



## balance sheet: assets and liabilities

- the town centre is **physically constrained** by topography and the dense urban form: there is very little land available for new development
- reflecting this lack of economic dynamism, **the population of the town is ageing**, and the limited supply (and high price) of property make it difficult for young people and working families to enter the housing market.

The strategy set out in the following pages aims to **maximise the potential** of Dawlish's strengths and attributes, and to find creative ways to **overcome weaknesses and barriers to regeneration**. It also aims to draw on lessons from the experience of other small towns and coastal resorts: some of these lessons are summarised in Section 7.



Dawlish is a **special place**, with a lot going for it. It is a popular town of **distinctive character** in a superb **landscape setting** and with a **benign climate**. The town centre is attractive, with the Lawn its **green heart**, and the Strand enjoys a splendid, south-facing setting. Dawlish is still popular with day visitors and its **Carnival** is one of the region's biggest events. The town has an **active community** that cares passionately about its future well-being: funding for this study was secured by the voluntary efforts of Dawlish Community Trust; the Carnival Committee and the Shaftesbury Theatre are outstanding examples of community enterprise.

Dawlish is **accessible and well-connected**. It is close to **Exeter**, one of England's fastest growing cities with a



dynamic economy, a highly rated university and excellent shopping and leisure facilities. Devon is an enduringly popular **visitor destination** which has added new selling points – food, crafts and culture – to its traditional strengths of beaches, sailing and heritage.

But despite this evident potential, **Dawlish town centre is under-performing**. We have already discussed the weakness of the town's retail and food and drink offer, and the deteriorating state of the Lawn. Other underlying factors give cause for concern, for example:

- the **local economy is small and fragile**, and dominated by low-wage industries such as tourism, retail and caring: a remarkable 58% of local jobs are part-time

