

Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

Key Findings and Messages

Communities Theme

Key Local Findings from the Evidence:

- The neighbourhood area is a series of distinct settlements and communities each with their own unique identity
- There is over 500 listed buildings and 13 conservation areas, and many more unlisted but significant heritage sites and buildings
- There are several areas where poverty and multiple deprivation is prevalent
- A third of households are single person households
- The public transport network is generally good but declining
- Community hubs are vital for social interaction
- People value access to the countryside and open spaces

Key Messages from the Evidence:

- Reducing the fear of crime is a matter priority
- The loss of shops, pubs and other community facilities has been detrimental to community life and wellbeing
- The waterfront needs further redevelopment to increase its appeal to the community
- The town centre needs a better mix of social attractions and facilities
- Cars, traffic, and parking can be a nuisance to safety, health and the general enjoyment of the town centre and other neighbourhood centres
- Town centre public realm needs improving
- More and better sports and leisure facilities are needed
- Walkable access to recreational facilities, shops and other services needs improvement

Key Messages from Community Consultations:

- The area has a strong sense of community
- The villages and outlying areas have a strong sense of identity which should be preserved
- Neighbourhood shops, pubs and other services are valued and should be retained
- We need a central hub for people with learning difficulties to network
- Transport connections need to improve
- More live perform areas/spaces
- Protect local community facilities and services (including pubs) from loss
- Heritage of the area should be respected
- Recognise local non-designated heritage assets
- Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour needs to be addressed
- Retain grass verges and trees
- Create more green infrastructure

- Address road safety issues
- Enhance unique character of different neighbourhoods

Key Messages from School Consultation

- Provide opportunities/spaces for community 'get togethers'
- Encourage community litter picks
- More neighbourhood convenience shops
- Community recycling points
- Protect historic landmarks and heritage spaces
- Ensure there is adequate public open space in or near new housing developments
- Promote community horticulture
- Make public spaces feel safer

Jobs Theme

Key Local Findings from the Evidence:

- The area has a very low wage economy
- Unemployment or seasonal employment rates are too high
- The Weymouth local economy is largely dependent on tourism, the harbour and local visitor attractions
- Limited leisure service provision in the town centre
- There is a significant amount of outward commuting to Dorchester and other areas for employment purposes
- There are a significant number of residents working in Defence and Aerospace, mostly at the Granby Industrial Estate in Chickerell but also on Portland and at Winfrith and Yeovil
- Weymouth is the location of two key employment sites in the Local Plan; Mount Pleasant Business Park and Littlemoor Urban Extension
- There are few suitable brownfield sites available for business and commercial development – Westway Road, The Peninsula, Mount Pleasant Business Park and Jubilee Sidings
- Relatively limited food and convenience goods provision in and on the edge of the town centre
- Apart from the town centre, there are local retail centres at Wyke Regis, Littlemoor Centre, Abbotsbury Road, Westham, Lodmoor Hill, Southill Centre

Key Messages from the Evidence:

- Lack of local career opportunities and a relatively poor record in education, often traps young people
- Post-Covid new working/trading practices needs to be factored in
- Weymouth has an important role and function to fulfil as a coastal holiday resort and visitor destination
- There is a need for high-quality attractions that provide differentiation to the visitor mix and have all-year-round sustainability
- There are major regeneration opportunities at the Pavilion and Peninsula, Brewers Quay, Jubilee Sidings extension and Weymouth Harbour
- Increase jobs and skill development opportunities within the Low Carbon Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE)
- Responding to climate emergency will open up / expand opportunities in the low carbon economy

- Park and ride facility is inadequate lacking a bus that stops there and open facilities

Key Messages from Community Consultations:

- The most important single issue is the lack of year-round, better paid jobs
- More local training opportunities are needed
- Town centre and industrial estates should be the focus of new employment development
- The range of further and higher education opportunities in Weymouth need to improve
- Retail provision in the town is lacking and not providing for all their needs
- Town centre and harbour regeneration is supported
- Heritage and Culture are important from a year-round economic opportunity
- Relying on Tourism alone will not regenerate Weymouth's economy

Key Messages from School Consultation:

- A broader range of local job opportunities are wanted, especially in the creative industries
- A greater variety of local jobs is needed

Housing Theme

Key Local Findings from the Evidence:

- Recent housing developments have not delivered the proportion of affordable homes that the LP expected
- The new Local Plan will not deliver the number of affordable dwellings that are needed by the local community over the plan-period (to 2038)
- More sites than those allocated in the new Local Plan need to be identified, specifically to provide a high number and proportion of affordable homes
- Many households cannot even afford to buy discount housing
- Social housing providers have an important role to play in providing new homes for rent
- Innovative solutions to providing affordable housing are needed
- The housing market is not responding to the brownfield site opportunities
- The housing mix and character varies from local area to area

Key Messages from the Evidence:

- The new Local Plan will not deliver the number of affordable dwellings that are needed by the local community over the plan-period (to 2038)
- More new housing sites specifically for affordable housing, than those allocated in the new Local Plan should be identified
- Social housing providers, including community land trusts, should be encouraged, and facilitated to provide social and affordable homes for local people
- Innovative solutions to providing affordable housing should be explored and encouraged
- All major housing development schemes (over 10 dwellings) should contribute to maintaining a relevant mix of housing and tenures

Key Messages from the Community Consultations:

- The number and quality of HMO's should be strictly controlled
- Much more social housing will be necessary
- Housing development should reflect the character of the area in terms style and density
- Brownfield sites should be re-used, whenever appropriate, for new housing development
- The highest standards of energy efficiency should be attained in the construction and subsequent running of new dwellings
- Include provisions for working from home
- Local housing needs must be prioritised

Key Messages from School Consultation:

- Make homes more affordable on Weymouth wages
- Make rooms bigger in new build homes
- Provide larger gardens in new homes
- Plan for and encourage good neighbourhood facilities
- Landscape and plant up areas around new developments
- Add solar panels to all new homes and existing homes when possible
- Build with eco-friendly materials
- Plan for allotments next to new homes/developments

- Provide homes specifically for existing Weymouth people/population
- Renovate old/empty house first

Environment and Biodiversity Theme

Key Local Findings from the Evidence:

- The national government, Dorset Council and Weymouth Town Council have all formally declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies
- Weymouth is identified as a flood-affected community
- The long-term approach to coastal flood and erosion risk management along the study frontage is to “Hold the Line for the next 100 years”
- There has been a massive decline and fragmentation in wildlife habitats and loss of species over the last century
- Carbon emissions per head are dropping, but slowly
- There are opportunities for low carbon generation in the form of solar and offshore wind.
- Dorset’s environmental industries have seen significant growth
- Central Weymouth is very walk-able due to its dense form providing a range of services within easy walking distance
- Technologies are lacking in terms of car-charging points for electric vehicles
- Weymouth generally has good pavements and public rights of way/bridleways, suitable for walking and cycling, providing a network of paths joining its distinct communities

Key Messages from the Evidence:

- We are in a climate and ecological crisis
- We should reduce our demand for power and our carbon emissions associated with power consumption to net zero as soon as possible
- We need to stop harming our environment which sustains us and set about ecological restoration (‘biodiversity net gain’)
- We must use our existing resources - including land, buildings, water, air, and soil - more efficiently
- We need to strive for zero-waste in our resource use, including adopting circular economy practices
- We have to adapt to the increasing extreme weather events, which are already upon us
- There is scope for a comprehensive suite of eco-tourism offers, promoting the green and blue natural assets of Weymouth, together with the heritage across the whole of Weymouth

Key Messages from the Community Consultations:

- Walking and cycling in our parks and the countryside are activities enjoyed in Weymouth.
- Traffic and congestion are the biggest dislikes.
- Climate change, and the climate and ecological emergency, are issues that people would like to see addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Good quality design sensitive to the environment is important.
- It is important to achieve carbon emissions reductions (via sustainable transport).
- Not all the local cycle ways and footpaths are joined up in a way conducive to safe and convenient walking and cycling.
- Many residents would like easily and affordably retrofit their houses with sustainable energy generation and energy efficiency (e.g. insulation) solutions.
- People want employment opportunities created that are associated with sustainability technologies (e.g. wind and solar).

Key Messages from School Consultation:

- Wind farms & wave power generation
- Park & ride/ car sharing
- Electric scooter hire
- Recycling bins in schools

- Avoid building on fields & wooded areas
- Protect coastal paths
- Build more apartments instead of lots of small houses-shared facilities
- Use solar panels on more buildings
- Plant fruit trees
- Plan for and build local shops to sell local food
- Local public farms
- Allow more space for local green areas
- Protect farmland
- Set up water butts on homes and buildings
- Provide more bins to tackle litter
- Provide more electric car charging points
- Provide cycleways on main routes to all schools

Landscape and Green Spaces

Key Local Findings from the Evidence:

- Important that designated wildlife areas are protected from the impact of development.
- Inadequate infrastructure and over-development are major contributors to surface water flooding and sewage overflow.
- Recreational facilities are poor or absent in some areas.
- There is inadequate allotment provision in some areas where demand exists.
- Significant potential exists to connect habitats, stepping-stones, buffer zones, etc.
- There is a general lack of veteran and native trees (few woodlands, loss of traditional orchards, general lack of street trees)

Key Messages from the Evidence:

- The protection of biodiversity and wildlife habitats is importance
- Flooding is a major concern both on (Town Centre) and away from (River Wey valley villages) the coast
- Need to make better use of natural flood protection, such as water meadows
- Local recreational areas and facilities are important and should meet the needs of all age groups
- Allotment provision is well used and valued
- Walkable and cycle-able access is important to people
- Focus on improving connectivity between areas
- Retain 'cut-throughs' in new residential and other developments to support safe walkable access
- Tumbledown Farm is a community asset

Key Messages from the Community Consultations:

- People value the varied landscape, coast and sea views and want to conserve and enhance the scenic beauty
- People value key views particularly along the coast
- People value access to the countryside and open space
- Creeping urbanisation of open space between settlements is a concern
- People recognise the health benefits of walkable access to green space
- Tumbledown Farm is strongly supported
- Inadequate segregation of pedestrians and cyclists is a concern.

Key Messages from School Consultation:

- Provide recycling stations in green areas
- Plant up sensory flower gardens
- Enclose specific areas for dogs
- Replace trees when they are cut down
- Minimise the need to use cars
- Set up nature trails next to green spaces and parks
- Provide green space in the town centre
- Facilities for roller skating paths and climbing walls
- Build all weather natural paths for easy access to green spaces
- Provide outdoor exercise equipment/wooden jungle gym/GoApe

- Set up bird boxes