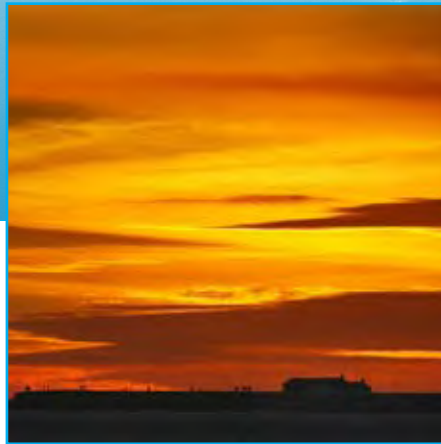




*Lyme forward*



## **Lyme Regis Community Plan 2007 - 2027**

How the people of Lyme and its surrounding area would like the town to develop in the foreseeable future.



# Lyme forward

*How the people of Lyme and its surrounding area would like the town to develop in the foreseeable future.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Our three key aspirations for the future

We want to preserve the unique character of Lyme Regis, the physical and visual charm that arouses such strong passions, without stultifying progress.

We want to achieve the mix of ages and skills required for a viable community, and so need to provide suitable housing, employment, and leisure opportunities. We must however manage any such development without exacerbating existing problems such as too much traffic, too little parking in the right places and house prices beyond the means of most local people.

And finally, our location and reliance on tourism makes us very aware of the challenges of global warming and environmental sustainability: we would like to turn our concern into an economically advantageous position.

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To achieve these aspirations, we have tackled the issues under seven theme headings, whose aims are listed below. Further details on how we will achieve these aims are given in the following pages.

### Our Economic Aims

- To strengthen and develop the tourist sector in a way which brings net benefits to the town and local businesses, and creates well paid year round employment opportunities.
- To help all local businesses to grow, perhaps building on the potential of the many creative artists in the area, but also including those in the traditional industries of fishing and agriculture.
- To attract new businesses to broaden the economic base and employment opportunities.
- To develop the skill base of the local population to enable them to take advantage of these enhanced opportunities.

### Our Environmental Aims

- To protect the unique and high quality environmental heritage that defines and distinguishes Lyme Regis.
- To minimise the environmental impact of the community of Lyme Regis and the surrounding area and in particular to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- To position Lyme Regis and the surrounding area as an exemplar of environmentally sustainable living.

### Our Aims for Health, Well-being and Safer Communities

- To ensure that residents of and visitors are able to access health care 24 hours a day, and that all healthy living, preventative health measures and the health care facilities are effectively promoted to individual households.
- To keep Lyme Regis safe on land and sea for residents, visitors and businesses, and that community policing is responsive to local needs.
- To ensure that community policing is responsive to local needs.

### Our Housing Aims

- To ensure that key workers and other people employed in Lyme Regis and those with particular needs are able to live locally.
- To ensure that young people are able to continue living in Lyme Regis once they leave the parental home.
- To address the negative impact that second and empty homes have on the supply of affordable property for local people.
- To work with agencies, developers, planners and householders to ensure that all housing (new and existing) meets the highest possible standards for energy conservation, resource use and environmental sustainability.

## **Our Sports, Culture & Lifelong Learning Aims**

- To make the most of what we have and to achieve and then share enhanced provision across the local area in response to identified needs.
- To ensure the availability of a wide range of sports/learning/cultural activities to give choice and variety, ensuring participation is enjoyable and rewarding.
- To maximise the potential of festivals and events to benefit the town, community and visitors, economically, educationally and culturally.

## **Our Aims for Traffic & Transport**

- To improve the convenience and safety of pedestrians, cyclists and users of mobility scooters.
- To improve access to the town and of viable car parking , especially for locals, and short-stay parking for access to shops.
- To secure the necessary access for heavy vehicles whilst avoiding undue disruption.
- To provide sustainable co-ordinated public transport.
- To increase and improve transport by sea.
- To ensure compliance with traffic regulations.

## **Our aims for Young People**

- To ensure that our young people are healthy, safe, and able to enjoy their lives.

- To ensure that despite our geographic isolation, young people have the access to educational, training and recreational facilities needed to allow them to develop to their full potential.
- To enable all to make a positive contribution to society and to achieve economic well-being.
- To ensure parents and carers are supported in achieving the above.
- To maximise mutual understanding and respect across the age ranges within the community.



## INTRODUCTION – HOW THIS PLAN CAME ABOUT

In 2004, Lyme Regis gained a place on the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI). This regional scheme, initially established by the South West Regional Development Agency and a range of other partners, was designed to help communities and their partners to prepare plans for their futures; to develop their skills and organisational capacity; to share good practice, and to secure funding.

The MCTI process has to be led and driven forward by the communities themselves and requires all those involved to think and work differently. At the heart of the Initiative is the preparation, by local people, of a long term community strategic plan covering the social, economic, environmental and cultural futures of their towns and surrounding rural area.

In April 2005 community leaders in Lyme Regis and the surrounding area were introduced to the MCTI concept and, enthused by the potential and working under the title of 'Lyme Forward', made an immediate start identifying examples of initiatives, opportunities, organisations and possible projects that could all contribute to a new strategic plan.

In July 2005, 200 of us attended an open meeting at Woodmead Halls in Lyme Regis and began listing aspirations, concerns, key issues, and possible solutions. As the town has considerable dependence on tourism, work on the strategy had to stop for the visitor season but in the autumn the results of the July meeting (hundreds of 'post-its'!) were analysed and grouped into seven main areas: Economy; Environment; Housing; Health, well-being & safer communities; Sports, leisure & lifelong learning; Traffic & transport; Young people.

We talked to all the relevant District Council departments and, through a series of openly advertised evening meetings, discussed possible future joint working. We built up a mass of data and in the spring 2006, with the help of Julian Mellor of 2md, ran a series of training sessions and Sunday afternoon workshops to structure our community plan. The outcomes were presented to a community event in July 2006, where again 200 or so people viewed and commented on our analysis of issues and possible solutions.

Further valuable exposure was given via the [www.lymeforward.co.uk](http://www.lymeforward.co.uk) website and the local free paper, "View from Lyme Regis", which gave us half a page a week to describe each of our seven main areas of concern, and explore possible ways for local organisations to work together.

In January 2007 a draft plan was produced for consultation with local agencies, Lyme Regis Town Council and the Local Area Partnership. The comments received were integrated into this final community plan.

The plan covers the period from 2007 to 2027. It aims to set out our vision for Lyme Regis and the surrounding area, describes what we want to achieve and suggests, from today's standpoint, ways of getting there. Our ideas on tactics may change as new opportunities arise, but our vision of the future should only be changed after due discussion and documented decision. This community plan will be accompanied by an annual Action Plan that identifies precise activities, timescales and responsibilities.



## HOW WE'LL TAKE THIS PLAN FORWARD

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world!”

For this community plan to be successful it must be clear about intentions and timescales. That, in turn, means having proposals that are realistic, with clear strategies for achieving them.

Lyme Regis is fortunate in that it already has two organisations that can help its Town Council turn the community plan into reality: the Lyme Regis Local Area Partnership (LAP) and the Lyme Regis Development Trust (LRDT).

The Local Area Partnership has been established by West Dorset District Council to cover Lyme Regis and the surrounding area including Uplyme and Charmouth, and includes representatives of local groups, local service providers, and interested individuals. It is chaired by the Town Council and links upwards to the district level West Dorset Partnership and on to the county level Dorset Strategic Partnership, thus giving the Town Council and the community recognised and valuable communication paths.

The LAP is funded by the town, district and county councils. It will be supported for the next three years under a service level agreement with the Development Trust, which will employ a co-ordinator with responsibility for facilitating meetings, supporting the members, and raising public awareness and involvement.

In recent months, the LAP has agreed to act as guardian of the plan and specifically:

- To be the hub that brings together all the local interests in one forum, uniquely combining statutory voluntary and community sector provision.
- To adopt the work done through the MCTI process to develop a community plan, turning this into its annual action plan.
- In the future to “own” responsibility both for an ongoing consultation and planning process and the resultant strategic plan and action plans.

- To appoint a Steering Group .
- To be a decision-making forum.
- To take responsibility, either through partnership members acting alone or in partnership with others, for the delivery of specific actions or entire projects.

All decisions on project proposals, prioritisation, and suggested strategic direction will be taken by the full Local Area Partnership or in accordance with its specifically delegated authority.

It is anticipated that the Steering Group will consist of a small team of strategic thinkers and experienced planners who will :

- Draft an annual action plan for consideration by the full LAP
- Monitor and co-ordinate the theme working groups (based around the activity areas identified in this plan);
- Turn unallocated issues into practical funded projects ;
- Ensure key plan objectives are being tackled.

The Steering Group will also seek the resources to develop local capacity and will establish working groups to progress projects.

The Lyme Regis Development Trust, as well as servicing the Local Area Partnership, will deliver some of the projects identified in the plan, and will facilitate future consultations as required. LRDT has an excellent track record in acquiring project funds and has proved itself capable of playing a crucial role both in the local co-ordination and delivery of projects. However, if the Trust is to continue in existence and to perform functions required by this Plan, it needs both to assure its own future and to develop its own capacity and abilities.

## DELIVERY - BUILDING THE CAPACITY TO TAKE THIS PLAN FORWARD

This is an ambitious plan that proposes a wide range of projects to address the needs of Lyme Regis. The plan has been largely written with volunteer effort. However, all those involved recognised that delivery of the projects will require voluntary sector organisations to receive help to develop both the capacity of the organisations and the capability of the community, together with professional help and skills as required.

As described above, the two key partners to local delivery are Lyme Regis Town Council and Lyme Regis Development Trust, who jointly lead and facilitate the Local Area Partnership. This joint-working has proved a successful model for progress in the last few years, with the Town Council providing the local government framework, and the LRDT successfully attracting resources and delivering projects of significant local benefit.

However, as also indicated in the previous section, if the Trust is to become the type of “anchor organisation” \*required by the community to develop itself and to enable delivery of the plan’s objectives, the Trust itself (and its subsidiary LymeNet) needs a sustainable future and enhanced capacity.

Within the last year, the Trust has purchased its St Michael’s base from West Dorset District Council with the help of a grant from the Government Office of the SW through their ChangeUp programme, which focuses on improving capacity building and infrastructure within the voluntary and community sector.

The two-fold aims of the purchase were a) to deliver a community resource centre to underpin an ongoing consultation and planning and project delivery process; b) to start development of an asset base.

The purchase of St Michaels also offers an opportunity for the Trust to pursue some of the many other exciting options that both meet Plan aims and could produce ongoing income, such as the development of a community kitchen. Already, thanks to MCTI funding, the Trust has been able to provide meeting and display space dedicated to the community planning initiative.

Happily, the Trust has received 3-year funding from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

to enable it to concentrate on developing a sustainable future. The aim will be to create a strategy for financial sustainability by 2010 based on a series of nationally significant asset-based projects. A key project, along with others designed to meet objectives described throughout this Plan, will be the development of the Trust’s newly acquired St Michael’s Business Centre into a Community Resource Centre which will support more effective Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, and promote increased social entrepreneurship.

- \* The Trust’s interpretation of the term “Community Anchor Organisation”, which is currently being widely used, closely resembles that offered by the Community Alliance, namely that the functions of such a body are to:
  - Provide physical space for meetings and activities.
  - Provide a base/tenancies for some groups.
  - Generate income and resources to fund community services and activities, subsidise some community groups and sustain itself in the long term.
  - Provide basic development support, advice and information for community groups and individuals.
  - Provide back office support (such as access to a computer, photocopier, phone and use of address)
  - Provide a community voice; independent, organised and deeply networked.
  - Start and sometimes hive-off new community enterprises, groups and activities
  - Delivery of some services or running some activities.





## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Local Government Act 2000 placed a duty on all principal local authorities to prepare a “community strategy” for promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of their areas and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. The aims of the duty were to allow local communities to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities and to co-ordinate the actions of local authorities, agencies and other organisations. Following the introduction of this Act, there has been a plethora of initiatives aimed at empowering grassroots communities, enabling locally-based comprehensive collaborative planning, and developing strategic partnerships at all levels. In 2006, the Department for Communities and Local Government was set up: “We want strong, cohesive communities in which people feel comfortable and proud to live, with a vibrant civic culture and strong local economy.” Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State, July 2006

The House of Commons Select Committee which scrutinises the work of this department, chaired by Phyllis Starkey, has recently completed an investigation into Coastal Towns. The final report, issued in March 2007, identified a number of characteristics shared by many coastal towns. These included: their physical isolation; deprivation levels often exaggerated by benefits placements; the inward migration of older people and outward migration of young people (leading to stress on local services); the high levels of transience; the duality of high house prices often fuelled by inward migration and second homes, alongside a low-quality private rented sector; and the cyclical nature of the coastal visitor-focused economy. The combination of these characteristics with the environmental challenges that coastal towns face, lead the committee to conclude that they are in need of focused, specific Government attention and a national approach to promote and support seaside tourism.

We are therefore operating in the context of widespread support and constant initiatives intended to encourage both grassroots community consultation and planning and the delivery of projects, with the regeneration of coastal towns being recently recognized as a specific and important area of concern.



## LYME REGIS PROFILE

Situated where Dorset meets Devon and the rolling countryside tumbles to the sea, Lyme Regis is a fascinating town and fishing port that has attracted visitors since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is famed for its ancient Cobb Harbour and boasts an unspoiled heritage that has withstood the creeping commercialisation of many seaside towns. Visitors come in search of tranquillity, refreshment and recreation. It is also famed for its geology and is a gateway town to both the 95 mile long Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Despite its small size, (its population has remained remarkably static over the centuries) Lyme has been of great importance and has consistently punched above its weight. In 1284 Edward I granted the burgesses of the town privileges, similar to those of the City of London, with the town thereby gaining the 'Regis' title. By the 1680s, a time when only five cities in England had populations of more than 10,000, historians estimate that Lyme ranked only just below Sheffield, Derby, Birmingham and Liverpool in importance.

Until the local government reorganisation in 1974, Lyme Regis retained its Borough Council Status, and since then has been represented by a Town Council despite having a smaller population than many parishes.

One reason for this constraint on the population is its position which was described by John Fowles (author of "The French Lieutenant's Woman") as **"cramped in its combe between eroding cliffs, and so can only grow backwards or inland"**. Fowles goes on to say that even that was impossible for many centuries as owners of Colway Manor and the land adjoining would not part with any of their estate. Today, development is equally difficult given that this same land is now in Devon!

Given then a population currently around 3,700, Lyme is fortunate to have both a cinema and a theatre, thriving churches, two excellent schools, and a greater range of shops than many towns of larger size: it is still possible to do a full weekly shop, including a fishmonger, baker and butcher (latter about to retire); In truth though, many local people do their main shopping in supermarkets in neighbouring towns, usually citing lower cost and easier parking as the reasons.

We have almost withstood the onslaught of national charity shops; and there is a wide selection of small shops and galleries, many providing outlets for the area's talented artists of all types.

However, proximity to the county boundary, the unstable local geology, high land values and an isolated rural hinterland all serve to counter-balance the town's picturesque location and rich heritage.

Thus, any profile of trends and other factors affecting Lyme Regis and surrounding area has to highlight:

- A heavy economic dependence on a relatively short and increasingly competitive 'traditional holiday' offering. The loss of local hotel accommodation to apartment conversions has had a negative effect on the wider local economy.
- Few year-round employment opportunities of any worth exist, particularly for young people. Low-paid & low-skilled jobs in tourism, service and other sectors are attracting migrant workers, particularly from EU accession countries, but this is keeping wage levels low so those in full-time employment in West Dorset now earn 17% below the national average.
- High house prices, currently more than 40% above national average, are unaffordable to most local people, including key workers. West Dorset District Council's 2003 "Housing Needs Survey" identified a need for 69 social and affordable houses but there are only ten currently under development with eight in planning. In some areas of the town over 30% of properties are second homes or holiday lets.
- High inward migration of retiring older people into the town has resulted in 43.5% of the community being over the age of 60, against the figure for Dorset as a whole of 29% (2001 census). Of those working in West Dorset; 42% are due to retire in the next ten years. (DSP economy theme group)
- There is considerable displacement of young people owing to the lack of suitable housing, worthwhile employment opportunities, and the scarcity of local provision for further education.

- Alarmingly, in the “Index of Deprivation for Dorset (2000) for Child Poverty” Lyme Regis scored in the 9th lowest (worst) out of 124 County Wards, in the bottom quarter nationally. (NB: the 2004 Index of Deprivation shows a significant difference in scores between Lyme Regis East and Lyme Regis West).

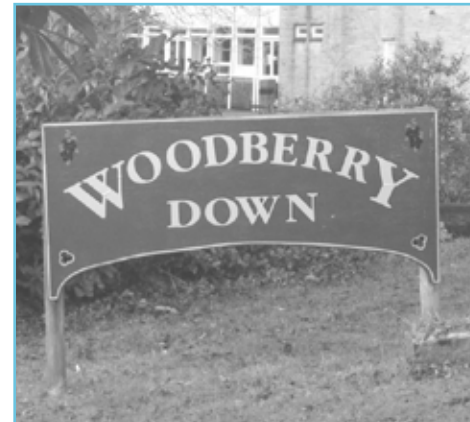
Looking to the future, the following are some of the national and regional issues that might affect us:

- Future reorganisation of local government following the White Paper of Autumn 2006. The extent of change may be limited in Dorset.
- Increasing concern about, and action on, climate change and broad environmental issues. This is an issue that has an immediate relevance to Lyme Regis and could be a focus for future developments in terms of transport strategies.
- National and regional agencies looking to reduce transaction costs by looking for bigger projects. This may mean that the Lyme Regis Development Trust (LRDT) will have to work in alliance with other organisations.
- There is a proposal to create a Dorset Regeneration Agency, which again may have implications for how the LRDT can access funding for projects in Lyme Regis.
- There is an increased recognition of the economic value of cultural “industries” and Lyme Regis is well placed to tap into funding for such initiatives as “Starter Studios for Young People”.
- Changes in European Union funding streams that may create, or remove, opportunities.
- A General Election by 2010 could lead to major policy changes.
- There are opportunities to capitalise on the 2012 Water Sports Olympics taking place in and around Weymouth.

And here in Lyme itself:

- The completion of the coastal protection scheme, and the development of the Seafront shelters.
- Possible development of Woodberry Down (plans are being developed by owner).

- Proposals for a visitor centre based around the Marine Theatre and museum which will celebrate Lyme Regis’s role in history and provide an interpretive centre for the World Heritage Site for the role that the Town and surrounding area played in the birth of the earth sciences, and for its place in the ‘Walk Through Time’.



An Opportunity



Phase IV of the Coastal Protection Scheme



A recent “new” enterprise, using traditional skills



Sold - but probably not to someone local

One of Lyme's most striking economic statistics is its percentage of self-employed: 31.8% against 17.6 for Dorset as a whole. (2001 census). Perhaps this is not surprising, given the lack of large private sector organisations. The two major employers are public sector – Woodroffe School and the Medical Centre. For its size, there are a significant number of independent retailers. The thriving creative arts scene offers exciting opportunities for economic and social development. It was not co-incidental that the Jurassic Coast Arts Strategy was launched in Lyme Regis!

Economic issues specifically affecting Lyme Regis include:

- Heavy economic dependence on a relatively short (though admittedly extending) tourist season. This results in a significant shortage of year round employment opportunities, particularly for young people.
- Large numbers of day visitors who require toilets, car parks and other services but contribute little value to the local economy.
- Loss of hotel accommodation as buildings have been converted to apartments. This has had, and continues to have, a negative impact on the broader local economy. Each bed-night is estimated to be worth between £45 and £90 to the broader local economy
- The average salary for those in full time employment in West Dorset is 17% below the national average.
- The distance from and the lack of low cost and quick public transport to further and higher education facilities. This means that there are very few post school-leaver training opportunities for local youngsters.
- Many 'lifestyle' businesses work up to the VAT threshold and then close for a number of months each year. This ceiling stifles local prosperity and year round job creation.
- The lack of affordable housing creates a vicious cycle of 'no homes no

jobs' especially for young people. When people have to leave the area in search of affordable housing it reduces the year round labour pool and limits local demand for training provision. The opportunities for those who are able to continue living locally are thereby reduced and this forces them to move elsewhere.

The challenge for Lyme Regis and its tourist industry in particular is to address the economic needs of local residents and businesses in a way that does not exacerbate other problems such as congestion and high house prices. This will only be achieved by a thorough understanding of the sector, and a more sophisticated market awareness that recognises how by the use of promotional tools and the quality of our offering, we can ensure that we attract appropriate numbers of the right mix of visitors to deliver the desired social and economic results.

### **Our Vision**

To create a sustainable, high quality and year round economy in Lyme Regis that provides relevant skills and employment opportunities for local people and businesses thereby ensuring that the communities in Lyme and surrounding areas have a lively and prosperous future. This vision must be delivered in a way which either minimises or mitigates the negative effects of a successful economy namely increasing traffic and house prices.

### **Our Aims**

1. To understand, then develop, an intelligent strategy which will strengthen and develop the tourist sector in Lyme Regis in a way which brings net benefits to the town, to local businesses and creates well paid year round employment opportunities.
2. To help all local businesses to grow, perhaps building on the potential of the many creative artists in the area, but also including those in the traditional industries of fishing and agriculture.

3. To attract new businesses to Lyme Regis in order to broaden the economic base and employment opportunities.
4. To develop the skill base of the local population to enable them to advantage of these enhanced opportunities.

### Our Objectives (2007-2010)

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Create a year round and sustainable tourist economy by developing and improving facilities and attractions for shoulder and low-season visitors who have a high net-value for the town. (1)
2. Position Charmouth and Lyme Regis as an internationally significant educational tourism destination focussing on geology, fossils, history of earth sciences as well as broader heritage and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). (1)
3. Help regeneration agencies and existing local businesses to identify mutual priorities and agree responses. (2)
4. Promote Lyme Regis to inward investors in a way that will create well paid employment opportunities and have low environmental impact both to Lyme itself and the surrounding area. (3)
5. Identify opportunities for the provision of new BI light industrial, services and standalone office space for new and growing businesses. (2,3)
6. Assist local people to acquire and update saleable skills and expertise to meet the needs of existing and future job markets. (4)
7. Help local people start their own businesses by ensuring the availability of relevant business training and business premises. (3,4)
8. Work with traders and businesses in Lyme Regis and the surrounding area

to: support cooperation; promote them to existing and new markets; and encourage and enable the local communities to buy local products and services. (2)

9. Establish the priorities of the local farming and fishing communities in the area surrounding Lyme, to help strengthen their businesses and explore opportunities to diversify. (2)

### How you can help:

- Join our Economy Theme Group
- Shop locally and buy local food.
- Encourage visits to local studios, galleries and attractions.
- Support initiatives designed to improve the local economy.



Tourism and retail is a mainstay of the local economy



We must ensure we do not lose locally produced food sources

Lyme Regis's "environment" encompasses its architecture, its streets, its land constraints, its unstable geology, its Jurassic past, and its unique relationship with the sea. This environment is acknowledged to be the town's greatest asset, which must be enhanced and nurtured to become one of the consistent engines of its economy.

The environment of Lyme Regis has faced its challenges in the past, not just from natural disasters but also from poor quality development and bad planning. The work of groups such as the Lyme Regis Society has done much to protect the town's heritage from these excesses.

But we must not become an outpost of the heritage industry. Rather, as a small, self-contained character-full community, we are in a prime position to take a lead in environment innovation and in all aspects of sustainability, be it building or transport.

### **Our Vision**

Under the banners;

*Lyme Regis - a national asset*

*A unique natural, physical and marine environment*

*A special place for resident and visitor*

*A heritage to pass to future generations*

the town, by 2012 and building on its unique relationship with the sea, will successfully nurture and enhance its diverse character while meeting the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability.

### **Our Aims**

1. To protect the unique and high quality environmental heritage that defines and distinguishes Lyme Regis.
2. To minimise the environmental impact of the community of Lyme Regis and the surrounding area and in particular to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
3. To position Lyme Regis and the surrounding area as an exemplar of environmentally sustainable living.

### **Our Objectives (2007-2010)**

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Prepare a statement of the fundamental principles of environmental sustainability as they affect Lyme Regis and seek its adoption by all local decision making bodies. (1,2,3)
2. Encourage energy conservation and the use of renewable energy as an alternative to carbon sourced fuels. (2)
3. Encourage the purchase of local produce and services by residents, visitors and businesses. (2)
4. Encourage reduced consumption of finite resources and actions that substantially reduce waste generation. (2)
5. Encourage the use of alternatives to the private car and reduce the carbon footprint of all forms of transport in and around Lyme Regis. (2)
6. Work with the relevant planning authorities to prepare and adopt policies for environmentally sustainable design and development (both new build and alterations) (1,2)

7. Introduce a 'masts strategy' that reconciles the competing needs of telecommunications and environmental quality. (1,2)
8. Reduce the visual impact of signage, utility poles, overhead wires etc. through a programme of improved design, replacement and removal. (1,2)
9. Ensure that buildings are not allowed to mar the appearance of Lyme by falling into disrepair or being developed inappropriately. (1)
10. Ensure that significant trees, landscapes, greenways and open spaces in Lyme Regis are given adequate protection (e.g. from development, chopping down, topping and lopping) and that the appropriate regulations are fully enforced. (1)
11. Work with local authorities, agencies, businesses, utility providers and householders to achieve dark skies over and around Lyme Regis. (2)
12. Create and increase public awareness and pride in Lyme Regis's environment. (2,3)
13. Identify Lyme's 'tatty corners' and arrange regular clean-ups. (1,2)



A solution has been found to the coastal erosion along Marine parade, but there are plenty of other challenges!

### How you can help:

- Join the Environment Theme Group and/or its subsidiary group aiming to reduce Lyme's Carbon Footprint
- Encourage all your family and friends to Keep Lyme Tidy
- Recycle or compost as much of your household waste as possible.
- Conserve energy and resources, for example by turning off lights, turning down the heating, reducing your use of a car.
- Watch out for much more detailed information from West Dorset District Council and Lyme Forward.





## HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND SAFER COMMUNITIES

Lyme Regis ranks 30 out of 124 wards in Dorset in the Government's 2000 Index of Health Deprivation and Disability. In the 2001 census, only 61% of people in Lyme Regis ranked their health as "good", compared with 68% in West Dorset and Dorset; and 10.7% ranked their health as "not good", compared to 8.3% in the district and county. This could well be due to the high population of older people living in the town.

Nevertheless, the majority of residents appear to be well satisfied with healthcare services provided locally, at least in office hours: in a recent survey by the SW Dorset Primary Care Trust nearly three-quarters of those questioned (the numbers included 150 completed questionnaires as well as numerous interviews and focus groups), agreed or strongly agreed that local health services provided an excellent level of services that met their health needs, whilst a further 16% neither agreed nor disagreed. Considerable concern was however expressed about out-of-hours cover, especially in view of the distances to hospitals.

On the policing front, the same survey indicated that most people did not consider crime to be an issue in Lyme Regis. Indeed, we are exceptionally lucky to have crime rates lower even than the rest of Dorset's 6.6%, as against the GB average of 18.6%.

We must however ensure we maintain, and hopefully improve, this enviable record, keeping watch on these issues in particular:

- Will Dorset Primary Care Trust and Dorchester as a Foundation Hospital make a difference?
- Is there consistent investment and quality in health care for residents on either side of the Devon Dorset border?
- Is poor pavement maintenance making them more dangerous especially when wet and dark?

### **Our Vision**

Whilst providing very high medical and social support to the permanently and incurably ill, we seek to maintain the general physical, mental and spiritual health of the population at the highest achievable level. We want everyone to be as healthy as possible whilst causing as little social burden as possible; and we want both visitors and residents to feel safe in Lyme Regis. If disaster should occur, we want to be confident that there will be a speedy and effective response from the appropriate emergency service, whether police, ambulance, fire, coastguard, or lifeboat.

### **Our Aims**

1. To ensure that residents of and visitors to Lyme Regis are able to access health care 24 hours a day, and that all healthy living, preventative health measures and the health care facilities are effectively promoted to individual households.
2. To keep Lyme Regis safe for residents, visitors and businesses.
3. To ensure that community policing is responsive to local needs.

### **Our Objectives (2007-2010)**

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Ensure that the availability and provision of health care facilities is promoted to every household in Lyme Regis. (1)
2. Work with the PCT and NHS Trust to promote and encourage healthy living through nutrition, exercise etc. (1)
3. Ensure that local residents are able to meet their spiritual health needs. (1)
4. Create and maintain strong and positive links between the Lyme Regis community and the Police. (3)



5. Increase the number of Homewatch schemes. (2)
6. Encourage the reporting of crime. (2.3)
7. Ensure that key workers in Lyme Regis have access to affordable housing. (1)

**How you can help:**

- Join our Safer and Healthier Communities Theme Group.
- Help prevent crime by reporting suspicious incidents at the time.
- Report crime on 01305 222222.
- Join or set up a Homewatch scheme in your area.
- Join in and support our forthcoming initiatives to encourage healthy eating.



Listening to community concerns



Our ageing population and their carers need support



Our churches contribute greatly to spiritual health & community well-being



Just what is a “portion”?



## HOUSING

In common with many other coastal towns, Lyme Regis suffers from house prices which far exceed the buying power of most people employed locally.

Here in Lyme Regis, the situation is worse than most: 60% of those in work are employed in the distribution and tourism industries, on a wage that will allow a mortgage on a property worth no more than around £80,000 and our geography means there is very little land available to build new affordable homes.

In 2001, 15% of the housing stock in Lyme Regis was second or holiday homes. This compares to 8% for West Dorset as a whole and 2% across the South West [2001 census]. Anecdotal evidence suggests that second home ownership of smaller properties (i.e. those needed by those on low incomes or young people trying to get onto the housing ladder) is considerably higher and that ongoing demand is constantly pushing prices up. A shortage of properties and excessively high prices therefore presents a 'double whammy' for local home buyers.

The extraordinarily high price of 4 and 5 bed properties is as much of an issue as the prices of smaller properties being bought up as second homes. Not only are first-time buyers unable to afford 1 or 2 bed homes, maturing local families are being priced out of the mid-range 3 bed market by incomers unable to afford the larger 4 and 5 bed properties and therefore downsizing to 3 bed houses.

The resulting accommodation difficulties for people wishing to work in the town are of concern not only to the families themselves, but also to the (older) majority of the population as the health, police and safety services are finding it hard to recruit local personnel, as are building, gardening and other maintenance services. The Starkey Report (2007) identified a compounding of the problem as elderly residents who move to the coast detach themselves from their family support networks and thereby require higher support levels from their new host community. The need for care workers, and affordable homes for them, is therefore even more crucial in towns like Lyme Regis.

If Lyme Regis and the surrounding area are to have a future as a sustainable, working community, we must ensure that the right mix of people and skills are able to live here. Failure will result in an increasingly aged population, with few

if any key workers living locally and none of the vibrancy which attracted people here in the first place. Consequent increases in demand for health and other services, a reducing labour pool for local service providers (especially in the retail and tourist industries), increased reliance on services provided in urban areas and workers being bussed in from elsewhere will exacerbate matters in Lyme Regis.

### Our Vision

By 2027 there will be a range of accommodation of suitable numbers, size and cost for all local people who wish to stay in the area and for those wishing to work here, at all stages of their lives. There will be systems in place to help meet the needs of those with special requirements especially key workers. All new building will be environmentally friendly.

### Our Aims

1. To ensure that key workers and other people employed in Lyme Regis and those with particular needs are able to live locally.
2. To ensure that young people are able to continue living in Lyme Regis once they leave the parental home.
3. To address the negative impact that second and empty homes have on the supply of affordable property for local people.
4. To work with agencies, developers, planners and householders to ensure that all housing (new and existing) meets the highest possible standards for energy conservation, resource use and environmental sustainability.

## Our Objectives (2007-2010)

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Ensure that accurate information is available regarding the current and forecast demand and supply of housing in Lyme Regis and the surrounding area. (1,2)
2. Establish and pursue a strategy for increasing the supply of affordable 1, 2, and 3 bed properties available for rent, purchase and mixed equity for people working or with a particular need to live locally. (1,2)
3. Establish a strategy for keeping homes “affordable” in perpetuity. (2)

Help second homeowners to understand their impact on the local community and economy and to maximise their contribution to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Lyme Regis. (3)

4. Identify empty homes and work with the owners and local agencies to bring them back into occupation. (3)
5. Work with residents of large under-occupied properties to help them identify alternative smaller properties and facilitate their move so that larger family properties are available to meet demand. (1,2)



A missed opportunity for affordable housing on the site of the former Police Station



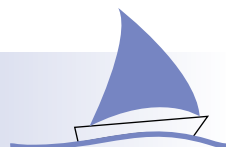
We were more successful on the old gasworks site

## How you can help:

- Join the Housing Theme Group
- Support planning applications for affordable housing
- Encourage people in need to add their names to the Housing Register if not already on it, and to fill out the Lyme Forward Housing Needs Survey.
- Think about renting out spare rooms or second homes.
- Support future initiatives designed to address these issues.



Local homes are essential for our lifeboat crew and other emergency and support service personnel



### Sports & Leisure

There are over 60 organisations and clubs in the Lyme Area offering a wide range of opportunities and activities for participation, many of them relating to sports, the arts and leisure.

Among the sports organisations and clubs are the Football Club, Golf Club, Sailing Club, Bowling Club and Power Boat Club, and now community access to sessions at Woodroffe School. Darts and skittles leagues take place in local pubs.

Neighbouring Charmouth has in addition, a bowls club, tennis club and village halls, while Uplyme has Uplyme and Lyme Regis Cricket Club, a football club, tennis courts and a village hall and playing fields.

Outdoor leisure facilities in Lyme Regis include playing fields and public amenity areas such as the seafront, beaches, gardens plus many footpaths.

### Arts

On the arts side, there are the Pantomime Society, Operatic Society, Dramatic Society, Community Players, and Youth Theatre. Lyme is fortunate to have a library, a cinema showing current films, and a quality museum. The Marine Theatre and Town Mill provide a varied programme of events as well as being available as venues.

The long established Jazz Festival has been joined more recently by Arts Fest and the Fossil Festival, both of which are trying to become self-sufficient (i.e. not need grant-funding). There is a weeklong Regatta & Carnival week, and Lifeboat week.

Young People have provision offered by the Baptist Church, InSparation, and Club for Young People.

Other event venues include the Woodmead Halls, the Masonic Hall, and the Guildhall, Woodroffe School, and St Michael's Church.

However, the expansion of facilities and construction of a sports centre or a leisure centre, which other local towns have, is made difficult, if not impossible, by the geography of the town.

There has long been a demand for a full-sized pitch for the Lyme Regis Football Club, so that they may compete in a higher league and have facilities for all their teams to play.

Calls for a permanent skate park over the past 15 years have still not been met although a BMX track in the Anning Road playing fields is imminent, all permissions having been given with funding in place.

### Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning provision, (referring to out-of-fulltime-school learning) in the local area includes: the Community Learning Centre at Lyment which offers a wide range of ICT courses; adult education courses at the Woodroffe School; a fairly recently established yet vibrant Jurassic Coast U3A (University of the Third Age) which is also providing valuable social links for its students; and lecture programmes by the Museum, the Lyme Regis Society and the Action Forum.

### Our Vision

Lyme Regis to be a place offering a wide choice of cultural, extended learning and sports opportunities, creating a cohesive community area where promotion of health, creativity and the achievement of personal potential are fostered in an overall context of enjoyment.



For its size, Lyme has some excellent provision

## Our Aims

1. To make the most of what we have; to achieve and then share enhanced provision across the local area in response to identified needs.
2. To ensure the availability of a wide range of sports/learning/cultural activities to give choice and variety, ensuring participation is enjoyable and rewarding.
3. To maximise the potential of festivals and events to benefit the town, community and visitors, economically, educationally and culturally.

## Our Objectives (2007-2010)

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. To establish a co-ordinated approach to sports, leisure and lifelong learning provision across the wider community area, with special emphases that benefit both the broader picture as well as smaller communities, organisations and groups. (1)
2. Address health and well-being aspects alongside pleasure in sports and fitness activities. (2)
3. To maximise the opportunities for people of all abilities and experience to realise their personal potential through all activities, with coaching, tutoring, group support as required. (2)
4. Support through a package of measures, including improved marketing, existing sports/culture/learning providers, organisations and facilities where possible, building on current provision. (1,3)
5. Work to secure funding for existing facilities/organisations where the need for provision is demonstrable. (1,2)

6. Where there is a proven shortfall in current provision, to establish strategies for the development of new facilities. (1,2)

## How you can help:

- Participate at every opportunity!
- Join our SCLL Theme Group
- Volunteer to help organise existing groups – all committees will welcome new faces and pairs of hands!



Some sports are well supported



The problems caused by congestion and the difficulty of parking is high on everyone's agenda. These have been exacerbated during the recent coastal protection works, with the loss of car parking spaces at Holmbush and Charmouth Car Parks, and works vehicles adding to the chaos.

But now the works are coming to an end, the key problems of lorries and buses off-loading and passing in our narrow streets, and the difficulty of parking for a quick shopping trip will remain. Many a trip to Axminster or Seaton is made largely because parking is easily available, taking money out of Lyme Regis and adding unnecessarily to petrol consumption. Delivery lorries are even more of a hazardous obstacle if they have to double-park. Our low-floor buses are not accessible if they are forced to stop in the middle of the road, either because of cars parked in the bus-stop space, or because our three scheduled services have arrived simultaneously. In summer, the Park-and-Ride bus plus tourist coaches on- and off-loading at Cobb Gate leads both to ludicrous congestion and to extreme difficulties for any but the most able-bodied and un-encumbered would-be passengers.

Nor are our pavements friendly towards pedestrians, especially if accompanied by young children, pushchairs or wheelchairs: they frequently narrow, tip sideways, or disappear altogether. Some of these access problems are inevitable in such an historic, quirky, town, but could be mitigated by good maintenance and lighting.

Additional issues include:

- Limited availability of residents' parking in many areas. Lyme and bordering Uplyme have a high proportion of dwellings with no dedicated off-street parking. Where on-street parking theoretically exists, such as along Anning Road, residents have to fight for a space against both day visitors and those staying in holiday lets.
- Traffic travelling through for no apparent reason. We wonder how some of the huge foreign lorries which come unstuck negotiating the Guildhall corner have managed to find our small corner of Dorset. Suggestions range from

slavish reliance on Satellite Navigation Systems to the lack both of signage clearly indicating the major road at Boshill Cross and of enforcement of the weight limit signed at the Charmouth end of the A3052.

- Inappropriate speeds are an issue throughout an area where visibility and width often demand speeds of 20 mph or less. After navigating twisting side roads and lanes, many vehicles then put their foot down and break existing speed limits along the A3052 and B3165. Charmouth Road has at last a pavement, but Sidmouth Road has only very limited pavements, making speeding here particularly threatening, an issue that has been raised recently publicly.
- Another issue causing much public concern are the dangers of crossing the road by St Michael's Primary School.
- Finally, we need to remember the needs of cyclists and users of mobility scooters, and remove any unnecessary obstacles to their safe passage.

### Our Vision

To create sustainable and integrated transportation arrangements, which facilitate the movement of people and goods into, out of and within Lyme Regis whilst avoiding undue impact on the environment or the economy.

### Our Aims

1. To improve the convenience and safety of pedestrians, cyclists and users of mobility scooters.
2. To improve access to the town and of viable car parking (especially for locals, short-stay parking for access to shops).
3. To secure the necessary access for heavy vehicles whilst avoiding undue disruption.
4. To provide sustainable co-ordinated public transport.

5. To increase and improve transport by sea.
6. To ensure compliance with traffic regulations.

### Our Objectives (2007-2010)

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Improve the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooters at key points in the centre of Lyme Regis (1)
2. Work with public transport providers to increase the use of existing public transport services. (2,4)
3. Work with public transport providers and transport agencies to ensure that public transport services are matched to local demand and needs (including the need to reduce congestion and the use of private vehicles). (2,4)
4. Work with highways authorities to improve access to Lyme Regis. (2,3)
5. Improve traffic management, car parking in the town centre and park & ride provision. (2,6)
6. Improve the provision of alternative transport by sea. (1,5)

### How you can help:

- Join our Traffic and Transport Theme Group
- Reduce the use of a car whenever possible – consider using public transport, car sharing, or even walking for short journeys!
- Proactively make your views known, and respond to consultations.



Triple-parked buses and huge juggernauts pollute our town, yet environmentally-friendly cycling is a tough option in this area!



Despite the picturesque setting of Lyme Regis, young people in the area suffer many of the challenges associated with small towns in rural areas. They lack an effective voice in the community (even on the management committees of organisations with a youth focus); there are few bridges with the retired community; further and higher education is inaccessible; there is little affordable housing; job opportunities and careers are limited; older residents are suspicious and fearful of young people; public space frequented by young people has been reduced through 'enhancement' and 'redesign'; aspirations for a skate park have not been met; there is no youth club operated by the Youth Service; voluntary sector youth provision lacks suitable premises and funding; and there is no discreet and accessible sexual health clinic. In addition, the 2000 Index of Rural Deprivation rated Lyme Regis particularly poorly in the field of child poverty. So while Lyme Regis and area is served by good schools at both primary and secondary levels, the considerable disadvantages of life in the town for young people mean that many choose to leave after completing their secondary education.

There are, however, some positive stories.

- The imminent Lyme Regis Sure Start Project will provide opportunities for young people up to 12 years of age offering wrap around child care and in the longer term a breakfast club and a holiday club.
- The Lyme Regis Club For Young People (Boys Club) building is on the market and the Management Committee are planning to use the proceeds to build a new centre possibly in collaboration with the Woodroffe School.
- InSparation, a collaborative project providing advice and support and run by the Development Trust and County Council, is open three evenings per week and on Saturdays for young people Year 10 (14 years of age) to age 25 and offers a place for them to relax when not at school and be at ease amongst themselves. Size does, however, constrain the level of service.
- There is a Dorset County Council Youth Service project run with the Library.
- There are also organisations like Marine Theatre Youth Theatre, Junior Band etc.

### Our vision

We want Lyme and the surrounding area to have a sustainable demographic base, to become more young-people friendly and thus more appealing for young people to want to stay in, or return to, Lyme Regis as adults.

### Our aims

1. To ensure that our young people are healthy, safe, and able to enjoy their lives.
2. To ensure that despite our geographic isolation, young people have the access to educational, training and recreational facilities needed to allow them to develop to their full potential.
3. To enable all to make a positive contribution to society and to achieve economic well-being.
4. To ensure parents and carers are supported in achieving the above.
5. To maximise mutual understanding and respect across the age ranges within the community.

### Our objectives (2007-2010)

(Link to Aim number shown in brackets)

1. Develop, with major funders, a youth strategy to help secure the long-term financial future of projects that benefit young people in the town and surrounding area. (1)
2. Work with agencies, community and voluntary organisations interacting with young people in and around Lyme Regis to ensure that: young people are effectively involved and consulted on how services to them can be



better delivered; services are co-ordinated and well-managed; best practice 'child safety' procedures are in place; and advice and guidance on issues of concern to young people are available. (1,2)

3. Ensure that good, well-used, dedicated facility (facilities) exists for the provision of wrap-around child-care and services for all young people up to the age of 12 and their parents. (3)
4. Work with schools, parents and caterers to ensure that accessible healthy eating options exist for young people both in and out of school. (3)
5. Establish space for young people (e.g. skate park) where they can be at ease amongst themselves. (1,3)
6. Provide and support accessible training and employment for young people to acquire appropriate skills and expertise that will enable them to earn a living within the local community if they wish to. (2,3)
7. Work with housing agencies, developers and property owners to ensure that appropriate low cost social and affordable flats and houses that are accessible to young people are available. (1)
8. Establish opportunities for members of the community of all ages and backgrounds to meet and share their experiences and to promote the contribution made by young people to the life of the Town in a positive manner. (2)



Redevelopment offers exciting possibilities

### How you can help:

- As a young person, make your own future happen!
- As an older person, volunteer to help existing groups working with young people
- Encourage young people themselves to join community organisations.



Two of the activities open to young people

## EVALUATION

Now that the results of the consultation have been incorporated into this Final Plan, a series of evaluation criteria will be drawn up by the Steering Group, enabling the Community to check periodically if projects under way are in fact achieving the overall objectives, and to assess the likely effectiveness of new proposals in achieving our visions.

Evaluation will focus on lessons learnt and dissemination of good practice and will be at four levels:

- Reaction: What was the immediate impact of the project?
- Learning: What can the local area now do that it couldn't do before and how has its capacity been increased?
- Development: How has this increased capacity been applied?
- Change: What is the longer-term effect or impact of the activity likely to be?

In particular evaluation will seek to establish:

- The successes (and any failures) of the plan.
- The economic, social and environmental impact of the plan.
- The extent to which the plan's aims have been achieved.
- The likely long-term effect of the plan.
- Any best practice that has emerged.

Monitoring reports will be submitted to partners and funders as required and will be supplemented with periodic feedback from partners, stakeholders and the wider community.

## OTHER FORMATS

If you would like a copy of this plan in large print or any other format, please contact Lyme Regis Development Trust on 01297 445021

## WHAT NOW?

Thank you for reading this far: please keep in touch, and get involved if you possibly can.

### How?

- Visit our display at St Michael's Business Centre
- ring 01297 445021 during office hours
- email the Lyme Regis Development Trust: [admin@lrtdt.co.uk](mailto:admin@lrtdt.co.uk)
- visit our website <http://www.lymeforward.co.uk>



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*Lyme forward*



Market and Coastal  
Towns Association

