

Dorset CPRE - Poole and Purbeck Group

Response

BCP Local Plan - Scoping Consultation

Question 1 - Is there anything missing from the key issues we have identified for the plan?

In our opinion a key issue for the local plan is that it is based on a **realistic local housing target** for the conurbation that is deliverable and will meet the needs of the population over the plan period. This is essential for the production of a local plan which is truly sound.

BCP declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019. The local plan must go further than merely adapting to and mitigating the climate and ecological emergency but ensure that the conurbation will be a) **net zero by 2050** and b) ensure that BCP pro-actively seeks to ensure that a minimum of **30%** of land and sea is protected for nature by **2030** (30 by 30) in line with Government commitments. This should be a thread that runs throughout the plan.

Question 2 - Are there any other topics or specific policies that should be in the Local Plan Scope?

- **Protecting and enhancing the Southeast Dorset Greenbelt.** The Greenbelt provides multiple functions in addition to its official purposes. Not only is it highly valued by residents for the access to green space and the countryside that it provides, but also has a central role to play in contributing to nature recovery, climate mitigation and local food production. The Southeast Dorset Greenbelt is unique in incorporating internationally important habitats making it essential that incursion into the Greenbelt by development is resisted at all costs and development is focussed within settlement boundaries.

Designation of the Southeast Dorset Greenbelt as a **Regional Park** could greatly assist in ensuring that it is able to meet its potential to deliver much needed nature recovery, access to greenspace and protect our valuable heathlands.

- **Previously Developed Land (Brownfield)** - we would like to see policies that support and encourage the repurposing of brownfield land ensuring that it is brought back into use either for the provision of housing, employment land, renewable energy generation or re-greened to provide space for nature.
- **Affordable Housing** - the government's definition of affordable housing (80% of the local market value, with affordable rent being at least 20% below local market rents) does not deliver housing that is affordable for many households in the conurbation. We would like to see a policy to ensure the delivery of **genuinely affordable housing** is prioritised and that a minimum of 25% of housing delivered on all new schemes is Social Rent. Ensuring that young people and key workers are able to find decent homes that they can afford to live in.
- **Bringing Vacant Space back into Use** - the urban area contains many derelict and underutilised properties including heritage buildings, which can make a significant contribution towards meeting housing and employment needs. We would like to see policies that support these buildings being brought back into use.

- **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** - the increasing conversion of family homes to HMOs is reducing the number homes available within the conurbation for families, eroding the character of areas and increasing traffic numbers in residential areas. We ask that BCP considers introducing an Article 4 Direction requiring HMOs to apply for planning permission in those areas where they are having the greatest impact.
- **Moving away from Car Dependency**- we would like to see policies that support and guide the movement away from car use within the conurbation and encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- **Roof top solar** - The rooftops and carparks of BCP have the potential to make a significant contribution towards meeting the conurbation's energy requirements, we would like to see policies included in the Local Plan that support and encourage the installation of solar panels on roof tops (residential and commercial).
- **Green/Nature Corridors & Infrastructure** - it is important that the plan protects existing green spaces and strategically plans for a green space network throughout the conurbation which connects existing green spaces and supports the formation of new green spaces.
- **Trees** - we would like to see policies that not only protect and preserve trees and hedgerows but also look increase the number of trees throughout the conurbation.

Question 3 - Are there any other ways we should engage with people or organisations?

Dorset CPRE welcomed BCP's commitment and approach to full public consultation in the previous Local Plan process and trust that there will be no less consultation through the formulation of this local plan. It is important that the evidence base and assumptions on which policies will be based are published in a full and timely manner.

Members of the public can often be put off responding to local plan consultations due to the volume of information presented to them, and lengthy response forms. Making it clear at the outset that individuals have the option of only commenting on those policy proposals/site allocations that are relevant to them may encourage more individuals to respond.