

3. Next Steps

We propose to establish a Steering Group that will manage the development of our Neighbourhood Plan and report to the Parish Council. Public meetings will continue to be held and there will be regular community updates. It is likely that a questionnaire will be developed to canvas views on key issues facing the community. We will also establish some ad-hoc groups to ensure that the developing Neighbourhood Plan is fully representative of our community (e.g. with people of different ages, with major land owners and businesses, and with other community groups). Ultimately, the Neighbourhood Plan would be put to a vote of all residents and, if adopted, would drive future planning decisions.

The first step is to establish the Steering Group and agree the key roles. We are seeking a **Chair** (to ensure good governance and management of the Steering Group and to liaise with responsible organisations), a **Vice-Chair** (to establish and maintain the programme and to track its delivery), **Village Leads** (to help define the community needs through close engagement), **Administration, Publicity, Data Management, and Community Members**.

A meeting will be held in the Village Hall in Puncknowle on Wednesday 14th June at 7pm to establish the Steering Group and agree the key roles. PLEASE DO COME ALONG.

Although we already have a small core of volunteers, we would welcome more! We would anticipate membership of the Group to be fairly fluid as the Plan develops; it's also fine if you only want to be part of one aspect of the Neighbourhood Plan. If you're interested in supporting the Plan or becoming part of the Steering Group but can't make the meeting, please email

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Neighbourhood Plan for Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington

Feedback from Presentations on 13th May and Next Steps Starting 14 June 2023



1. Background

The Parish Council and community members are exploring the need for, and potential scope of, a Neighbourhood Plan for Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington. Such a Plan would be a community-led plan that would set out how we wish our Parish to develop over the next 15 to 20 years. It should highlight what is locally distinctive and set out the principles of planning and development issues. A series of initial meetings was held to understand the requirements for and interest in a Neighbourhood Plan, culminating in presentations held in the Village Hall on 13th May. These notes summarise the main discussion topics from the meeting and set out the proposed way forward.

Please support the meeting to establish the Steering Group to be held on 14th June at 7pm in the Village Hall

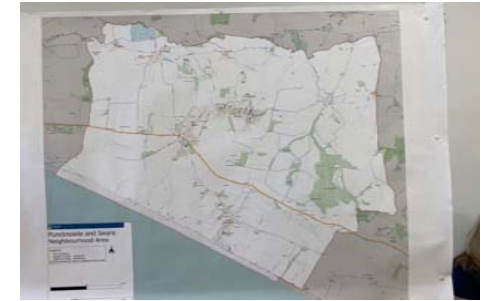
2. Highlights from 13th May

Three sessions were held during the afternoon, each with an initial presentation and then Q&A. The presentation highlighted what Neighbourhood Plans were and how they fitted into local planning, and how they should be progressed by the community¹. Four examples of potential issues were highlighted – Housing, Heritage, Environment and Business – in order to stimulate discussion of what issues were of most interest to the community. After the Q&A session, residents were invited to contribute their thoughts (using Post-It notes) on these four issues and all the information was collected.



Forty-three people attended the three presentations with a number of people expressing interest in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. Inevitably there were different views on priorities but a broad consensus emerged on the following themes.

¹ If you would like to get a better feel for what a Neighbourhood Plan looks like, please visit <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans-in-dorset>



Housing – There was little appetite for major developments in the three villages (this is consistent with the Dorset Local Plan). In general it was felt that any new houses should be aimed at supporting younger families with a willingness to explore different options to provide more affordable housing; the infrastructure (e.g. bus service) also needed improving.

Heritage – There was a desire to sustain the distinct identities and general “feel” of the three villages. Guidelines would help ensure that any new development was suited to the character of the villages. Greater use of heritage buildings should be explored to maintain a strong sense of community.

Environment, Biodiversity and Land Use – There was a strong desire to protect and enhance the environment and sustain the rural character of the landscape. There was interest in integrated approaches to land management, exploring renewable energy and enhancing our resilience to climate change.

Business – The importance of the local farms and businesses to sustaining the nature of the Parish was recognised. It is important to strengthen community support for local businesses and a listing would be useful.