

Summary of Recommendations

Short Term

- **Appoint steering group to oversee activities, regular rotation of members essential to ensure full engagement**
- **Secure funding to maintain momentum**
- **Investigate opportunities for working with AONB and achieving effective community plan development**
- **Raise profile of Plan development**
 - Improved Communications: Undertake a full survey of information dissemination mechanisms, current uptake and reach, investigate opportunities for a 'Blackdowns Online' website to develop an identity, link existing sites.
- **Engage with groups from the community willing to commence work on the following areas:**
 - Planning – with a view to the long term - engage with a group willing to learn through development of the Localism Bill what devolved responsibilities will be available, share best practice and engage with planning authorities. Gather evidence of inconsistency of planning decisions to enable effective engagement for future decisions where appropriate.
 - Public transport opportunities – better dissemination of information about what is already available, survey of uptake of community led schemes, assess opportunities to widen these schemes or emulate in different areas of the Blackdown Hills.
 - Winter roads planning group – establish a group or groups to undertake a survey in the parishes of self help opportunities to enable gritting and salting of important, yet untreated roads in the Blackdowns. This would build on a comprehensive report prepared for Devon County Council's (DCC) Environment, Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee in 2010, which contains a comprehensive assessment of the state of road network throughout the County¹ and makes recommendations for community actions to maintain the network.

Medium Term

- **Develop the Public Transport and Winter Roads planning groups to align with DCC's newly developed arrangements with South West Highways, intended to create flexibility of working practices by enabling information sharing between parishes and the highway authority to ensure effective maintenance visits, and work with the equivalent in Somerset.**
 - Widen remit of Public transport group to include transport and highways input and view to long term achievement of reduced speed limits and less HGV traffic, allowing safer recreational access in key locations
- **Extend the Communications group remit to investigate opportunities to enable access to broadband for all, better mobile signal etc – many examples to draw on. The timing for this is appropriate in the light of recent moves to improve access to high speed broadband throughout Somerset and Devon.**
- **Seek to influence planning decisions from a firm knowledge base**
- **Steering group to maintain overview and direction focus as issues are dealt with or new ones arise.**

¹Task Group CX10601 winter road report to DCC Environment, Economy and Scrutiny Committee.

- Particular attention essential for those areas not currently of concern to Blackdown Hills community although at risk of short to medium term change in delivery, eg Health and Social Care, Education provision, Sustainability (discuss with Transition group) and Environment.

Long Term

- A functional, joined up community that speaks for itself with knowledge and the trust of corresponding local authorities.

