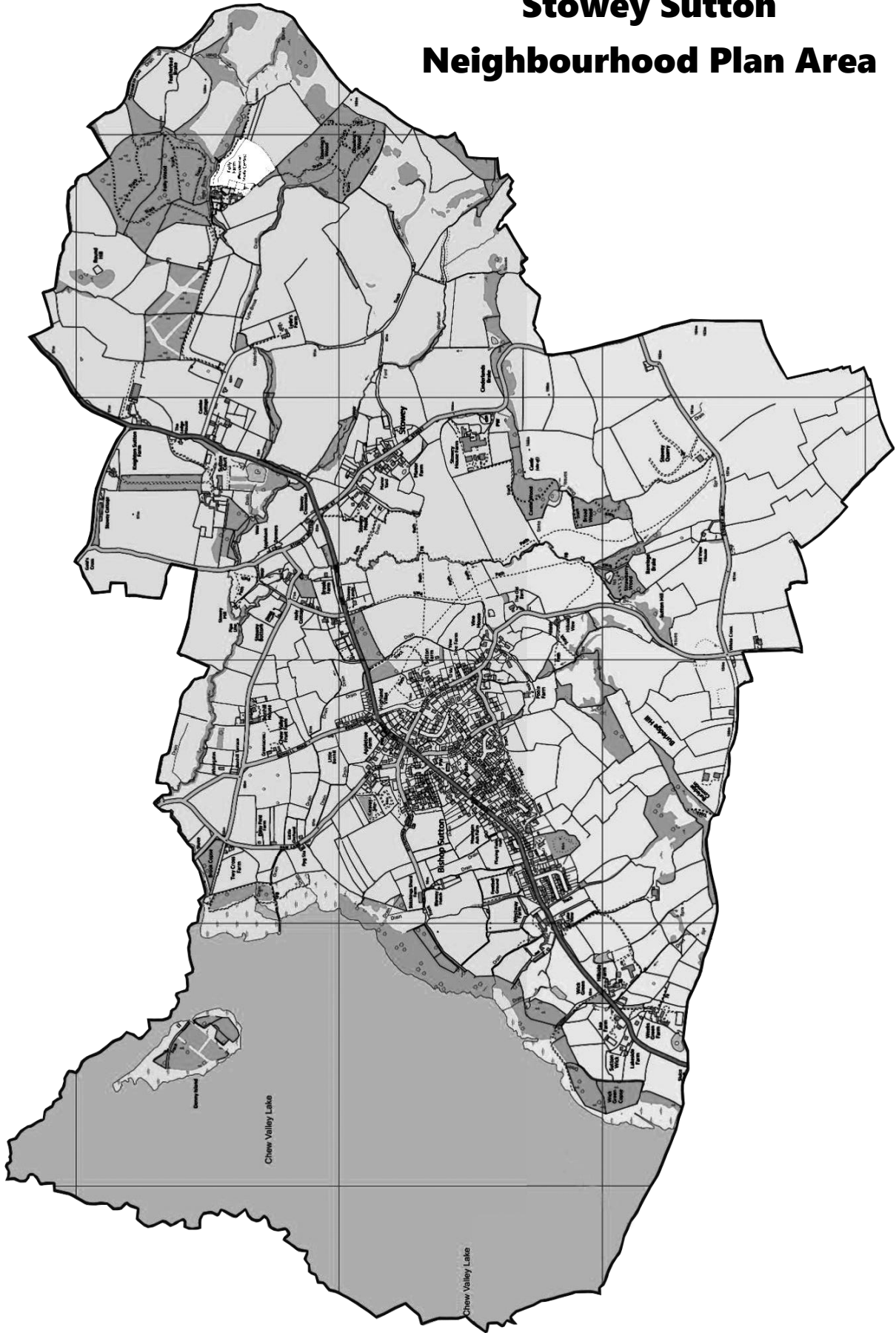


Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Plan
Community Consultation

Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan Area



Foreword

The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

The Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about its future, bringing them together with census information, strategic and statistical evidence into a “living promise” that mirrors the community’s overwhelming desire to make Stowey Sutton an even better place to live and work, both now and for future generations.

The plan has been produced by a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group including Parish Council members and community volunteers. Once the Plan has been completed, following a favourable local referendum, the Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan and become, with the Bath and North East Somerset Council’s core strategy, the starting point for deciding where development should take place and the type and quality of that development, together with influencing social and community growth.

The Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The following suite of policies has been developed to manage the future development of Stowey Sutton in order to achieve the vision, objectives and strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan.

To reflect the results of the consultation events undertaken during the Plan’s preparation and evidence of local issues and characteristics, the policies are separated into several themes – Housing and Development, Roads and Transport, Business and Employment and Community and Recreation.

To aid interpretation for decision makers and applicants, each policy is accompanied by supporting text setting out the context for the theme, the local community’s views on that subject and the evidence, plans and strategies that offer support and evidence for its approach. All policies have been framed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging core strategy for Bath and North East Somerset.

Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document, a number of issues falling outside of the planning system’s remit were identified by the local community during consultation events. Alongside its core policies the Plan therefore includes a number of aspirations to encourage interventions by wider stakeholders. These are included within each topic where relevant, as Action Policies.

Housing and Development Policies

Our Housing and Development policies are based on information gathered from community consultation in questionnaires, public meetings, discussions with estate agents and other stakeholders, together with background information such as census data.

The policies are compliant with both the B&NES Core Strategy and national policy.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP01 Housing Boundary

The housing development boundary (HDB) for Bishop Sutton should be redefined to strictly follow the existing HDB but with the addition of the strict boundary of the two already approved housing developments of Cappards and Oak Court which together total 76 houses.

Reason: As the number of new houses already approved by B&NES has already exceeded the 'around 50' allocated to the Parish as an RA1 village within the core strategy for the period to 2028, further large scale development would be in contravention of the core strategy.

Redefining the housing development boundary so that it matches the existing, with tight extensions around the recently approved developments will prevent

further opportunistic building applications.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP02 Development Scale

The neighbourhood plan will support infill housing, within the housing development boundary, this is likely to be small scale development and will be of an individual character in keeping with the Character Assessment, the exception to such development will be if it is deemed to be harmful to the Green Belt, or threaten the AONB which has the highest level of protection in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework).

Reason: Further small scale, one and two bedroom, open market development, within the housing development boundary will be supported to meet the need identified in the housing needs survey conducted in 2014.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP03 Development Character

The neighbourhood plan will support future housing development which will reflect the character, varied materials and varied build design as identified through the Character Assessment and should be limited to infill within the amended HDB.

Reason: Future development should reflect the existing character, density, material and colour palette of housing

within the parish, with reference to the Character Assessment completed in 2013.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP04 Property Size

The neighbourhood plan strongly supports infill development which proposes to build small (1 and 2 bedroom) low cost open market houses to meet the local need identified in the Housing Needs Survey.

Reason: The Housing Needs Survey identified a local need for small, low cost open market housing.

Demand for larger 3, 4 and 5 bedroomed open market houses and 1, 2 and 3 bedroom affordable houses for rental has been met by the recently approved developments of 76 houses within the Parish.

This policy is set out to address this shortfall and to allow the family members of existing residents to remain close to their wider family.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP05 Sustainability Impact

All planning applications must address the sustainability of each proposal and the impact on the whole community, in order to assess the mitigation necessary to balance the impact on the existing infrastructure and community.

Specific reviews will must cover;

- Surface water drainage and flooding risk
- Electricity supply
- Mains gas supply
- Sewage capacity
- Parking provision
- Telephone capacity
- Broadband connections and performance for the whole community

The sustainability review must also include the impact of the proposed development on;

- Primary schooling
- Secondary schooling
- Pre-school provision
- Recreational facilities

The developer will be expected to propose how any deficiency or risk identified in the reviews will addressed, this may be through contribution via a Section 106 Agreement or through payment of any future Community Infrastructure Levy.

Reason: Many aspects of local infrastructure are currently poor or just acceptable, the addition of additional housing without a meaningful review of its impact and where necessary improvement is not a sustainable way forward.

Housing and Development Policy SSHP06 Lighting

Where lighting is proposed, it should be designed to avoid intruding into areas where darkness is a characteristic of the village. Any lighting scheme must not impact negatively near woodland edges or near hedgerows used by bats for foraging.

Reason: This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance the conservation interests of the North Somerset and Mendips Bat Special Area of Conservation. There are also areas of the Parish that lie within the Mendip Hills Areas of Outstanding Beauty, an objective of this plan is to minimise light pollution sources wherever possible.

Business and Employment Policies

Our Business and Employment policies are derived from consultation with the business community balanced with the preferences of the residents of the parish and set out to accord with the overall aims of making our community more sustainable and vibrant, whilst remaining compliant with both the B&NES Core Strategy and national policy.

In particular, the policies seek to encourage and facilitate the establishment and growth of sustainable businesses to create local employment opportunities where possible.

Business and Employment Policy SSBE01 Business Conservation and Preservation

The neighbourhood plan supports the continued usage of business or office units in preference to converting such properties to domestic housing wherever planning permission is required.

Reason: To ensure economic sustainability of the Parish through avoiding a reduction in business premises and to maintain local employment opportunities.

Business and Employment Policy SSBE002 Business Type

The Neighbourhood Plan will encourage and support new retail, catering, small office and business units or the expansion of existing businesses, providing they can be shown to be viable, sustainable, of benefit the local economy and the wellbeing of the parish.

They should be sensitive to the local setting and not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding environment.

Such development should meet the needs of existing and future local businesses.

Reason: The Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire identified some types of business which would be welcomed and therefore sustainable within the Parish.

We will encourage an appropriate mix of business leading to a more sustainable community which will also improve and enhance facilities available to residents and provide employment opportunities.

Business and Employment Policy SSBE03 Employee Parking

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance that new businesses provide adequate parking for both staff and customers.

Reason: The lack of adequate rural public transport means that private cars are needed to access any commercial development, flexibility in the retained B&NES policy is required as such journeys are inevitably much shorter than the alternative longer commute to Bath or Bristol.

Business and Employment Policy SSBE04 Homeworking

Building alterations that support homeworking will be supported in principle by the neighbourhood plan.

Reason: The Parish has experienced a reduction in small businesses during recent years which has reduced local employment opportunities, home working will help to prevent the parish becoming a dormitory, encouraging a better work-life balance for residents.

Business and Employment Action Policy SSBE05 Broadband

The Neighbourhood Plan strongly supports the need for faster Broadband speed, through development of fibre optic networks, to slow the movement out of the parish of existing small businesses and to encourage new business to relocate or set up within the parish. The community supports developments to improve broadband speed across the parish through community investment.

Reason: This will bring long term sustainability through the provision of employment opportunities as well as enabling working from home to support business enterprises and social communication. Businesses once established will be able to compete openly on a national basis.

Road and Transport Policies

Our road and transport policies are developed from the preferences of the parish residents and set out to accord with the overall aims of making our transport infrastructure more sustainable, more accessible for both work and social use and safer for all, whilst remaining compliant with the B&NES Core Strategy as well as national policy.

In particular, the policies seek to encourage and facilitate the use of public

and non-motorised transport where possible.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT01 Public Transport

The neighbourhood plan supports improving the availability of public transport for commuting to work outside of the parish and for general social use such as journeys between local villages.

Specifically, a viable link to services facilitating commuting to local urban centres should be developed using funding from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy, paid by developers) and grants where available.

Reason: Current bus services are limited both in terms of number of journeys and the times of those journeys, making commuting to Bristol, Bath and other likely places of employment impractical if not impossible.

Only weekly services are available to centres such as Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton or Weston-Super-Mare.

Additionally, the current services do not facilitate local journeys in any practical way and are thus making no contribution to the reduction of private car use or to the social and community life in the parish and wider Chew Valley.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT02 Parking

The neighbourhood plan supports improving access to local retail facilities by the provision of additional parking spaces, particularly in the area of the junction of the A368 and Sutton Hill Road, where a local retail store, a hairdresser and a pub/restaurant are located.

While the pub/restaurant has adequate parking facilities, the shop/post office and the hairdresser are limited to three and four parking spaces respectively.

This policy will be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: From the community consultation survey, 72% of respondents stated the need to facilitate and make safer the use of the existing retail facilities by residents of the parish.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT03 Footpaths

The neighbourhood plan supports improvements to existing footpaths and the provision of safer and more extensive footpaths throughout the village and parish, including pedestrian friendly access to:

- The Herriotts Mill area which contains a farm shop, restaurant and children's leisure area

- Bishop Sutton village, site of a Church and an extensive retail outlet
- Chew Valley Lake area, providing extensive leisure facilities, a tea room and a farmers market. This will be promoted through the use of funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: Current footpaths are inadequate, too narrow and unsafe in places. Considerable improvement as well as development of new access paths is essential to improve safety and to provide access for the general population as a whole but particularly for wheelchair or mobility scooter users together with people with children or using a pushchair.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT04 Safe Road Crossing

The neighbourhood plan supports provision of safe road crossing facilities at relevant points throughout the village and parish.

This is essential given the likely increase in both vehicular and pedestrian traffic arising from the newer housing developments.

Sites with a high footfall together with busy junctions like the junction of the A368 and Sutton Hill road, the junction of A368 and Bonhill Road and popular crossing points such as the area around the School entrance(s), as well as social and meeting places like the Bishop

Sutton Village and Methodist halls, should be considered for the provision of safe pedestrian crossings. To be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: Despite being on the busy A368, the village is very poorly served for safe pedestrian crossing opportunities.

This should be remedied for both safety reasons and for the more general purpose of facilitating use of village facilities rather than undertaking journeys to other centres. In particular, consideration must be given to making crossing the A368 safer for wheelchair users, riders of mobility scooters and the elderly together with people with children or using a pushchair.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT05 Cycling and Walking for Recreation

The neighbourhood plan supports provision of safe and accessible walking and cycling facilities for leisure purposes. For example the leisure opportunities already available at Chew Valley Lake need to be optimised by the provision of a safe cycle and footpath route that provides improved access to the lake, whilst avoiding any detrimental impacts on the special nature of the designated Special Protection Areas and Special Area of Conservation. Reference policy SSRT03.

Reason: The Parish is at the heart of an AONB and lies on the bank of the Chew

Valley Lake which is a Special Protection Area. However the lake area amenities are not accessible from Bishop Sutton or Stowey villages other than by road. Footpath and cycle path access is essential to reduce the need for car journeys to this local facility, to provide safer use of this leisure area for both pedestrians and cyclists and to increase the overall appeal of the parish as a tourist destination.

Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT06 Stowey Weight Restriction

The neighbourhood plan supports restrictions on the size and volume of traffic using "The Street" in Stowey, by the implementation of a 7.5 ton weight limit, except for access to properties within the restricted zone, from the junction at the top of Stowey Hill to the junction with the A368. This will require further restrictions to prevent users diverting via Sutton Hill Road and other unsuitable routes. This will be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: The road that climbs Stowey Hill from the village is suffering from subsidence, caused in part by the volume of traffic including heavy goods vehicles using it. There is frequent damage to walls and kerbs within Stowey caused by drivers of large vehicles who mis-judge the available space.

A decision to impose this restriction was taken by B&NES Highways committee in 2000 but has never been implemented.

Community and Recreation

The survey of the parish showed nearly all respondents consider the parish to be a comfortable and safe place to live with basic recreational and community facilities.

However, the playground facilities are quite limited and our survey showed strong support for safe crossing points in Bishop Sutton.

Improvements in recreational facilities including existing play areas are needed including more recreation space and leisure facilities with facilities for older children and teenagers.

More recent housing development in the parish has small gardens with insufficient space for growing fruit and vegetables such that there is a significant demand for allotments within the parish.

Community and Recreational Action Policy SSCR01 Recreation Ground

The neighbourhood plan will promote greater use of the recreation ground and play areas within the parish, improving facilities to meet the needs of users of all age groups, including access to toilet facilities at the recreation ground when the village hall is closed. To be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: Several community groups have identified inadequacies in the current recreational facilities in the parish, causing many residents to travel to other facilities outside the village.

A group of residents is already working towards improvements to some of the play facilities for younger children, whilst another group have identified the problem with the lack of toilet facilities when the village hall is not available.

Community and Recreational Action Policy SSCR02 Allotments

Where the individual garden size of any development of five or more houses is smaller than the footprint of the actual building, excluding any hard surfaced parking, the neighbourhood plan will require specific contributions for the provision of allotments for community use. To be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

Reason: To encourage recreational activities and provide a healthy and sustainable food supply, together with developing a better understanding of the food chain in younger residents.

What Happens Next?

You have received this leaflet as part of our six week community consultation, which includes two drop in sessions, one to be held from 8.30 to 10.00 am on the 20th November at the Red Lion in Bishop

Sutton and the second from 6pm until 7.30pm at the Methodist Hall in Bishop Sutton later the same day.

We will also be contacting community groups such as the WI and the users of the Youth Bus which visits Bishop Sutton twice each week.

The plan will be submitted to B&NES Council for a further six weeks consultation.

Once we have collected all of the feedback from both the community and B&NES Council consultation's we will consider if any changes need to be made to the plan, publicising any amendments, at which point the plan will be submitted to a government inspector, for compliance checking against all relevant local and national policies, once approved we will work with B&NES to schedule a referendum, where all voters in the parish will have an opportunity to vote to adopt the neighbourhood plan, early in 2015.

Once the plan is adopted it becomes a part of B&NES planning policy and will influence planning and social policy in our community until 2029.

The development of our neighbourhood plan has been a huge task and we have been helped by many members of the community to get to this point, the steering group and the Parish Council would like to thank everyone for their support. This plan has been developed by our community and we all should be proud of our achievement.

Full Printed copies of the neighbourhood plan
are available for inspection at

Chew Valley Caravan Park, Ham Lane,
Bishop Sutton
10-4 Monday to Sunday
November 1 to 30

Please Send Your Comments To:
feedback@sspcnp.org

Or Write to
Stowey Sutton Parish Council
3 Chapel Cottages, The Street
Bishop Sutton, BS39 5UX

You can also use either of these contact points
to request a meeting with a member of the
neighbourhood plan steering group to discuss
your views