

Notes of the Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward Partnership (BWWP) Public Engagement Session held in Bothenhampton Village Hall on Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 2.00pm

Present: Cllr Anne Rickard - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*
Cllr Bridget Bolwell - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*
Caroline Pearce - *Project Officer, Bridport Town Council*
Jo Hughes - *Ward Clerk, Bridport Town Council*

15 members of public

Apologies: Cllr Andy Holdridge - *Bridport Town Councillor, Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward*

Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) Review

Caroline Pearce, Project Officer at Bridport Town Council was in attendance with a display of information to provide residents with an opportunity to discuss the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) Review that is currently underway. Caroline advised that the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan is not to be confused with the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation that has recently taken place.

Caroline explained that the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan is an important document for the town as it is part of the development plan for the Bridport area. The plan has been in existence for the past five years (2020-2025) and has been referenced in many planning applications during that time to shape how the area has developed. As the plan is now five years old, it is due a 'light touch review' to ensure it remains relevant and effective but more importantly, as the new Dorset Council Local Plan will not be ready for another 18 months, the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan will be the most important, relevant and up to date document in planning decisions. Caroline also empathised that plans older than five years risk carrying less weight in the development process.

Caroline advised that the review of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan has been carried out by the BANP Community Steering Group and there has been a strong focus on affordable housing. The consultation stage is now necessary to ensure the review reflects public opinion and that the community are behind it. Members of the public can comment on the plan until 30th December 2025, The consultation is available [online](#) or comments can be emailed to: enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk. Paper copies of the review documents are available at Bridport Library, Bridport Tourist Information Centre and the Town Council offices at Mountfield.

Residents raised the following questions:

- Who has been involved in the BANP review? Caroline advised that she has been involved with the plan for the last five months following the retirement of a colleague who is still involved with the plan as a consultant. The Community Steering Group consists of several volunteers who have given their time, energy and knowledge to the development of the plan and their details can be found on the Bridport Town Council website.
- Are facilities in the town mentioned in the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan in relation to additional development. Caroline confirmed that they were under various headings within the plan.

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- How does the BANP link with the Dorset Council Local Plan? Caroline advised that when the Local Plan comes into play, it will take priority in the planning process. The aim of the BANP review is to make it the most up to date and relevant policy until the Local Plan is in place.
- Are the sites identified for development in the Local Plan happening? Bridget advised that Dorset Council had to demonstrate as many site options as possible, so all potential and non-potential sites were included but many of these won't happen. Bridget also pointed out that the Local Plan is in the consultation phase at this stage.

20mph Update

Residents requested an update on the 20mph application for Bothenhampton and Walditch Ward. The Ward Clerk advised that the application for Bothenhampton and Walditch Ward was submitted to Dorset Council in August. On 11th November 2025, Dorset Council confirmed: *that all applications submitted this year will be included in Phase 4 which they intend to present to the internal 20mph Panel in February 2026. Currently, Phase 4 includes nineteen 20mph applications across the Dorset Council area.*

For context, as of 11th November:

- *Phase 1 - five schemes were delivered in summer of 2024.*
- *Phase 2 - five schemes will be fully delivered by 14th November 2025.*
- *Phase 3 - eleven formal public consultations concluded 7th November 2025, with delivery planned for early next year following legal approval.*

The 20mph Panel's role is to authorise progression to Stage 2: Formal Public Consultation. Given the high volume of applications, the Panel may recommend a staggered approach to Stage 2 consultations to ensure the process remains manageable.

A resident commented that the new 20mph speed limit through Bridport town centre is not being taken seriously by Dorset Council as the 20mph signage is inadequate/inaccurate and there are still many cars doing 30mph because they are unaware the speed limit has changed to 20mph.

Action: Ward Clerk agreed to bring this matter to the attention of Dorset Council.

UPDATE: The Ward Clerk reported the concerns raised to the Dorset Council Road Safety Team who have advised that 'Dorset Council must follow strict speed limit signing guidelines set by the Department for Transport so that there is consistency across the country. The 20mph signing in the town meets these guidelines and is adequate. Post-implementation surveys demonstrated a pleasing reduction and generally good compliance but regrettably there are individuals that will break the law and that is where enforcement is an option. Dorset Police are responsible for speed limit enforcement. Residents can be encouraged to report speeding issues for the attention of Dorset Police via this link: [Reporting Traffic Concerns - Dorset Road Safe Partnership.](#)'

A35 Firch Lane

A resident requested that the trees and hedge line on the A35 at Firch Lane be cut back to enable better visibility for vehicles pulling out onto the A35.

Action: Ward Clerk agreed to report on Fix My Street.

UPDATE: Response from Balfour Beatty '*Thank you for your enquiry which has been passed to us by*

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National Highways Central Team. SWHBBIS can confirm that unfortunately, the hedge and tree line in the vicinity of Firch Lane is not within our maintenance boundary. SWHBBIS maintain the grass cutting to the hedge line which having inspected the area yesterday believe this is not causing any issues. The hedge line is maintained by the adjacent landowner and should be suitably maintained for visibility purposes.'

Hollow Way High Pavement Update

The Ward Clerk provided the following update to residents on repairs to the currently closed Hollow Way high pavement as received from Dorset Council on 14th October 2025:

Works are provisionally scheduled to begin after Christmas, with completion expected in early 2026. A road closure will be required to carry out the footway repairs. Once the application is submitted, confirmed dates will be shared with the public and stakeholders.

The footway remains closed due to its poor condition and associated safety risks. Signage is in place to guide pedestrians to a safer alternative route. We avoid placing pedestrian signs on road signage to encourage use of non-road paths.

The upcoming works will include vegetation clearance and essential repairs to the supporting wall, improving safety and accessibility. The footway will stay closed during the works, but disruption to the surrounding area will be kept to a minimum.

Following a report by a resident of loose stones on the high pavement, the Ward Clerk advised that the Bridport Town Council Maintenance Team have assessed the stones but are unable to move anything due to concerns of causing more problems/landslides and have confirmed that the issue needs to be resolved by Dorset Council.

Residents commented that the Stakeholder Notice for the future road closure of Hollow Way to allow the repair works to the pavement to be carried out will be important as access along Crock Lane has been difficult during the current Hollow Way road closure. A request to maintain pedestrian access during the works was requested as was the request for vehicles not to park along Crock Lane during the road closure of Hollow Way.

Action: Ward Clerk agreed to raise these points with Dorset Council.

***UPDATE:** Dorset Council advised that 'Advance warning signs will put out over the next few days. We will maintain pedestrian access wherever possible; however, there will be times when this won't be feasible or safe to do so. Once work begins, we will monitor traffic using Crock Lane to ensure everything runs smoothly.'*

Anne provided a brief overview regarding the incorrect letter that had been sent to residents regarding the current Hollow Way road closure which had caused some confusion but confirmed that the workers onsite had been very helpful and accommodating for residents coming and going from their properties.

Regarding the repair works to the Hollow Way pavement, a resident commented that Dorset Council should be looking at a more long-term view of public works that will last 50 years rather than short term repairs lasting perhaps 5 years.

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Other Comments/Issues Raised by Residents

- What was Bridport Town Council's response to the Local Plan – the Executive Summary? Caroline advised that the full response can be found on the Bridport Town Council [website](#).
- How do the Ward Councillors view their relationship in terms of Bothenhampton & Walditch Ward? Both Anne and Bridget advised that they are Bridport Town Councillors who work to support the town and ward, but they are Bridport Town Councillors foremost and the Ward Clerk progresses ward related issues. Residents commented that the Ward Clerk system works well. A resident commented that they have not seen Cllr Holdridge at any ward meetings. Anne and Bridget advised that Cllr Holdridge works full time but is very active on various Town Council committees.
- A resident advised that there is a broken fence at Jelly Fields which they will report to Dorset Council.
- A resident advised that there is a damaged bin outside the Old Church in Bothenhampton.

Action: Ward Clerk agreed to report to Dorset Council.

UPDATE: The Ward Clerk visited the site but was unable to locate the bin.

Meeting closed 3.06pm

Date of next meeting: The meeting will take place at Walditch Village Hall in early 2026, date and time to be confirmed.

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