

Feniton Neighbourhood Plan

2016–2031

[Consultation draft Plan for submission: Regulation 16 of the
Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012]

Feniton Parish Council

October 2017



Foreword

Feniton's Neighbourhood Plan outlines the vision of the people of Feniton in terms of planning for its future. Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced by the 2011 Localism Act to give local people more say about the scale and nature of development in their area, recognising the current Government planning laws encapsulated in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of 2012, and the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013–2031.

The Feniton Neighbourhood Plan – 'the Plan' – covers the following topics: Education, Employment, Environment, Future development, Health and care, Transport, and Social, leisure and communications.

The Plan will run to 2031 to coincide with the end date of the Local Plan, but will need to be reviewed at five-year intervals to ensure that it continues to reflect the views of the current residents and responds to their needs in terms of housing provision.

The Plan has been drafted by members of the Feniton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group¹ and is the result of extensive community consultation and engagement over a period of three years. It will be formally submitted to East Devon District Council, which will then arrange for the Plan to be 'examined' by an independent examiner. The Plan will be then subject to a local referendum before being finally 'made'. A summary timeline of the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan through its various stages is provided as Appendix 5.

Both the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Parish Council look forward to receiving any comments on the Plan. We believe that this Plan represents a broad consensus of local opinion, based on what we have been told to date, and is submitted to East Devon District Council for consideration, prior to referral to an independent inspector.



View of old Feniton

Acknowledgements

Feniton Parish Council would like to express its gratitude to the many volunteers who have worked selflessly on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, particularly Jenny Wilson; to the district council officers (and in particular, Tim Spurway, Claire Rodway and Linda Renshaw) for their advice and input; to Stuart Todd, of Stuart Todd Associates; to Martin Parkes of Devon Communities Together; and to those whose photographs are included in this document. The Parish Council also wishes to acknowledge the very many local residents whose opinions were given so passionately and who helped to formulate the Plan.

Martyn Smith
Chairman, Feniton Parish Council, October 2017

¹ Membership of the Steering Group is provided as Appendix 1.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Planning law in England

The main national Planning Acts in force at present include the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compensation Act 2004, the Planning Act 2008, the Localism Act 2011, and the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The concept of Neighbourhood Plans was introduced in the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood Plans need to meet what are termed 'Basic Conditions', i.e. they must:

- generally conform with the strategic policies of the formally adopted Development Plan for the area;
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance provided by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to achieving sustainable development;
- be compatible with European Union (EU) law and human rights obligations.

In addition to the Acts referred to above, the main policy guidance provided by government is embodied within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of 2012. This sets out guidance to local planning authorities, planning applicants and local communities on how the government expects the planning system to be delivered, in support of both economic regeneration and environmental protection. The NPPF can be viewed and downloaded at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60777/2116950.pdf

1.2 Local and neighbourhood planning policy

Like all neighbourhood plans, the Feniton Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the statutory Local Plan for its area. This is the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013–2031 ('the Local Plan'),² prepared by East Devon District Council (EDDC) and which sets out policies and proposals for the future development of the whole district for the next fourteen years. The Local Plan was formally adopted in January 2016, having been found 'sound' following examination by an independent Planning Inspector. The Neighbourhood Plan adds more local detail and policies than would be appropriate for inclusion in the district-wide local plan.

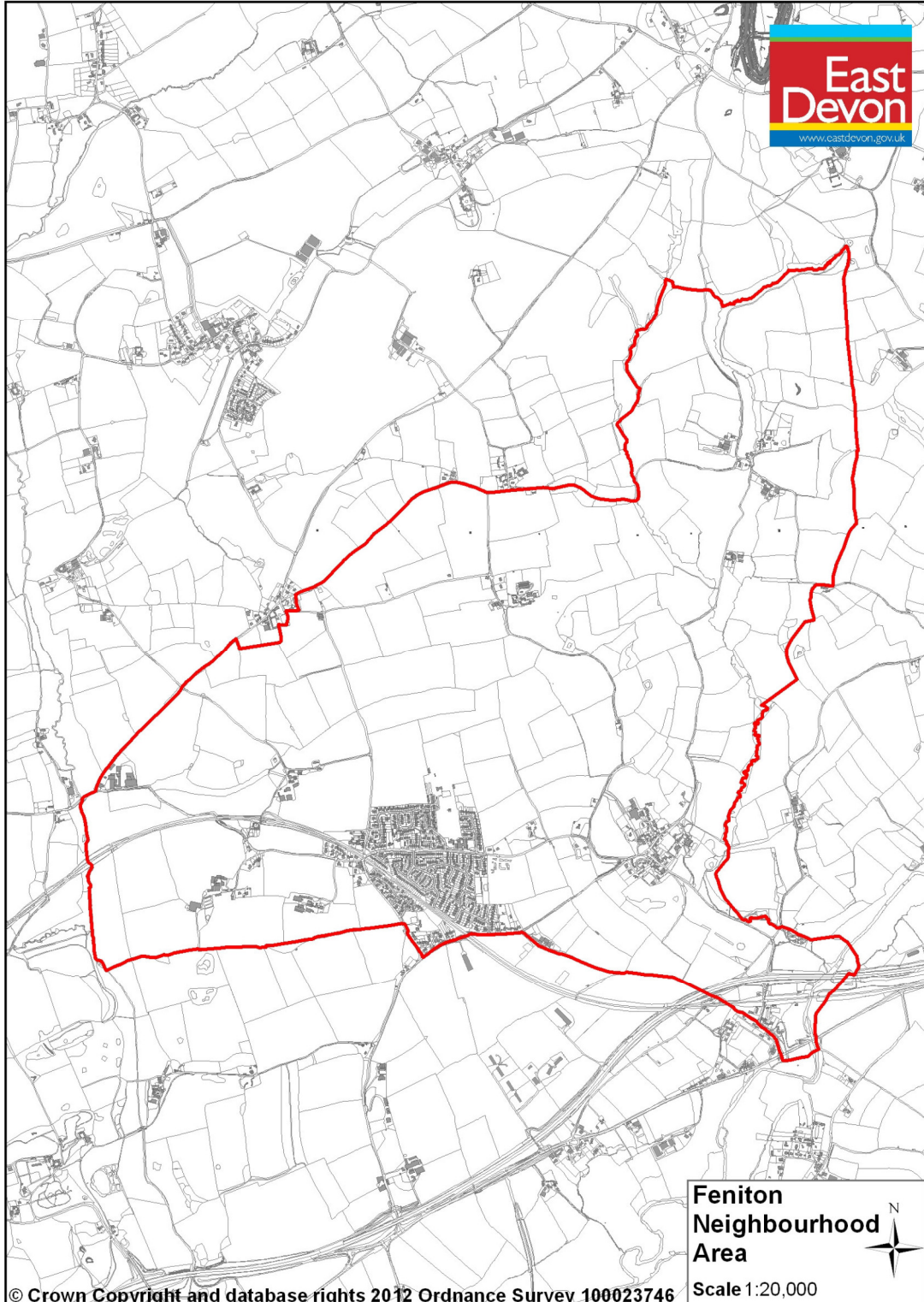
Within the context of the Local Plan, Feniton sits in Strategy 27 (Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages). The Local Plan's vision for smaller towns, villages and the countryside is one of 'seeking to accommodate modest development that supports and complements rural areas whilst helping to sustain their intrinsic qualities and appeal. This will need to be achieved in the context of planning for development in the highest quality of built and natural environmental settings whilst supporting communities' social well-being and respecting the intrinsic features that help define the character of rural East Devon. But all the time recognising that rural East Devon has been designed and shaped by farming and rural practices and these will need to remain an intrinsic part of the future' (p. 89). This vision, as witnessed by responses and concerns raised as part of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process, is shared passionately by the people of Feniton. The decision to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan has been directly informed by these values, and the desire of the community for Feniton to grow in a sustainable and appropriate manner.

² <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1772841/local-plan-final-adopted-plan-2016.pdf>

An end date of 2031 for the Plan has been chosen in order to complement the end date for the Local Plan, and Feniton Parish Council commits to undertaking quinquennial reviews of the Plan to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. (Assuming the Plan is approved in 2017, this would mean formal reviews in 2022, 2027, and a final review in 2031.)

2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area

Parish of Feniton: the designated area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The area was designated on 3 September 2014.



3 Feniton within its wider context

3.1 The general pattern of settlement

Feniton is just off the main A30 trunk road, 11 miles east of Exeter, 5 miles from the market town of Honiton, and 3 miles from Ottery St Mary.

The village of Feniton dates back to pre-Norman times, being mentioned alongside the nearby town of Ottery St Mary in a charter from 1061, detailing the boundary between the two parishes, a boundary marked today by a commemorative stone on the outskirts of the village. Feniton is also mentioned in the Domesday Book, along with the hamlet of Curscombe.



Stone marking the boundary between Ottery St Mary and Feniton



St Andrew's Church, old Feniton

Today the old part of the village includes the 13th-century church, a hairdresser and the village hall, and a number of thatched cottages.

The Vine Water, a tributary of the River Otter, runs nearby, and is generally believed to have given the village its name.

The newer part of the village lies approximately 0.75 miles west, and is separated by open countryside. This area was formerly known as Sidmouth Junction and for many years consisted of just a few houses and a public house and a chapel, which were associated with the building and operation of the railway station of the same name.

More recent development has included a primary school, a village shop, a playing field, a sports and social club, a private dental practice, a hairdresser and a fast food takeaway. In 1967, the original Sidmouth Junction railway station and its associated branch line were closed as a result of the Beeching cuts.



Wells Avenue, new Feniton



Road between old Feniton and Curscombe

The station was reopened by British Rail in 1971, following extensive lobbying by the residents, with the new name of Feniton, offering a limited service to Exeter and London Waterloo.

The outlying areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area are characterised by small groups of houses which have grown up around farmsteads, as well as isolated cottages.

3.2 Facts and figures

A search of the national census archives reveals the sporadic, and at times explosive, growth of Feniton. The census of 1801 recorded the population of the village at 252 and this figure remained reasonably static up to 1961 when it was recorded at 320. The census of 1971 (just 10 years later) demonstrates the rapid increase of the population in new Feniton, when the figure was recorded at 1,069 and rose again by 1981 when it was recorded at 1,586. Despite increased development since 1981, the population figure has remained largely the same, which demonstrates the trend for single-person homes and smaller families.

The population of the village in 2011, according to the national census, was 1,568. The ward profile conducted by Local Futures in November 2013³ characterised Feniton as follows:

- a knowledge economy and enterprise culture that performs in the bottom 20% of wards nationally;
- a resident workforce that performs in the middle 20% of wards by national standards;
- a resident workforce that is in the top 20% nationally by wards in terms of those in employment;
- an average age of residents in the highest 40% of wards nationally;
- the average household size/proportion of owner-occupiers puts Feniton in the middle 20% of wards nationally;
- standards of health are in the top 40% of wards nationally;
- in the bottom 40% of wards nationally in terms of the use of public transport as a means of getting to work/access to local services.

The general picture that emerges from this section is that of a small rural community, located in the East Devon countryside. The older part of the village can trace its history back to at least the time of the Norman Conquest while the much larger 'new Feniton', separated by open countryside, owes its existence to the coming of the railway. Agriculture continues to shape Feniton's environment. The community may be characterised as having a relatively high proportion of those in older age groups, with relatively poor access to local services.

³ <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/996709/summary-place-profile-feniton-and-buckerell-nov-2013-29120.pdf>

4 Key issues

The key issues to be addressed in Feniton's Neighbourhood Plan were established in extensive public consultation exercises outlined in the Consultation Statement which accompanies this document.

The first consultation events were held at the annual village fair ('Feniton Fun Day') and St Andrew's Fair (both in 2014). From these public discussions a questionnaire was written and a copy distributed in October 2015 to every resident (over the age of 18) in the Neighbourhood Plan area. A total of 1,730 questionnaires was distributed, with a response rate of 43%. Statements were posed and the respondents were asked to rate them according to a Likert Scale. In addition, space was allowed for free text, so that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group could be completely appraised of the concerns of those who responded. In April 2016, the responses were analysed and an analysis report written.⁴

4.1 Education

Education is an important topic for the majority of the village, and there is a strong view that the school offers an excellent provision for the village and needs protecting. Many comments suggest that the size of the school has reached a limit in being able to cater for the demand from the parish (and beyond), and that this is an important issue when considering future growth without adequate infrastructure in place.

4.2 Employment

Feniton residents tend to travel to work outside the parish as there are limited employment opportunities within the parish. The issue of employment within the parish raises several issues in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan for Feniton. These issues are inextricably linked to transport and the weaknesses of the public transport provision serving the village. Also many respondents complained about the road infrastructure and its ability to safely absorb additional demand, following new housing development, given the dependence upon the car to get to work for most.

4.3 Environment

There is a strong view that any new development will need to wait until there are sufficient flood alleviation and prevention measures in place. Given the on-going flood events within the old and new village areas, this is not at all surprising. There is also a clear wish to have the village retain its rural character, as indeed was recognised at the 2014 Public Inquiry, when concerns were raised frequently that more development would destroy what makes Feniton unique. Indeed the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England featured Feniton as an example of the dangers of unfettered development in its report *Countryside Promises, Planning Realities* of March 2013.⁵

4.4 Future development

It is clear from the questionnaire responses that there is an acceptance that there will need to be future development within Feniton parish, but many voiced concerns that future development should not exacerbate existing flooding problems. The vast majority of respondents wanted any new development to be situated within the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) (Appendix 6). Any new

⁴ <https://fenitonparishcouncil.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/feniton-neighbourhood-plan-updated-analysis-of-questionnaire-20-april-2016-final-version.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning/item/3260-countryside-promises-planning-realities>

Feniton Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16, consultation draft for submission development should include 50% affordable housing, with a choice of sizes to accommodate larger families. The replies suggested that the majority of parishioners wish to see fewer than 50 new homes within the first 5 years and a similar growth pattern over the subsequent 10 years.

For this reason, and others stated within the Key Issues, it would be inappropriate at this stage to allocate sites for development. At the time of writing (September 2017), there are 32 houses under construction in Acland Park, the development of which follows closely on the development of 50 houses in Winchester Park. Both these developments were won at appeal, and in fact every appeal decision affecting Feniton made since 2012 has raised the issues of the lack of sustainability and ever-present concerns about surface water flooding in the area. It was seen as important to allow the village to concentrate on bringing the social and environmental aspects of the community into equilibrium with the large-scale unplanned developments that had been built, or were in the process of being built, at the time of writing the plan.



Flooding in Station Road, new Feniton

However, looking to the future, residents of Feniton are mindful of the national drive for development and the needs of future generations to live independently. Many comments on the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire made reference to the need for the village to grow incrementally and not be swamped by large-scale developments such as were proposed by developers at the Feniton public inquiry in January 2014.

At the 5-year review of Feniton's Neighbourhood Plan, the sites put forward under the Villages Development Plan Document (DPD) of the Local Plan in and around Feniton will be assessed, and the community will be asked to consider which site(s) should be promoted for small-scale development to meet the future needs of the village. If, at this time, East Devon District Council is looking towards the Strategy 27 communities to take some level of development, the wishes of the people of Feniton will be the driver for the choice of site(s) put forward: the scale of development will be in accordance with the results of a Housing Needs Assessment commissioned by Feniton Parish Council.

4.5 Health and care

In the absence of a medical practice within the community, some thought needs to be given as to how that omission might be rectified. There is strong support for a volunteer-led support service and for sheltered accommodation for an ageing population. Also there is strong support for improved walking provision throughout the village, and for a cycle path to Ottery St Mary and Sidmouth to improve health and safety.⁶ The network of public rights of way and bridleways around the immediate area are much valued and enjoyed by walkers (Appendix 4).

⁶ The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group noted that support for such a cycle path features as Policy NP10 in the draft Neighbourhood Plan for Ottery St Mary, and that there is scope for co-operation between the two Parish Councils as a result.

4.6 Transport

There is a strong view that while Feniton has a railway station, the service is not adequate for the needs of the community and therefore in many cases the use of other modes of transport (bicycle, bus, car and car share) is the most effective solution for work and other uses.

4.7 Social, leisure and communications

A majority of respondents acknowledged that there is a requirement to look forward and to embrace the views of the youth of the parish in working up the Neighbourhood Plan for Feniton. The existing community assets are greatly treasured, and the need for a community-owned green space is seen as essential moving forward. Infrastructure – or lack of it – has played out very badly in the recent history of Feniton, and so it is not surprising that almost all respondents saw this as a vital part of the Neighbourhood Plan, i.e. to ensure that any new development is absolutely sustainable and establishes Feniton as a prime place to live and thrive.



Level crossing, new Feniton



Convenience store, new Feniton

5 Vision and Objectives

5.1 Vision

Feniton will continue to be a thriving and vibrant village community which protects and enhances its distinctive character, rich heritage and its rural setting, and will grow to be an even better place for young and old in which to live.

5.2 Objectives

- **Objective 1.** Promote efficiencies and improvements to the **strategic transport network** to improve currently poor connectivity between Feniton and the major centres of Ottery St Mary, Honiton and Exeter; development only to be supported when it is proposed in conjunction with sustainable transport solutions.
- **Objective 2.** Secure and maintain effective **flood alleviation** for both the old and new parts of the village, whilst also minimising and managing flood risk, including taking into account the impact of any new housing.
- **Objective 3.** Promote small developments within the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB), which allow a range of houses, broadening the choice from affordable housing to larger family homes, for local people.

- **Objective 4.** Promote opportunities for young people to access **education, community facilities and leisure** within the village.
- **Objective 5.** Preserve and enhance the **rural character and historic environment** of the village and the wider landscape.
- **Objective 6.** Promote the provision of an **open green space** for use by the village.
- **Objective 7.** Support the provision of **local medical facilities**.



Old part of Feniton



Ottery Road, new Feniton

6 Strategic planning issues

6.1 Development principles

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but also emphasises the importance of the Development Plan which should be the basis of decisions on planning applications (Section 11 of the NPPF). Once approved, this includes the Neighbourhood Plan. Section 16 of the NPPF highlights the need to reflect strategic policies in the Local Plan and to provide a local framework for development in Neighbourhood Plans.

East Devon Local Plan

Feniton is one of the communities listed in Strategy 27 'Development in small towns and villages' of the Local Plan. The strategy recognises that communities incorporated under this policy '... vary in size and character but all offer a range of accessible services and facilities to meet many of the everyday needs of local residents and they have reasonable public transport. They will have a Built-up Area Boundary that will be designated in the East Devon Villages Plan though they will not have land specifically allocated for development'.

Feniton Neighbourhood Plan

The consultation responses clearly indicate that local residents value Feniton's close-knit community and environment, but have serious concerns about traffic, over-development and the importance of maintaining its individual identity. This plan represents the most detailed and local level of planning, but the policies in the plan are set within the context of both the NPPF and the Local Plan.

7 Neighbourhood Plan policies

This section details Feniton’s Neighbourhood Plan policies and should be read in conjunction with the Basic Conditions Statement, which outlines how these policies conform with the adopted Local Plan and national planning guidance (NPPF). Where local and Neighbourhood Plan policies relate to the same issue, the Neighbourhood Plan policies should be read in conjunction with those policies contained within the Local Plan.

7.1 Strategic transport network

Objective 1. Promote efficiencies and improvements to the **strategic transport network** to improve currently poor connectivity between Feniton and the major centres of Ottery St Mary, Honiton and Exeter; development only to be supported when it is proposed in conjunction with sustainable transport solutions.

Policy T1 Proposals for new development will only be supported where they demonstrate that they will, in proportion to the scale of development proposed:

- i) minimise any adverse impact of additional traffic, such as increased volume of traffic at peak times which could lead to congestion, increased levels of pollution or increased speeds which may compromise pedestrian and cyclist safety;
- ii) improve accessibility to and safe use of pedestrian and cycle routes through enhancement of existing or provision of new routes;
- iii) not lead to an unacceptable increase in existing HGV movements in and around the village; and,
- iv) not exacerbate existing parking problems in the village.

As a rural community, approached by narrow country lanes with limited passing spaces at every entrance to the village, transport is a key issue for the residents of Feniton. Public transport is considered to be poor, and for villagers at least one car per household is essential.⁷ The Local Futures survey of November 2013 was particularly clear about the critical role played by the car in respect of villagers commuting to/fro work.⁸

Congestion. Feniton suffers from traffic congestion especially at peak times of day, including at each end of the school day. Movement of HGVs through the village to work units nearby and as a short cut to major road arteries should be minimised/discouraged.

⁷ The Parish Plan questionnaire of 2006, a time when public transport services were better than today, revealed that of the 203 households responding to a question about car ownership, 55% owned two cars or more.

⁸ *Local Futures. Ward Profile: An Economic, Social and Environmental Summary Profile of Feniton and Buckerell, East Devon* (November 2013) reports that “The national average for the proportion of people who travel to work by car was 62.66% in 2011. By comparison the ward figure of 77.12% places the area in the top 40% of wards nationally. The proportion of residents who travel to work within Feniton and Buckerell ward by foot or bicycle was 7.86% in 2011. This is low, placing it in the bottom 40% of wards nationally. By comparison the national figure is 13.61%. The proportion of residents who travel to work within Feniton and Buckerell by motorcycle or scooter was 1.33% in 2011. This is very high, placing it in the top 20% of wards nationally. By comparison the national figure is 0.81% ... The national average for the proportion of people who travel to work by public transport was 16.4% in 2011. By comparison the ward figure of 5.3% places the area in the bottom 40% of wards nationally”. (See http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/feniton_and_buckrell_profile_nov13.pdf).

Safety. Speeding through the village has been a complaint of many residents over many years, and given the lack of pavements, particularly between old and new Feniton, there are grave concerns about safe walking and cycling on the roads around the village.

Sustainability. Questionnaire responses highlighted inadequate access to public transport. While Feniton benefits from a railway station, the timetable is constrained by the single track with no passing places for trains between Exeter Central and Pinhoe. While there are plans to put in a passing loop at Whimple, which should increase the frequency of service, this has been envisaged for some time and will require considerable investment in infrastructure to see it come to fruition. Questionnaire responses demonstrated a genuine appetite for cycling and, in particular, the opening up of a cycle route along the disused railway from Feniton to Sidmouth, and on to Budleigh Salterton. Feniton is served by a limited bus service which is used by shoppers who wish to visit Ottery St Mary and beyond. It is rarely used by those travelling to work.

7.2 Environmental protection

Objective 2. Secure and maintain effective **Environmental Protection** for the parish, whilst also minimising and managing flood risk, including taking into account the impact of any new housing.

Policy F1 Proposals for development will only be supported where they:

- i) Are of a design and construction which seeks to minimise adverse impact on existing flooding (including, but not limited to measures such as permeable driveways and dedicated parking spaces, use of soakaways and planting to minimise run-off);
- ii) Demonstrate that they have taken full account of and recognise the impact of flood risk, both in terms of fluvial and localised surface water flooding;
- iii) Minimise and do not exacerbate existing surface water flooding issues beyond the development site; and,
- iv) Ensure no adverse impact on existing flooding and satisfactorily mitigate / accommodate surface water run-off arising from the development through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) where appropriate.

Feniton has been badly affected by flooding, most notably in 2008 and on numerous occasions since then. The first documented reference to flooding was in a parish council report of 1912, but probably the worst case of flooding was in 2008 when between 50 and 60 homes were flooded and elderly residents were forced to escape the rising water by climbing up into the attic of their bungalows. At the time of writing the plan,



Flooding in Salisbury Avenue, new Feniton

much of Feniton Parish (including all of “new” Feniton) is located within a Critical Drainage Area, meaning that in this area there is a need for surface water to be managed to a higher standard than normal to ensure that any new development will contribute to a reduction in flooding risks in line with the NPPF. These higher standards are determined by the Environment Agency. There is understandably deep concern about the impact of any new build, and reassurances sought that any new development will not exacerbate the current situation. The community at large, and residents of the estate in particular, were deeply upset that a developer failed to comply with conditions attached to their development, i.e. that attenuation tanks should be installed to receive surface water runoff before any of the houses were occupied. It took the combined weight of EDDC and adverse publicity from many news outlets, including a report on BBC TV’s ‘The One Show’ (broadcast nationally in October 2014), to force the developer to comply. This is the context in which policy F1 has been written.



Flooding at Patteson’s Cross

A £1.6m flood alleviation scheme is in progress. This multiagency-funded project is now at its midway point with two phases completed. Despite this, the questionnaire responses revealed flooding to remain a major concern of the majority of residents.



Phase 1 of the flood alleviation scheme

The NPPF provides clear guidance that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk and water supply and demand considerations. Similarly, policy EN22 of the Local Plan states that “Planning permission for new development will require that: (1) The surface water run-off implications of the proposal have been fully considered and found to be acceptable, including implications for coastal erosion. (2) Appropriate remedial measures are included as an integral part of the development, and there are clear arrangements in place for ongoing maintenance over the lifetime of the development. (3) Where remedial measures are required away from the application site, the developer is in a position to secure the implementation of such measures. (4) A Drainage Impact Assessment will be required for all new development with potentially significant surface run off implications. (5) Surface water in all major commercial developments or schemes for 10 homes or more (or any revised threshold set by Government) should be managed by sustainable drainage systems, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate”.

The community expressed its strong views that development should be restricted until solutions to reduce the risk of flooding are put in place and work adequately.

7.3 Scale of development

Objective 3. Promote only small developments within the BUAB, which allow a range of houses, broadening the choice from affordable housing to larger family homes, for local people.

Policy H1 Affordable housing shall be provided at a rate of at least 50% of total yield on sites, within the BUAB, subject to viability in accordance with current Government policy and Strategy 34 of the Local Plan. Outside the BUAB, on exception sites, at least 66% affordable housing should be provided, in accordance with Strategy 35.

Policy H2 Proposals for small-scale housing – i.e. comprising up to 10 dwellings – within the proposed BUAB will usually be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the proposals contribute towards affordable housing in accordance with Policy H1; and
- the affordable housing element of the development, comprised of social-rented dwellings, will be restricted to a person(s) who does not have access to general market housing and is in housing need and is a resident of the Parish, or has a local connection with the Parish because of family ties or a need to be near their workplace according to Local Plan Strategy 35.

Proposals for more than 10 dwellings will be determined in accordance with the policies of the East Devon Local Plan.

Policy H3 Housing developments within Feniton’s BUAB will usually be supported where they include a range of house types, and where they have demonstrated through a Design and Access Statement or Planning Statement that they:

- i) are of high quality design, complementing the local vernacular, and will enhance visual amenity and minimise any adverse impacts on the built environment;
- ii) ensure that the size, height, density, scale and location of the development respects its setting and the character of the area;
- iii) ensure that materials and design of the development are sympathetic and complementary to its setting and the character of the area;
- iv) ensure that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the natural environment and mitigating any adverse impact using landscaping where necessary;
- v) maximise opportunities to provide habitats for wildlife and nesting birds;
- vi) maximise opportunities for ‘greening’ the built environment through natural planting of shrubbery and trees local to the biodiversity of the surrounding area;
- vii) preserve or enhance the heritage assets in the parish.

Policy H4 The Neighbourhood Plan will look favourably upon developments which recognise the unique pressures faced by Feniton with respect to traffic congestion and on-road parking, i.e. by proactively providing more parking spaces per dwelling than the minimum set out in the Local Plan.

Congestion and problems associated with parking are long-standing issues in Feniton. For example, 76% of responses to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire expressed the view that parking was an issue in the village, while 78% supported the idea of a local traffic and parking plan. The Joint Inquiry of 2014 (APP/U1105/A/13 {2191905}{2197001}{2197002}{2200204} (Appendix 7) recognised that villagers were especially reliant upon the use of a private car “to reach the shops, services and facilities that cannot be found in Feniton. Many others would be reliant on the use of

Feniton Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16, consultation draft for submission a car to commute to work” (#78). Any further housing development inevitably would increase such usage (#79), “an adverse environmental impact of some weight” (#104).⁹

The permitted development of 32 houses in Acland Park and 50 houses at the Wainhomes site unsurprisingly has led to further concern about the increased impact of traffic congestion and on-street parking.



Typical traffic congestion outside Feniton Primary School¹⁰



A farming community with narrow roads

Policy TC9 of the Local Plan (Parking Provision in New Development) requires as a guide “at least 1 car parking space ... for one bedroomed homes and 2 car parking spaces per home with two or more bedrooms”. The strong view of the Parish Council and others was that these guidelines fell short of what was required for Feniton, and that for new homes with 3 or more bedrooms, 3 parking spaces would be more appropriate, even if against Local Plan guidelines.

7.4 Education, community facilities and leisure

Objective 4. Promote opportunities for young people to access **education, community facilities and leisure** within the village.

Policy C1 Existing community facilities – identified in Appendix 3 – will be protected, maintained and enhanced, with community support.

Policy C2 Developer contributions generated from Section 106 planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), where relevant and feasible, should contribute towards the local priority amenity and facility projects identified to East Devon District Council by Feniton Parish Council.

Policy C3 Development proposals that result in the loss of community facilities will only be supported where:

i) it can be demonstrated:

⁹ According to the 2011 census, the use of a car to travel to work from Feniton was 51% as opposed to 40% in East Devon, and 37% nationally.

¹⁰ Source: Travel Plan, Feniton Primary School, March 2012. Submitted as Appx 10 of Feniton Parish Council’s Proof of Evidence at the Joint Inquiry of the same year.

- a) through an up-to-date assessment of community need that the facilities are no longer needed; or
- b) through an up-to-date assessment of the facility in its current form, or to provide a use of a similar nature and is no longer commercially viable. To be redeveloped for an alternative use, evidence will be required to show that the facility has been actively marketed for at least 12 months at a realistic and viable price for the existing or similar uses. Marketing should include an offer to the local community, at a realistic current use price, for its acquisition or operation;

or

- ii) it can be demonstrated, through an assessment of local community facilities, that suitable alternative provision (in terms of size, capacity and type) exists in Feniton to serve the community; and,
- iii) where there remains a need or demand, that suitable alternative replacement provision is included as part of the development proposal on or off-site within Feniton.

Development proposals for new and/or improved community facilities will be supported where:

- i) the proposal would not have significant harmful impact on the amenity of surrounding residents;
- ii) the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the surrounding local environment (with regard to biodiversity, wildlife habitat and landscape character);
- iii) the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network (with regard to additional traffic volume / congestion, demand for parking, and pollution levels); and,
- iv) the proposal would adequately address surface water run-off issues (for example, through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)).

7.5 Rural character and historic environment

Objective 5. Preserve and enhance the **rural character and historic environment** of the village and the wider landscape.

Policy E1 Feniton's unique topography, its status as a rural farming settlement of long standing, and a setting that conveys a sense of 'remoteness' (to quote the Planning Inspectorate's report following the Joint Inquiry) all contribute to making Feniton the unique place that it is.

Accordingly, development proposals which change the characteristics and essential qualities of the natural environment (including biodiversity, habitats, built heritage and landscape) will only be supported where they:

- i) demonstrate no adverse impact on those characteristics or that any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated (for example, through appropriate landscaping, habitat creation or replacement and natural planting consistent with local biodiversity and species);
- ii) enhance the natural environment where there is the opportunity to do so.

Feniton’s documented history as a rural, farming community stretches back at least a thousand years. Agriculture remains central to the community’s identity and environment, and much of the surrounding land is designated as some of the highest quality. The village itself is on the eastern edge of the Devon Redlands National Character Area (NCA), an area characterised by the red soil that “dominates the landscape ... [and is] ... visually evident in the ... hamlets and villages that are scattered across the area”.¹¹ As the NCA notes, agriculture has “left a dense pattern of deep and narrow lanes imprinted in the landscape ... [and] ... the gently rolling hills that feature across the NCA support a network of hedgerows enclosing relatively small fields ... Hedgerow trees and small copses often give a wooded appearance to the hills”. Feniton and its environs are described perfectly in this regard.

Specifically, Feniton is characterised by a mixture of narrow country lanes, with high hedgerows and Devon banks, with long panoramic views to the hills beyond. The value of such vistas was recognised by the



View of new Feniton



Tractor passing new Feniton pub



Ploughing Competition in Feniton¹³

Planning Inspectorate in its appeal decisions of April 2014, when several large-scale housing development proposals were rejected.¹² For example the Inspectorate commented on “the existing sweep of uninterrupted views from Ottery Road up toward the top of Long Park Hill”, and that proposed development would result “in the suburbanisation of what is currently a rural and open part of the landscape” (#42). A list of Feniton’s important Local Green Spaces appears as Appendix 2 to this document.

¹¹ Natural England, March 2013: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6150022>

¹² <http://planningapps.eastdevon.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningDocuments.page>

¹³ Sidmouth Junction and District Ploughing Association annual competition, 2012. Photo courtesy © Paul Burton.

7.6 Local Green Space

Objective 6. Promote the provision of **Local Green Spaces** for use by the village.

Policy O1 Development proposals on or likely to impact the Local Green Space sites (see Appendix 2) will only be supported where they:

- i) maintain or enhance the existing use and amenity value of the site;
- ii) enhance the access to and use of the site where used for recreational purposes; and,
- iii) have no adverse impact on the landscape, habitats or biodiversity of the site or (where unavoidable) satisfactorily mitigate such impact

Policy O2 New development will include or contribute to the provision of recreational open space in line with standards set out by East Devon District Council's Local Plan, and in keeping with paragraph 58 of the NPPF.

Policy O3. Proposals for development will only be supported where they provide safe, convenient and pleasant pedestrian and cycling routes to the village centre and to principal facilities including the school, including safe and convenient crossings, where practical and the location of the proposal suggests a need for such routes.

The village has a scarcity of appropriate green space within the BUAB and what currently exists requires to be secured, maintained and enhanced wherever possible. Enjoyment of Local Green Space is nationally recognised as having health benefits for all age groups, and development must respect the need to provide open space and links to the established footpath network around the village. The provision of a cycle link utilising the previous railway line to Ottery and beyond to Budleigh Salterton would be seen as an important objective to be achieved for the community, and was flagged up by the population during the questionnaire as important.

7.7 Local medical facilities

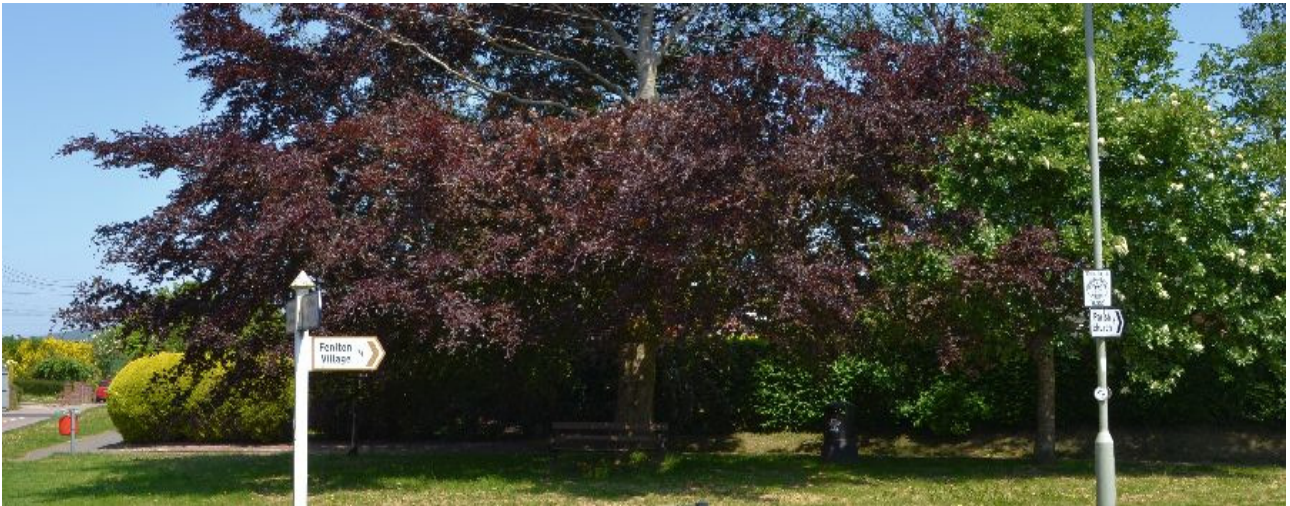
Objective 7. Support the provision of local medical facilities.

Policy M1 Proposals for the development of local medical facilities will be supported where they:

- i) are located close to existing community facilities such as the school or shops to help ensure good accessibility to residents without their own private transport (given the inadequate public transport facilities); and,
- ii) provide the appropriate medical facilities for the community's needs.

Under Community Facilities, para 16.35 of the Local Plan states that "community facilities are at the heart of every town and village in the District and provide for the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. They vary enormously but most offer meeting places hosting numerous social, cultural and other activities and space for sport and recreation, usually run and financed by the local community. Many settlements also offer a school and in some cases a library and medical facilities which tend to be funded through the County Council education and health authorities. Many residents use these facilities on a daily basis and for some, particularly the elderly, young and those without transport in the rural areas, they are an essential lifeline. Parish Plans and other community-produced documents consistently identify the retention of existing community facilities and the provision of

Feniton Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16, consultation draft for submission additional ones as key issues, highlighting just how crucial they are to residents' lives". The need for a medical presence in the village has been highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan survey and the Parish Council will endeavour to support the services of NHS providers within the locality to offer a meaningful service to parishioners on a regular basis. It is recognised that funding availability in the current financial environment within the NHS is a substantial impediment to achieving this goal.



Village green in new Feniton



Cluster of cottages and St Andrew's Church seen from Rutts Lane

Appendix 1: Membership of the Feniton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Membership of the Steering Group has included since its first meeting in October 2014 the following:

Malcolm Armstrong

Cllr Susie Bond (District Councillor, Feniton and Buckerell ward; Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

Cllr Jayne Blackmore (Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

Lorna Davis

Lynne Deam

Cllr Christine Gibbins (Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

Trevor Ives (former Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

Maureen Jones

Val Jones

Bill Knollman

Maureen Mills

Kathy Morris-Coole

Martin Morris-Coole

Cllr Chris Poole (Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

George Roulson

Janet Seal

Cllr Martyn Smith (Chair, and Chair Feniton Parish Council)

Nick Spence (former Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

Jenny Wilson

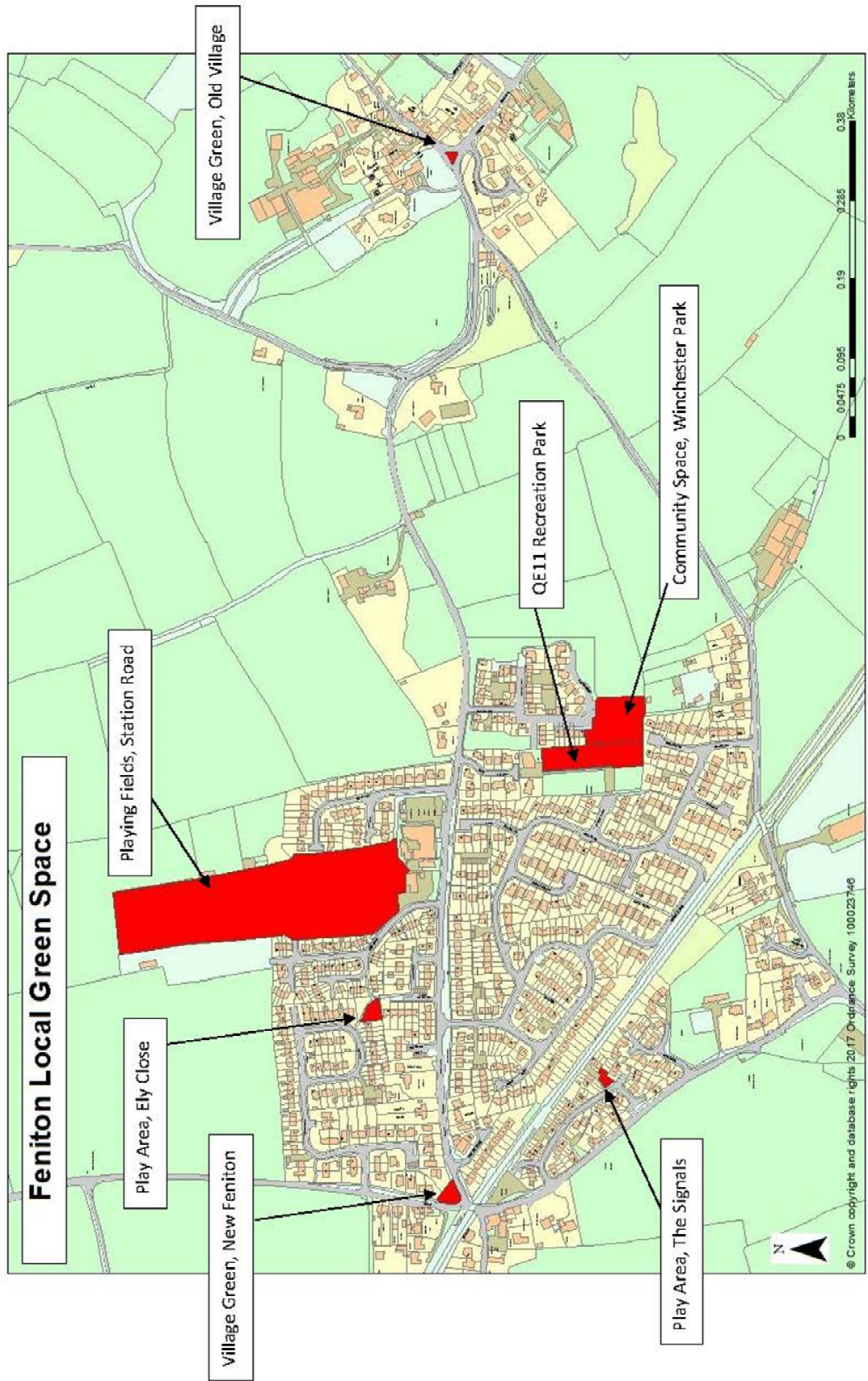
Cllr Dr John Withrington (Councillor, Feniton Parish Council)

In the course of its meetings, the Steering Group has also hosted a number of guest speakers to assist with creation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including Tim Spurway (EDDC), Martin Parkes (Devon Communities Together) and Stuart Todd (Todd Associates).

Appendix 2: List of Local Green Spaces

Feniton has limited Local Green Space (see map on page 23) and these are greatly valued by residents of the village.

Village Green, old Feniton	This historic green has been the centre of the original village for centuries and provides a focal point within the old part of the village.
Playing Fields, Station Road	The playing fields have been an integral part of the village for more than 70 years providing facilities for football, cricket, and many other activities. The playing fields act as a 'green lung' at the centre of a densely packed area of housing.
Play Area, Ely Close	This area has been in use from the 1970s and provides an important play area for smaller children.
Community Open Space, Winchester Park	This new area will become an integral extension to the QEII recreation park, open to the whole of the village. It is planted as an informal wildflower meadow and provides the backdrop to the QEII recreation park and allotments.
QEII Recreation Park	Created in the early 1970s this is the main recreation area for the younger generation. It provides play areas for all ages and pitches for ball games and other activities. The Parish Council will be embarking on a programme of refurbishment in consultation with all groups in the village.
Play Area, The Signals	Although small, this is an important area to allow play for the younger generation in this part of the village.
Village Green, new Feniton	This green provides a welcome area of open space close to the railway station and is planted with mature trees with a bench beneath.
Bowling Club, old Feniton	The Bowling Club was established in 1971, and is situated in old Feniton. Close to the Village Hall, it provides excellent facilities with access to an adjoining public car park. (Inclusion is subject to discussion with landowner.)



Appendix 3: List of community facilities

The following is a simple list of community facilities, broken down into various categories.

Category	Feniton (old)	Feniton (new)	Public ownership	Private ownership
Education				
Feniton Primary School		X	X	
Sport & Leisure				
Sports & Social Club		X		X
Football & cricket clubs		X		X
Bowling Club	X			X
Pub (The Nog Inn)		X		X
Allotments		X	X	
Youth Centre		X		X
Community land*		X		X
Play Areas				
QEII		X	X	
Ely Close		X	X	
The Signals		X	X	
School playground		X	X	
Retail				
Hairdressers	X	X		X
SPAR convenience store		X		X
Fast food take-away		X		X
Health				
Dentist (private)		X		X
Other				
Village hall, annexe, car park	X			X
Hosted p/t Post Office**	X		X	
Mobile library***		X		X

* Land allocated under Section 106 to Winchester Park site.

** Operates for 4 hours per week. Permanent Post Office closed early 2017.

*** Operates for 75 minutes per month.

Education

- Feniton Primary school

Sport and Leisure

- Sports and Social Club
- Football and cricket clubs
- Bowling club (old Feniton)
- Pub (The Nog Inn)
- Allotments
- Community land allocated under Section 106 to Winchester Park site
- Youth Centre

Health

- Dentist (private)

Play areas

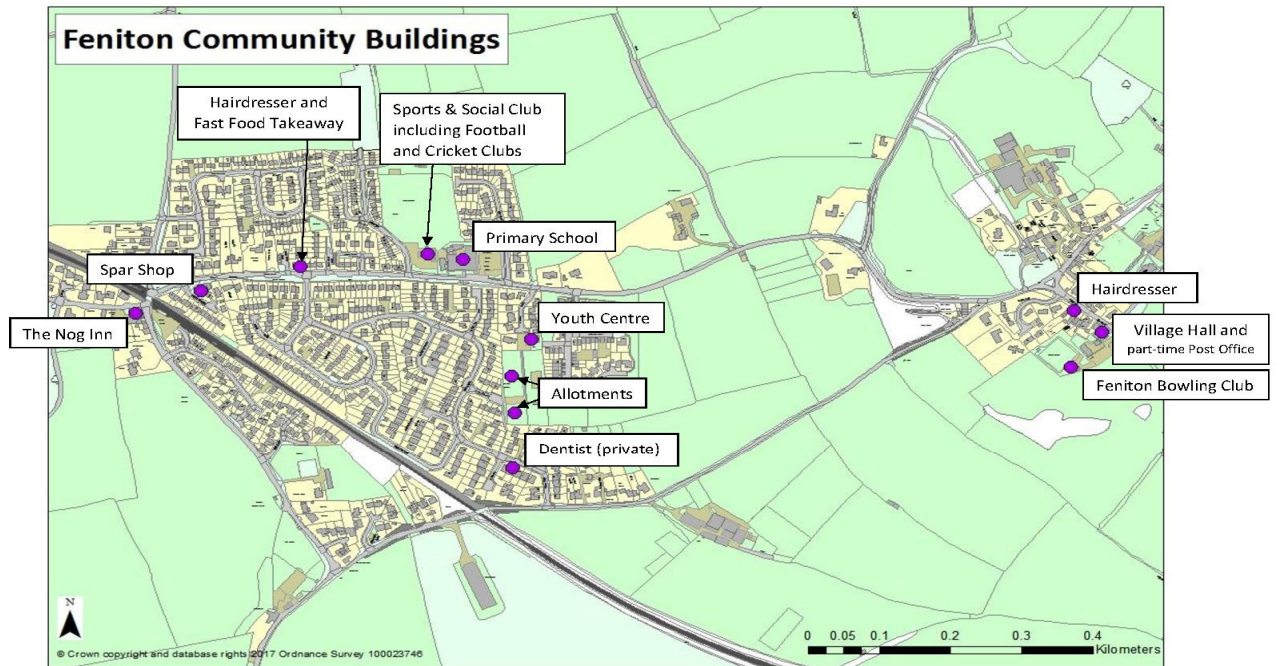
- QEII play area
- Ely Close play area
- Signals play area
- School playground

Retail

- Hairdressers (new and old Feniton)
- SPAR convenience store
- Fast food takeaway shop

Other

- Village hall and Annex, with car park (old Feniton)
- Hosted Post Office of 4 hours p.w. (permanent Post Office in old Feniton closed early 2017)
- Mobile library (75 minutes per month)



Appendix 4: List of Public Rights of Way

A copy of the Parish map for Feniton showing Public Rights of Way and County Roads is available from <http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer/MyLocalPaths/>.

- Footpath No 1 (Ottery footpath): Only the start of this path is in Feniton parish. It immediately goes into Ottery parish and heads south to the old A30.
- Footpath No 1 (Feniton footpath): Continues from footpath No 2, splits - one part heading towards the old village, one part heading towards the railway line, becoming footpath No 10 and coming out on to the lane from Fenny Bridges.
- Footpath No 2: Runs along the boundary of Feniton and Ottery for part of the way and then joins footpath No 6. Footpath No 2 continues after the new A30 (it was cut by the new road) and comes out on the corner of the village road at Fenny Bridges.
- Footpath No 3: Starts on the Sherwood Road and heads north across to Colestocks.
- Footpath No 4: Starts in Curscombe Lane and skirts Feniton Court, becoming Footpath No 16 at the Buckerell boundary.
- Footpath No 5: Runs from Curscombe towards Cheriton, it becomes a track/bridleway, then a designated bridleway (No 19) on the boundary of Payhembury/Feniton, then a track/bridleway.
- Footpath No 7: Runs from the Curscombe/Buckerell Lane to the boundary with Buckerell and then becomes footpath No 18 (Buckerell footpath).
- Footpath No 8: Runs from Sherwood Road south to the Talaton Road, coming out at Colesworthy.
- Footpath No 10: Continues from footpath No 1 (short section) and runs parallel to the new A30 to join Feniton village road down the steps by the new road.
- Footpath No 85 (Ottery footpath): Starts at Colesworthy (Feniton parish) and immediately heads south into Ottery parish (Escot).
- Footpath No 8 (Payhembury footpath), starts in Feniton parish (off lane from Lower Cheriton).

There is also an unmetalled road between Curscombe and Hembury Fort.

Appendix 5: Timeline of Neighbourhood Plan

A vital aspect of Feniton’s Neighbourhood Plan has been public consultation to ensure that views of residents have been canvassed during the preparation of the Plan. A Consultation Statement will be provided which outlines the extent and nature of public engagement. The views and information received over the entire extent of the formulation of the Neighbourhood Plan have been the bedrock of this plan.

The following table is a summary of the key events which have been undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. As outlined in the Consultation Statement, these public events are only part of the process. Feniton Parish Council’s website has been kept up to date; the parish magazine has had monthly reports on progress, and District Councillor Susie Bond’s blog has items outlining public engagement to date. The table below also looks forward to the eventual adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.

October 2014	First public consultation organised to outline the processes involved in writing a Neighbourhood Plan. Attended by consultant Stuart Todd
November 2014	Stall at St Andrew’s Fayre in Feniton Primary School
January 2015	All-day scoping event in Feniton village hall
March 2015	Scoping exercise in Feniton Primary School
July 2015	Stand at Feniton Fun Day (all-day village event)
November 2015	Distribution of questionnaire to every adult in the NP area
July 2016	Stand at Feniton Fun Day (all-day village event)
Nov 2016 to June 2017	Informal consultation with EDDC followed by amendments to ensure conformity with East Devon Local Plan and NPPF
July 2017	Stand at Feniton Fun Day (all-day village event)
July 2017	Draft plan sent out for 6-week Reg. 14 pre-submission consultation
October 2017	EDDC publish plan for 6 week period of further consultation
November 2017	Appointment of independent examiner arranged by EDDC
December 2017	Examination of plan
December 2017	Report of independent examiner
January 2018	Publication of any amendments required to Feniton NP
February 2018	Publication of Final Plan followed by local referendum
March 2018	Final Plan ‘made’ and adopted by EDDC as the Local Planning Authority. Feniton Neighbourhood Plan Policies are applied by Feniton Parish Council and EDDC



Appendix 6: Map showing Feniton's proposed Built-Up Area Boundary

Feniton falls within Strategy 27 of EDDCs Local Plan and the BUABs of the Strategy 27 communities are currently the subject of a Villages DPD to be examined by a Planning Inspector in November 2017. The proposed BUAB for Feniton is depicted below.

