



## Dartmouth and Kingswear Society

Conserving, Enhancing, Informing, Enjoying

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Jobs are Crucial**

As consultation proceeds on the West Dartmouth Development, the Dartmouth & Kingswear Society is pressing South Hams District Council to say what it is doing to attract jobs to the Dartmouth area. At present, information is vague, yet in the Society's view, the whole WDD project stands or falls on the ability of the planners to attract sufficient, sustainable employment opportunities into the area to justify the building of so many houses. No jobs, no people, no houses required, or put it the other way round, jobs of the right quality, people to do them, high occupancy of houses - provided they are of the right sort.

The Society wants South Hams to be more precise about its plans to attract potential employers, and state clearly who has responsibility for doing it. For example, what analysis of prospects has there been? What approaches have been made to individuals and/or companies, no matter how tentatively? How encouraging, or otherwise, have been the responses? The Society believes every effort must be exerted to secure the prospects for jobs as a matter of priority.

The Society is part of the West Dartmouth Development Steering Group set up by Millwood Homes to gather community views on the proposed development above Townstal. It has already raised its concerns over proposals by Millwood Homes to go outside the boundary set by the Inspector after the Local Development Framework consultations in 2010. South Hams formally adopted Development Plan Documents for Dartmouth & Kingswear in line with the Inspector's recommendations. These documents show the site allocated for the West Dartmouth Development, and in the Society's view, should not now be ignored by Millwood Homes.

The Society is also concerned that no formal terms of reference were set out for the Millwood Homes consultation process by South Hams and is now pressing the Council to put this omission right. It makes no sense for the lead developer to be conducting a public consultation process without clear guidance from the Council ultimately responsible for the development.

The Society wants the WDD pursued with energy and determination, but the final outcome must not be an isolated community. This is a great opportunity to enhance the overall sense of community in Dartmouth, but only if the WDD becomes a natural extension of Townstal. We must avoid ribbon development and ugly urban sprawl - the site is on top of a hill and can be seen from every approach to the town - and the best way to do that is to keep to the

footprint laid down by the Inspector until the situation with other farm land within the permitted boundary changes. If it does, a revised boundary may be possible in the second phase of development.

The project is in its early stages, but the Society is very concerned that timescales remain uncertain. A project of such importance to the community and the Council deserves a clear published timetable. Time lost in the early stages of a large project spanning years, is not easy to recover.