

Date of Meeting 2 February 2026

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Cranbrook Town Centre projects

Report summary:

There are a number of ongoing projects within Cranbrook town centre, including a number of land transfers, together with the commercial project of Cranbox and the health and leisure campus.

Land transfers are underway but those for TC1 and TC2 have been delayed by the slow progress of resolving the legal agreements to facilitate the approval of the New Community partners town centre residential applications.

The Cranbrook leisure project is working to an accelerated project programme and is looking to see the delivery of leisure and Decon County Council facilities. It is advanced from the wider campus project to see provision made of a dedicated Neighbourhood Health Centre, which has been experiencing revenue funding challenges to enable the production of the Short Form Business Case required to try and secure NHS capital funding.

A planning application for Cranbox is pending consideration. The Cranbox project has experienced a number of delays through the project, with the slow progress of land transfers (as detailed in paragraph 2) having a significant impact upon the programme.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Cranbrook Placemaking Group note the progress being made on the delivery of Cranbrook town centre.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Placemaking Group are kept informed about constituent projects within Cranbrook town centre.

Officer: Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead – Placemaking and Major Projects,
naomi.harnett@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☒ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate

- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☒ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information [Agenda for Cranbrook Placemaking Group on Monday, 8th December, 2025, 9.30 am - East Devon](#) – Agenda item 9 – Health provision at Cranbrook [Agenda for Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum on Tuesday, 13th January, 2026, 6.30 pm - East Devon](#) – Agenda item 9 Cranbrook Leisure Centre update

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of services

Background

1. There are several ongoing projects within Cranbrook Town Centre, most of which are being led by the public sector. This report provides an update on these projects.
2. In November 2022 the council made an acquisition of town centre land parcels TC4 d&e (land between Morrisons, Crannaford Lane and Badger Way) and this has helped to provide greater opportunities for the delivery of facilities in the town centre.

Land transfers

3. In addition to the land already acquired, a number of land transfers are underway or expected.
4. Land parcel TC1 is in the process of transfer from the New Community partners to Devon County Council, intended for the delivery of an Extra Care facility. The land transfer obligation is for a site of 0.5ha but to reflect the full planning permission granted to Live West and so as to enable the proposed access road to be constructed by them, the transfer is being progressed with a larger site area.
5. Adjacent to TC1 is land parcel TC2 which represents the remaining land north of Tillhouse Road and south of the Country Park. This land is due for transfer to East Devon District Council. The site is in part expected to accommodate The Tillhouse building for Cranbrook Town Council, together with Cranbox (discussed below) and therefore there will need to be an onward transfer of part of the site to the Town Council once the precise boundaries of the transfer have been established.
6. Both of these land transfers are underway and nearing the ability to complete but the New Community partners have stated that they cannot complete until their town centre residential planning applications have been issued as the legal agreements accompanying these will amend their existing land and delivery obligations in the town centre and remove risks that would remain should the land transfer in advance of the issuing of the residential planning applications.
7. In addition to these land transfers, the New Community partners have made an offer to transfer land parcel TC4b to Devon County Council, in line with their existing legal

obligations. The land was originally intended to accommodate the facilities for children's, youth and library services; however Devon County Council's Cabinet have now taken the decision to incorporate these services within the East Devon District Council Leisure Centre building. The s106 provisions allow for Devon County Council and East Devon District Council to jointly direct that the land is instead transferred to East Devon District Council and given the changed circumstances, this is likely to occur.

8. Land parcel TC4c will also be due for offer to East Devon District Council and once transferred will mean that the council will own all the remaining TC4 land parcels.

Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Strategy

9. A masterplan narrative was endorsed by the council in October 2024, identifying high level principles for the development of the town centre and locations for key uses. Since then, projects for the health and leisure campus have been established and this report gives further information about that. This has altered the location of these uses from that previously identified, in part due to a change in the facilities mix, to ensure that the swimming facilities are sized to account for the proposed new town of Marcombe.
10. As part of wider work being undertaken by the council to explore how the new town of Marcombe can be developed alongside and complementary to Cranbrook and the Enterprise Zone sites, AHR architects have been appointed to develop the next stage of masterplan. This work is in the early stages of development and will engage officers and members of the three local authorities in its production. A high-level delivery strategy will also be produced alongside the more detailed masterplan.

Health and leisure campus

11. The Group were provided with a written update regarding health provision at the meeting in December 2025 and it should be noted that this project to deliver an Integrated Neighbourhood Health Centre is not progressing at the same pace as the leisure project. Revenue funding is still being sought to complete a Short Form Business Case to enable capital funding from the NHS to be sought through a bid.
12. A project team, led by AHR Architects, have been appointed following a competitive tender exercise undertaken in Autumn 2025. The team are progressing on several workstreams to meet the ambitious programme that the council is working to. Latest developments are:
 - a. RIBA stage 2 design now underway
 - b. Communications plan developed and implemented
 - c. First public consultation planned to be undertaken in February 2026, with an in-person event included
 - d. Market engagement with contractors to ensure that the scheme can be delivered to the market for tender at the optimal time
 - e. Ecology and arboriculture surveys underway
 - f. Risk management ongoing
 - g. Engagement with Devon County Council regarding the inclusion of services delivery by them within the leisure facility.
13. Although the leisure project is progressing at a faster pace than the health element, the overall campus approach is being maintained, with shared parking provision for the public and consideration of the public realm between the two facilities. The planning strategy is still under consideration but is exploring how the health centre can be accommodated within the wider proposal for planning application purposes.
14. Due to the accelerated nature of the project programme, it is very important that key decisions are made in a timely manner to allow the pace to be maintained.
15. The work through RIBA stage 2 will develop the design further as well as more detailed cost planning and a funding strategy and business case is being produced regarding the capital funding required to allow the construction of the leisure centre.

Cranbox

16. The Cranbox project continues to advance according to a revised programme. Western Buildings, the modular provider, has initiated detailed design activities under the Pre-Construction Services Agreement.
17. A planning application for the delivery of Cranbox on land parcel TC2 is currently under review by the council. The determination process has experienced delays, primarily due to issues related to meeting the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
18. At present, the project remains aligned with the revised programme. Finalisation of the building design is expected by the end of February, with on-site works scheduled to commence in early April. Project completion is targeted for the end of September 2026. However, this is dependent upon the transfer of the TC2 land to EDDC.
19. Upon completion, ownership and management of the building and land will be transferred to Cranbrook Town Council. Occupation of the units is anticipated in Q3/Q4 of 2026/27.
20. Monthly progress meetings are being held with representatives from CTC. These meetings serve both to provide project updates and to facilitate CTC's involvement in the detailed design process, ensuring the building meets operational management requirements.

Financial implications:

This report notes progress and therefore the recommendations have no new financial implications.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications requiring comment in this update report for the Cranbrook Placemaking Group (ALW/002855)