

## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Projects Update - September 2025

#### Allington Hill

##### Project

Woodland and meadows leased from Woodland Trust and managed by Allington Hillbillies Group. As of spring 2025, a public consultation process is underway to update the 10-year management plan, with the final version expected to be adopted in winter 2025/26. This process includes community events and outreach to gather input, ensuring the plan reflects the needs and aspirations of local residents and stakeholders.

##### Actions - UPDATE

Over the summer there has been a series of walks and engagement events including a focus on nature, public access and volunteering. The Hillbillies have been leading the consultation preparation with support from us including a focus session with the volunteer cohort and collation of feedback from the public. So far the feedback has been very positive.



#### Food Security Plan

##### Project

##### Actions - UPDATE

The purpose of putting together a Food Security Action Plan for Bridport is to ensure all residents, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

The Brit Valley project is still in the development stage, and will be until summer 2026 when the project hopes to secure a 20 year deal with Defra to support farmers and landowners to make changes on their land that are better for nature in the long term. A good proportion - 20-30% of land in the scheme - is either currently organic / regenerative arable or dairy farming, or will be converting over time from conventional to organic / regenerative. This will not only have benefits for nature but will produce higher quality food. Much of the rest of the land will be grazed sustainably, producing high quality meat. It is a further aspiration of the scheme that more of this food has local markets, and with the development of the Brit Valley brand, we hope that meat (including venison), dairy, grains and other produce will stay more within West Dorset, but there is a lot of work to be done on market development in this area. The collaboration between the 57 farmers and landowners involved in the scheme will mean that they will learn from each other, share knowledge and skills, and also equipment and approaches, including some shared grazing areas. This is a long-term scheme but has the potential to contribute considerably to food security in West Dorset in time. Until a deal has been secured with Defra in 2026, nothing is confirmed.



## Asker Meadows Nature Reserve

### Project

Unimproved flood meadows with hedges and trees managed primarily for wildlife with a recognition of the range of uses enjoyed by local people.

Management plan objectives to be carefully balanced to consider:

- Flood scheme management,
- Maintaining access for all,
- Action to improve wildlife,
- Education and volunteering and
- Community events on the Show Field.

### Actions - UPDATE

We are working with the Asker Meadow Nature Reserve group and Brit Valley Landscape Recovery Project to start work on the enhancement opportunities laid out in the 2025 - 30 Management Plan. The AMNR group are working on their constitution and looking at areas they can become involved in such as hedgerow surveys. We have registered Sally Freemantle with the Rural Payments Agency as part of the process of being able to use our Single Business Identifier number to secure grants and maps in the future.

Proposed plans for meadow and access enhancements are an agenda item.



## WB1 Shuttle Bus to West Bay

### Project

Introduce a pilot low-cost, frequent weekend bus service between Bridport and West Bay with the aim to:

- Increase mobility for non-drivers and underserved groups.
- Create a scalable, replicable rural transport model.
- Reduce transport-related emissions and car dependency.
- Improve access to local services and coastal tourism.

### Actions - UPDATE

The WB1 West Bay Shuttle has run the summer timetable for 6 weeks and will be switching to the autumn timetable 6/7th Sept following demand for a longer Saturday service which will help West Bay residents get into town in time for the market. This reflects usage which is good for Saturday all day and Sunday day time but there has been less demand for Sunday evening. The service is being well used by all ages, including teens. This project has been a time consuming in terms of officer input.



## River Water Quality

### Project

### Actions - UPDATE

Developing strategic monitoring plan for the River Brit in conjunction with Dorset National Landscapes. To analyse strategic sites and existing data, to connect with the EA and Wessex Water re monitoring and trial new approaches on the ground.

Numerous volunteers are monitoring the Brit, Simene and Asker every month - Riverfly, Citizen Science, River & Guardians and the kit is coordinated by us. Many volunteers are now part of the Natural Flood Management Programme and being trained in more complex techniques particularly looking at run off and silt. In the long run flood management measures will benefit Bridport reducing soil loss, slowing the flow through Bridport when there is heavy rain and helping to prevent flooding.



## Play areas

### Project

Liaise with the residents close to any proposed play areas to ensure their involvement in the overall design of the community play areas before installing new play equipment.

### Actions - UPDATE

We are currently supporting the Court Orchard resident group with watering of the orchard trees which have suffered in the prolonged heat. The play park is well used and litter is fairly minimal. Very little graffiti or damage and people definitely keeping an eye out for any issues. Two damaged/ dying trees will be replaced over winter in conjunction with Bridport Tree Group.



## Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2036

### Project

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) has been approved by all participating councils: Bridport Town Council, Allington, Bradpole, Bothenhampton & Walditch, and Symondsburry Parish Councils, on behalf of those who live and work within the designated area. A Joint Councils Committee oversees delivery and development of the neighbourhood plan.

### Actions - UPDATE

A light review of BANP is being finalised ready for public consultation. The detailed site options assessment report (housing) prepared by AECOM housing has been signed off by Locality. The BANP Steering Group prepared two substantive additions; a supplement to the Housing Need Assessment Report and a new text to introduce and explain the issues of the ageing population of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The monitoring report has been completed. The Town Centre Health Check is currently taking place (this happens every two years) which are part of the plan's strategy to monitor and respond to changes in the retail landscape. This involves surveys and clicker counts over several weeks.



## Other Projects

### Project

### Actions - UPDATE

#### Resilience work

The flood plan is up to date in terms of logistics and the flood wardens met in July. The emergency plan needs a refresh in light of changes in the last year. A piece of work to revisit this can happen in autumn once the bulk of the Neighbourhood Plan Review work is done. We are speaking to the emergency and resilience team at Dorset Council about the update to include a scenario workshop event late autumn/early 2026 for relevant officers and councillors.



**Bridport Swift Town:** The Bridport Swift Town project is a community-led initiative launched in 2024 to protect and celebrate swifts through conservation efforts, public engagement, and creative events, aiming to make Bridport a model for swift-friendly towns.

We helped with the promotion of 2025 Swift Town events and the launch in May at the Town Hall. We worked on the wording for the Neighbourhood Plan review to ensure that swifts are considered in terms of swift bricks on new builds and retaining nesting sites. In Phase 2 of Foundry Lea there will be 75 Swift Bricks, 30 house martin cups, 30 house sparrow nest boxes, 60 bat tubes and 120 bee bricks.



**Sculpture Trail:** the trail aims to enhance green spaces, promote wellbeing, and celebrate local creativity. Notable works include Greta Berlin's Stalking Dog and Brendon Murless's The Air We Breathe.

Queenie the Stalking Dog has been recast and there will be a celebration event in September. There has been renewed interest in the Sculpture Trail but we have lost some through vandalism or return to artist. The Friends of Millennium Green are keen to source a large sculpture to replace the one of Isla Chaney's.

