merchant from Topsham.
- 9.4 The Community Survey 2015 confirmed that this variety of housing styles, reflecting different eras was an aspect of the Parish that was very desirable. The Neighbourhood Plan's policies aim to maintain this with small scale developments and with respect for the various existing styles.
- 9.5 Housing development in the Parish has usually been small in scale. Over the past 20 years, approximately 30 houses in total have been constructed in Ebford. The majority have been infill, large gardens being used as building plots, also a barn and stable conversion. Most new houses are large detached homes that have been built by an individual for their own use and scattered throughout the hamlet.
- 9.6 The latest development to take place, 25 houses in Clyst St. George village, is the largest ever to be built in the Parish. In one development, it increases the number of dwellings in the village by 65%.
- 9.7 East Devon's Local Plan, which came into force in January 2016, has designated the entire Parish of Clyst St. George as 'countryside' so that future development should be highly restricted. There was little support during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation in 2016 to the proposal that growth should be as high as 50 dwellings over the next 15 years. For this reason, we are not setting targets. Our policies are designed to ensure that whatever residential development that is considered permissible under the policies of the Local Plan, which does take place during the plan period, is well-designed and appropriate; and meets some kind of local need that helps maintain a balanced community.
- 9.8 In recognition of the distinct character of each of our settlement areas and the wish, expressed by the community during consultation, that we should seek to protect and enhance the distinctions, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared a Parish Design Statement<sup>15</sup>, which has been consulted on and adopted by the Parish Council. Its purpose is to draw developers' attention to the distinct characteristics of our settlements, including their heritage assets, and offer guidance on what may be appropriate and how new development can serve to complement and enhance what is already there.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CSG-Design-Statementv1.1.pdf>

Built Environment
Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and protect our heritage assets</li> <li>• Ensure that development is appropriate</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the diverse character and separate identity of settlements</li> <li>• Ensure that housing meets local need</li> <li>• Ensure that housing growth is justified in terms of numbers, type, scale of development, design and location</li> </ul>
Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Identify heritage assets and areas to protect</i></li> <li>2. <i>Develop and recognise a design statement</i></li> <li>3. <i>Establish acceptable scale for development</i></li> <li>4. <i>Define built-up areas</i></li> <li>5. <i>Carry out review of brownfield sites</i></li> <li>6. <i>The design new buildings to be sympathetic to surroundings</i></li> <li>7. <i>Prevent over-development of garden sites</i></li> <li>8. <i>Carry out a local housing need assessment and understand nature of local housing need</i></li> <li>9. <i>Give priority to small scale development that meets a local need</i></li> <li>10. <i>Influence the location and phasing of housing development</i></li> <li>11. <i>Ensure suitable infrastructure is in place</i></li> </ol>

## Policy No. CSG8

## Local Heritage Assets

**Development proposals will be supported that maintain or enhance the character and setting of a heritage asset.**

**Development proposals that might cause substantial harm to listed buildings, registered parks or gardens, or their settings will not be supported.**

**Any renovations or alterations of buildings or structures designated as heritage assets requiring planning permission should be designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the heritage asset's historical and architectural interest and setting.**

**Development proposals in proximity to a designated heritage asset should provide a clear assessment of the significance and impact of the proposal on the asset and its setting and justify the design approach taken.**

- 9.9 Policy CSG8 is intended to provide an appropriate level of protection for the statutory heritage assets of the Parish. The Local Evidence Report, 2015, identifies the Listed Buildings (Grade II\* and Grade II) and structures which exist in the Parish.
- 9.10 The NPPF (para. 126) encourage us to have “*a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, we should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance*”. The area is steeped in history despite having a limited number of heritage assets remaining. Ebford Manor is a grade II\* listed building. The Parish Church, the Old Rectory and the Manor House are probably the stand-out grade II listed buildings. Other buildings including farmhouses and cottages are also listed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
- 9.11 Policy S49 of the Local Plan states that East Devon District Council will work with local communities to help conserve and enhance the contribution that historic places make to the economic and social well-being of the population. There are other buildings and structures in the Parish, beyond those that are statutorily listed, that have a heritage value and highly regarded. As a community, we wish to ensure that these are recognised and provided with some protection

from inappropriate development. The Parish Council has agreed<sup>16</sup> to maintain a Schedule of Local Heritage Value that should be subject to Policy CSG8. Based on criteria set by East Devon District Council, the Parish Council is compiling a local list of heritage assets.

- 9.12 It is hoped that buildings and structures on the 'Clyst St. George Schedule of Local Heritage Value' will be included on the East Devon List of Local Heritage Assets once it has been created. Then, the significance of the non-designated asset will be taken into account when planning applications are determined, in accordance with the NPPF (para. 135).

#### Policy No. CSG9

#### Design Matters

**Development proposals should, where appropriate, provide an assessment of the character of the site and its context (including landscape character) and show how the development fits in with these specific characteristics.**

**Development proposals within the existing settlement areas will usually be supported provided they:**

- i. are of a scale, massing, density and design in keeping with the local character of neighbouring buildings;**
- ii. have access and parking arrangements that do not result in an unacceptable impact on road and pedestrian safety;**
- iii. do not have an adverse effect on residential amenity;**
- iv. will not cause nuisance to neighbouring uses; and**
- v. will not have any other unacceptable environmental impact.**

**All development proposals are encouraged to demonstrate how they have taken the Clyst St. George Design Statement into account.**

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- 9.13 An assessment of site character and context will be sought for all larger development proposals i.e. between 6 and 25 dwellings or for any new business uses, and for smaller developments which could have a significant adverse effect on the surrounding area e.g. on the natural environment, the form and scale of existing development, heritage assets, the amenity and function of neighbouring uses, local transport infrastructure and/or flood risk. The NPPF (para. 56) states that *"good design is a key aspect of sustainable development"*. In the context of existing settlement areas, the NPPF (para. 58) says that development *"respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation"*.
- 9.14 The built-up areas of Clyst St. George are characterised by low density housing of mixed architectural style. Most of the houses are detached or semi-detached and, except for the listed manor houses and old Ebford House Hotel, no more than two storeys. We believe that, in accordance with the NPPF, it is important that new development is of a high quality of design and makes a positive contribution to the local built environment. What this means is avoiding a dominant style or large areas of high density/terraced housing.
- 9.15 Local Plan Policy S48 says that local distinctiveness and the importance of local design standards in the development process will be of critical importance to ensure villages retain their intrinsic physical built qualities. It goes on to commit East Devon District Council to working with local communities to produce design statements to guide new development and ensure its appropriateness. Following liaison with East Devon District Council, the Parish Council has approved a Design Statement<sup>17</sup> to aid the design process and ensure that proposals come forward that reflect the community's desire to retain the character of their neighbourhood.

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<sup>16</sup> See minutes of Clyst St George Parish Council 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.csgnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CSG-Design-Statementv1.1.pdf>

## 10. Community Spaces and Recreation

### Overview

- 10.1 The Parish of Clyst St. George is small and relatively sparsely populated. We have little in the way of community spaces and land devoted to recreation. Clyst St. George village is home to a flourishing cricket club with pavilion and cricket nets. Clyst St. George village also has a village hall, which is available for booking for local events, and the parish church of St. George, with a church nature garden close by. There is also Lady Seaward’s Church of England Primary School and Little Dragons pre-school in the village.
- 10.2 The Clyst Road area and the hamlet of Ebford have no specific community spaces or recreational facilities. The cycle track from Woodbury to the Exe trail runs through Ebford using public and private roads. Cycling, horse riding and dog walking in the lanes are the usual forms of recreation carried out in these areas.
- 10.3 Results from public consultation showed that residents value the opportunities for walking in the area and would like the traffic in the lanes to be more controlled; they also desire further footpaths to link Ebford with Clyst St. George and even on to Clyst St Mary, if possible.
- 10.4 Residents also requested a public space, suitable for all ages, in Ebford.

<b>Community Spaces and Recreation</b>
<b>Aims</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support community self-help</li> <li>• Sustain the role of our community buildings and spaces</li> <li>• Improve local recreation opportunities</li> <li>• Encourage walking and cycling</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Support proposals intended to ensure community buildings and spaces remain valuable community assets</i></li> <li>2. <i>Resist loss of recreation space</i></li> <li>3. <i>Provide new recreation space that meets local need</i></li> <li>4. <i>Extend the cycle/footpaths network</i></li> </ol>

#### Policy No. CSG10

#### Existing Community Facilities

**Development proposals to ensure that local valued community facilities remain viable and suitable for community use will usually be supported.**

**Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of locally valued community facilities will only be supported where:**

- i. there is no reasonable prospect of viable continued use of the existing building or facility which will benefit the local community;**
- ii. they have been subject to consultation with the local community; and,**
- iii. it will provide an alternative community use for which there is local support.**

- 10.5 The NPPF (para. 70) states that to remain a healthy and inclusive community we should recognise the local social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that are needed and “*guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs*” (para. 70).
- 10.6 The Parish has a limited number of community facilities. In 2017, they are: the Cricket Club, the Church, the School and the Village Hall; all of which are located within the village of Clyst St. George.

- 10.7 All these facilities play an important part in community life. The village hall, for instance, has a high level of regular bookings for club activities, indoor exercise and Parish Council meetings; and it hosts a range of local events. 70% of the attendees at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation in 2016 thought it important that we should sustain the role of the Village Hall, as well as the other community assets we have.
- 10.8 Policy CSG10 is designed to protect the community facilities we enjoy for the benefit of the community at large for as long as they are needed and supports moderate-scale alterations, in accordance with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Policy S32 of the East Devon Local Plan will be applied, requiring a full exploration of options for retention or replacement with a similar use, if proposals which would lead to the loss of existing community facilities or sports and recreation facilities are put forward.

#### **Policy No. CSG11 Existing Sports and Recreation Facilities**

**Development which would result in the loss of any existing sports or recreation facility to a non-sports or non-recreation use will not be supported unless:**

- i. the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates that there is no continuing demand for the facility and it is not possible to use the facility for other sports; or**
- ii. alternative provision of at least an equivalent quality, size, suitability, convenience and accessibility within the neighbourhood area is made.**

- 10.9 The NPPF (para. 74) is clear that “*existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on*” unless they are no longer required by the community or replaced by better facilities. Local Plan Policy S6 is only supportive of development within settlement areas if it does not involve the loss of land of local amenity importance or of recreational value.
- 10.10 At present, 2017, the only dedicated sports and recreation area in the Parish is the cricket ground. The cricket ground, Bohea Field, is privately-owned. It has been the home of the Clyst St. George Cricket Club for over a hundred years. The pitch and its nets are all well used and much valued facilities and draw players from the neighbourhood and surrounding area. The cricket ground provides a picturesque rural setting for cricket and other games, as well as for leisure walking. It is framed by ancient oaks. The School also uses the cricket ground for its sporting activities as it has no sports field of its own.
- 10.11 48% of the attendees at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation in 2016 thought it particularly important to protect existing recreation areas. 41% supported improvements to the recreation opportunities we have. Policy CSG11 protects the cricket ground unless it is no longer wanted by the local community or is replaced by an acceptable alternative sports and recreation area of similar quality and amenity.

#### **Policy No. CSG12 New Recreation and Play Spaces**

**Development proposals which provide for additional recreation and play facilities, which meet an identifiable local need and have the support of the local community, will be supported.**

- 10.12 The NPPF (para. 73) confirms that “*access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities*”.
- 10.13 The Parish is short of dedicated recreation and play space. Apart from cricket, residents need to travel outside the Parish to make use of the extensive sports and recreational facilities in Topsham and Exeter. This is not perceived as a hardship to a very mobile community such as ours. However, for the less mobile it is a problem and a good proportion of people, 41%, attending the

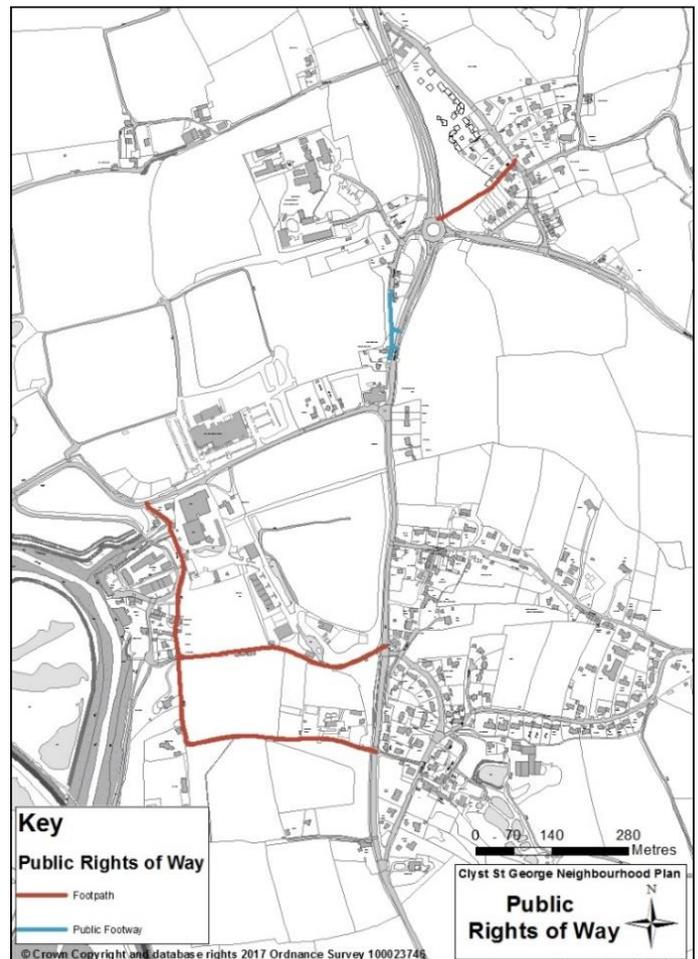
neighbourhood plan consultation felt it was important to improve access to local recreational facilities.

- 10.14 The East Devon District Council's Open Space Study 2014 concluded that the Parish is under-provided for in almost all categories (allotments, amenity open space, parks and recreation areas and play areas). There are, in 2017, no recreational facilities or public open spaces at all in Ebford. All our settlement areas could benefit from additional, conveniently located recreation and amenity areas. Policy S43 of the Local Plan sets open space minimum standards based on development thresholds.
- 10.15 Policy CSG12 supports proposals to provide additional recreation and play space in the Parish, in appropriate locations, in response to an identified local need.

**Policy No. CSG13 Local Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways**

**Development proposals to improve accessibility and extend local footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths and help connect them to the wider networks will be supported.**

- 10.16 The NPPF (para. 75) requires us to *“protect and enhance public rights of way and access and .... seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails”*.
- 10.17 The Parish contains very little in the way of footpaths or cycle track. The paucity of what we have is illustrated by Map 8. The most notable asset and opportunity is the Exeter to Exmouth Cycle Track (part of Sustrans route 2<sup>18</sup>) which runs along part of the western boundary of the Parish.
- 10.18 In the Community Survey 2015, 59% were in favour of walking and cycling being encouraged. At the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 2016, it was clear that there was support for the provision of more footpaths and cycle tracks. Many people advocated it for healthy exercise reasons, as well as recognising that more car-free routes would make the Parish a much safer place for pedestrians and cyclists and would likely encourage more non-car journeys by parishioners. Policy CSG13 supports improvements to the network in the interests of encouraging more use of transport modes other than the motor vehicle in the Parish.



MAP 8 – Existing Footpath Network

<sup>18</sup> Part of the National Cycle Network

## 11. Traffic and Parking

### Overview

- 11.1 The Parish of Clyst St. George is defined by the motor car. It is essentially three built-up areas separated by two very busy roads, the A376 and the B3179 Woodbury Road. Whilst the National Cycle Network connects to Ebford via the Woodbury spur, there are no safe pedestrian or cycling connections along the main roads or, and just as importantly, between the three built-up areas.
- 11.2 The 2011 Census confirms that over 97% of households have a motor vehicle and over 60% have two or more vehicles. The data also shows that over 80% of working residents travel to work in a car or van. This highlights the lack of suitable alternatives for reaching the main areas of employment in areas such as Exeter, other than by car.
- 11.3 Despite the proximity of the railway, the nearest railway station to the Parish is Topsham which is served by a regular service that provides access to Exmouth, Exeter and beyond. The distance to the station for Ebford and Clyst St. George residents is generally considered too far to be accessed by any other means than by car.
- 11.4 The number of cars owned by parishioners and on-road parking, causes problems of road safety for road users in the Parish, many of whom are pedestrians and cyclists.

<b>Traffic and Parking</b>
<b>Aims</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and extend cycleways</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian safety</li> <li>• Encourage increased public transport use</li> <li>• Reduce traffic impact</li> <li>• Address parking issues</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Support the development of safe pedestrian and cycle routes around the Parish</i></li> <li>2. <i>Enable measures that reduce the negative impact of the motor vehicle, which have the support of the community</i></li> <li>3. <i>Provide more off-road parking space</i></li> <li>4. <i>Provision of off road parking on new developments.</i></li> <li>5. <i>Support measures to alleviate traffic and parking problems on Clyst Road</i></li> </ol>

#### Policy No. CSG14

#### Safer Travel

#### **Measures to provide wider and safer footpaths and improved pedestrian and cycling routes within and between local settlement areas will be supported.**

- 11.5 The NPPF (para. 35) states that “*plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people*”.
- 11.6 A resident of Clyst St. George has no route that enables them to walk or cycle, in safety and separate from road traffic, to the local shop (Darts Farm), or to the local train station at Topsham. Most pupils at the only school in the Parish, in Clyst St. George, arrive and leave by car for convenience and safety reasons, which causes congestion and its attendant dangers. There are no pavements in Ebford apart from along the A376 road.
- 11.7 More than 85% of respondents to the Community Survey 2015 said the private car was their main form of regular transport. However, over 60% stated that, given improved transport infrastructure, they would like to walk or cycle more. It is worth noting that fewer than 3% of the Community Survey respondents named the bus or train as their main form of transport. It is

therefore reasonable to assume that the only viable alternative to the private motor vehicle is walking or cycling.

- 11.8 Improved pedestrian and cycle paths would be the best way to reduce dependence on the private car amongst parishioners. 85% of respondents to the Community Survey 2015 were in support of such improvements taking place.
- 11.9 Policy CSG14 is supportive of the provision of pavements within the settlement areas, where practical, and dedicated footpaths and cycleways (even jointly) between the settlement areas and the facilities and services we share.

**Policy No. CSG15                      Traffic Management**

**Traffic management schemes that increase safety for all road users in the Parish and are proven to have the backing of the community will be supported.**

- 11.10 The NPPF (para. 35) encourages us to *“create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians”*.
- 11.11 64% of respondents to the Community Survey 2015 felt there was a parking problem within the Parish. A similar proportion felt that there was a specific problem of commuter traffic cutting through back lanes as *“rat runs”* during peak traffic times. Other specific issues that need tackling, are the parking along the Clyst Road related to rugby match days at nearby Sandy Park, and the school traffic congestion experienced in Clyst St. George.
- 11.12 Just over 53% of Community Survey respondents support traffic-calming measures within the Parish; although very few favoured either speed bumps or a one-way system. It would therefore be safe to conclude that measures for traffic management that utilised design and layout, rather than speed restrictors (humps, pillows sleeping policemen etc.) and one-way systems would be of greater acceptability to a majority of parishioners.
- 11.13 Policy CSG15 is supportive of development specifically to provide traffic management schemes that make our Parish safer for all road users. We expect any proposed scheme to be subject to a full consultation with those that live and work in the area it will affect.

**Policy No. CSG16                      Off-Road Parking Areas**

**Development proposals to provide additional off-road parking spaces will be supported where they do not have an adverse impact on:**

- i. the character of the local built environment**
- ii. the quality of the surrounding natural environment**
- iii. the visual amenity of the area**
- iv. the safety of pedestrians and other road users**
- v. flood risk (including local surface water flooding)**

**Permeable materials for surface parking areas should be used where practicable.**

- 11.14 The NPPF (para. 35) says that *“developments should be located and designed where practical..... to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter”*.
- 11.15 Although on-road parking is of some concern throughout the Parish (65% of respondents to the Community Survey 2015 agreeing), parking is an issue along Ebford Lane, with concern about the safety of pedestrians and access for emergency and service vehicles being raised regularly by local residents.

- 11.16 Policy CSG16 is supportive of the creation of additional off-road parking areas in the Parish, if they can be provided without detriment to the local environment and road safety.

**Policy No. CSG17**

**Parking Standards for New Development**

**Development proposals must make adequate provision for off-road parking and take into consideration the type of development, and the accessibility of the location.**

**Permeable materials for surface parking areas should be used where practicable.**

- 11.17 The NPPF (para. 39) acknowledges that there may be a case for setting parking standards, but these should take account of accessibility, the size type and mix of developments and local car ownership levels. On-road parking is a real problem in many parts of the Parish, which constitutes a safety hazard and is likely to impede access for emergency vehicles on the narrow lanes. Commonly, garages have become additional storage for the household rather than a regular parking space.
- 11.18 In the absence of dedicated pedestrian and cycle paths, it is our strong belief that it would be prudent to require new development to provide sufficient off-road parking and to minimise any regular parking on access routes or other local roads, many of which are narrow. Our neighbours, the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service<sup>19</sup>, inform us that they would like a 4m width, which is wider than many of the lanes in our Parish without parked cars.
- 11.19 The East Devon Local Plan Policy TC9 requirement of one car space of off road parking per small dwelling and two spaces for larger dwellings must be adhered to. Any new development should not lead to an increase in on-road parking, which is likely to constitute a safety hazard to other road users.

**Policy No. CSG18**

**Match-Day Parking**

**Development proposals specifically aimed at reducing parking and traffic on Clyst Road that have the support of the local community and enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, will be supported.**

- 11.20 With the sustained success of the Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club the demand for parking on match-days has increased and the associated problems worsened. The Parish Council has continually pressed Devon County Council to enforce its rugby match day parking ban in Clyst Road. Recently, 2016/17, the enforcement of the match day parking ban along with a new portable speed monitor to help highlight the current speed limit has reduced the problems.
- 11.21 We are encouraged by the NPPF (para. 35) to devise *“safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians”*.
- 11.22 We wish Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club every success in the years ahead. Policy CSG18 recognises that there is a match-parking problem that requires a more permanent solution. Should part of that solution involve using land within the Parish we are supportive in principle although it must be the subject of consultation with the residents and business that are most affected.

<sup>19</sup> Devon & Somerset F&RS HQ is at The Knowle, Clyst St. George, EX3 ONW

## 12. Business and Jobs

### Overview

- 12.1 A survey of local business in 2015 showed that despite its rurality and its settlements being largely dormitory, there were 73 companies of various categories operating in the Parish. Together they employed 950 full-time and 330 part-time staff, although only 2.8% of these lived in the Parish.
- 12.2 Apart from the 'local-family' establishments, the most important point about Clyst St. George Parish for local businesses is the location and convenience – close to M5 with good access to Exeter and Exeter Airport. As a result, we have several business and employment centres (see Map 9).
- 12.3 The number of people working from home is growing and as local broadband improves this growth should continue. Local people are setting up businesses from home, but many require a local 'drop-in' office with meeting rooms, good IT and printing where they can meet customers and use facilities.

Business and Jobs
<b>Aims</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support employment initiatives on existing business sites</li><li>• Develop digital infrastructure to support 21st century working</li></ul>
<b>Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Encourage small scale development on existing sites of appropriate business uses</li><li>2. Encourage and facilitate the best electronic connectivity available in the region</li></ol>

### Policy No. CSG19

### Business Development

**Business development on the business parks listed below (and identified on Map 9) will be supported provided it is in keeping with those uses and business activity already on the site and does not lead to the outward expansion of the site. The following locations are currently in use as business parks:**

- A. Addlepool Farm
- B. Clyst Works
- C. Danny's Court
- D. Darts Farm
- E. Knowle House, (Devon & Somerset Fire H.Q.)
- F. Newcourt Barton
- G. Sandygate Farm
- H. Tremletts

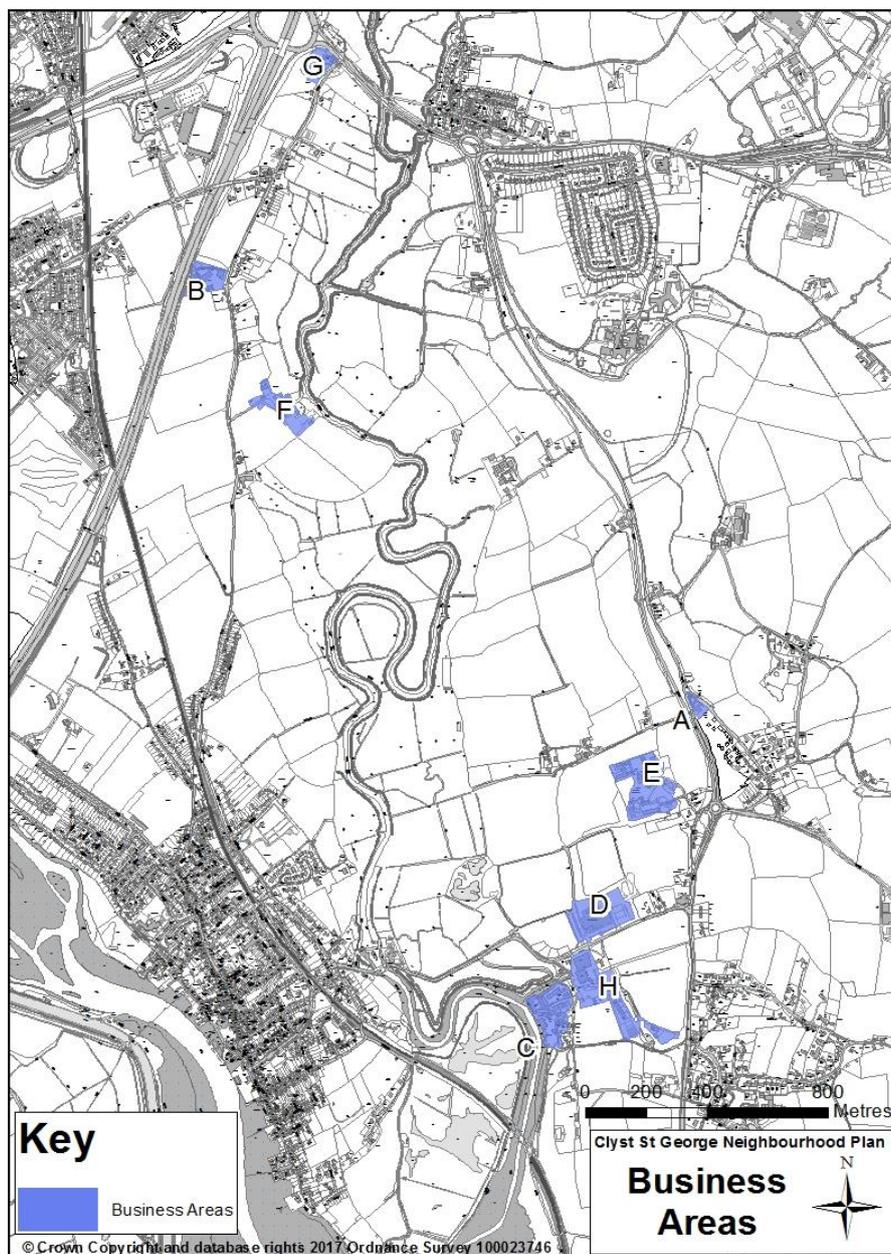
**All business/commercial development should:**

- i. respect the character of its surroundings by way of its scale and design;
- ii. not harm the surrounding landscape;
- iii. not have an adverse effect on its neighbours;
- iv. not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the transport network and parking; and
- v. safeguard residential amenity and road safety;
- vi. promote access on foot or by bicycle; and
- vii. reduce flooding and improve water quality in main rivers.

- 12.4 The NPPF (para. 28) requires us to have planning policies that support economic growth in the Parish despite it being regarded as a rural area and designated as countryside by the Local Plan. It states that we should "support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and

*enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings” including the promotion of “the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses”.*

- 12.5 We are proud to be home to some very successful businesses and supportive of additional development on our business parks that may provide local jobs and boost the local economy.
- 12.6 Policy CSG19 lists those business parks in the Parish where we support the growth and expansion of business activity. On existing business parks, new development should generally be in keeping with existing buildings in style, size and scale. Development for manufacturing, which may cause noise, pollution or extra traffic, will be discouraged.
- 12.7 We recognise too that there may be a case for farm buildings to be converted in the interests of diversification and viability of the farm business. Where existing farm buildings are converted for business use or new buildings for business use are constructed on existing farms, the advice contained in the Clyst St. George Design Statement should apply. To accord with policy CSG5, all such development should respect the style, location and environment of the existing buildings and minimise its impact on the countryside around it.



MAP 9 – Business Areas

**The development of a super-fast communication infrastructure to serve the area will be supported where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.**

**All new residential, educational and business premises development should attempt to make adequate, appropriate and effective provision for high speed broadband and other communication networks.**

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- 12.8 The NPPF (para. 42) states that *“advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services”*.
- 12.9 Currently, 2017, broadband provision by BT ‘Openreach’ is by fibre to cabinet, thence by copper overhead cable to premises, there is no other network. Speeds to local premises vary by distance from the cabinet. Higher speed is only possible by using more than one cable. Standard speed is 5-6 Mb/s. The superfast speeds are yet unattainable (25Mbs+). Residents have described the service as *“adequate, but not satisfactory and prone to disruption”*, which for small businesses and farmers is very unsatisfactory. We shall continue to campaign for the best service we can have and one that is comparable to the best in the region.
- 12.10 Any future solution for communications however should not be intrusive in the landscape or streetscape. Current communication networks such as broadband do not cause any problem with design issues but it is impossible to speculate on the effect that the hardware of future systems may have. Policy CSG20 is supportive of the development of a state-of-the-art communication system if the impact it has on visual amenity and the environment is minimised.

## 13. Monitoring the Neighbourhood Plan

- 13.1 There is no statutory requirement for the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies to be monitored.
- 13.2 Clyst St. George Parish Council will monitor the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies on change in the neighbourhood area by considering the effectiveness of the policies in the planning application decision-making process. We will keep a record of the application, any applicable policies, and comments from the Parish Council, together with the eventual outcome of the application.
- 13.3 A full or partial review of this Plan may be triggered by changes to legislation, changes to national, district or county-wide planning policies or significant planning issues being raised by the local community which cannot be dealt with effectively by a combination of national, district and/or existing neighbourhood plan policies. Five years from the date the Plan is made, the Parish Council will consider the need and value in undertaking some form of Review.

## 14. Glossary

The following terms may be used in the Clyst St. George Parish Neighbourhood Plan:

**Affordable Housing** - Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

**Bridleways** - are footpaths, but additionally users are permitted to ride or lead a horse or ride bicycles. Horse drawn vehicles are not allowed. Cyclists must give way to pedestrians and horse-riders. Motorcycling is not allowed.

**Biodiversity** - is the term used to describe the whole variety of life on Earth. It includes not only all species of plants and animals, but also the complex ecosystems they live within. It ranges from species and habitats which are considered commonplace to those considered critically endangered.

**County Wildlife Site (CWS)** - an area of significance for its wildlife in at least a county context i.e. it may be of county, regional or even national importance.

**Curtilage** - The area normally within the boundaries of a property surrounding the main building and used in connection with it.

**Flood Risk Assessment** - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

**Flood Zones** - have been created by the Environment Agency to be used within the planning process as a starting point in determining how likely somewhere is to flood. A flood zone is predominantly a planning tool and doesn't necessarily mean somewhere will or won't flood.

**General Permitted Development Order (GPDO)** - The Town and Country Planning GPDO 1995 provides permitted development rights for a specified range of development, meaning that those activities do not require an application for planning permission. However, agricultural buildings and certain telecommunications equipment covered by permitted development rights are also subject to a prior approval procedure.

**Green Wedge** - Green wedges comprise the open areas around and between settlements, which maintain the links between built-up-areas and the countryside, prevent the coalescence (merging) of settlements and provide recreational opportunities. The key wedges are areas of strategic importance to the setting and identity of the settlements, providing several functions in the interests of protecting and promoting access to the countryside.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** - A HRA tests the impacts of a proposal on nature conservation sites of European importance and is a requirement under EU legislation for land use plans and projects.

**Heritage Asset** - A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Landscape Character Area (LCA)** - Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a specific landscape type.

**Listed Buildings** - Buildings which have been recognised by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) as having special architectural or historic interest.

**Local Green Space** - Green areas of particular importance to local communities, which meet the criteria of the NPPF (para. 77), designated as 'local green space' to provide special protection against development.

**Local Plan** - A portfolio or folder of documents (Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), setting out the planning strategy for a local planning authority area.

**Local Planning Authority** - The public body whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a specific area. All references to local planning authority apply in this Plan to East Devon District Council

**NPPF** - The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of communities.

**NPPG** - The National Planning Practice Guidance is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

**Neighbourhood Plan** - A plan prepared by a town and/or parish council or a neighbourhood forum for a specific neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**Public Right of Way** - is a highway over which the public have a right of access along the route.

**Qualifying Body** - Either a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum, which can initiate the process of neighbourhood planning.

**Use Classes** - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 put uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**SUDS** - A solution which manages surface and groundwater sustainably by mimicking natural drainage regimes and avoiding the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. SUDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** - Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - The consideration of policies and proposals to assess their impact on sustainable development objectives.

**Sustainable Development** - is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Sustrans** - A sustainable transport charity.