

Notice of Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 17 December 2025 at 10.15 am

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY



Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr M Earl

Vice Chairman:

Cllr M Cox

Cllr D Brown
Cllr R Burton
Cllr A Hadley

Cllr J Hanna
Cllr R Herrett
Cllr A Martin

Cllr S Moore
Cllr K Wilson

All Members of the Cabinet are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6069>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Sarah Culwick (01202 817615) on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 118686 or email press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

AIDAN DUNN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

9 December 2025

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app

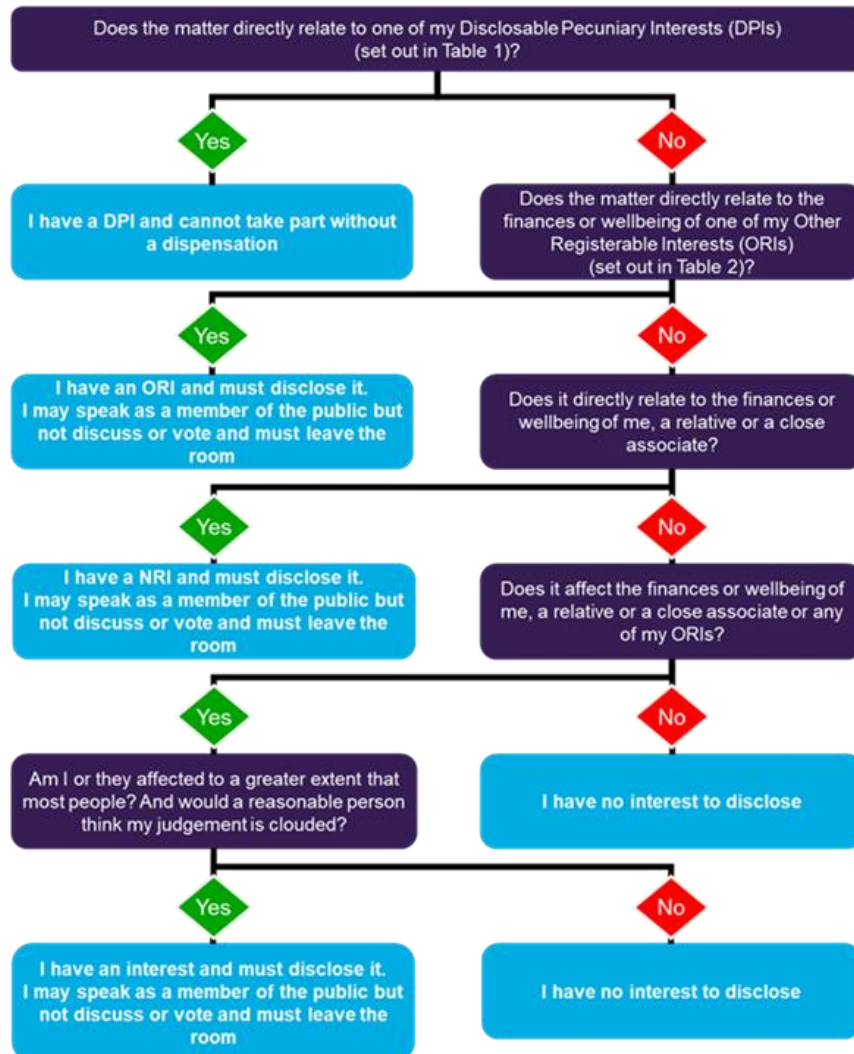


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Councillors.

2. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 26 November 2025.

7 - 20

4. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution. Further information on the requirements for submitting these is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeID=151&Info=1&bcr=1>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is mid-day on Thursday 11 December 2025 [mid-day 3 clear working days before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a statement is mid-day on Tuesday 16 December 2025 [mid-day the working day before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a petition is Wednesday 3 December 2025 [10 working days before the meeting].

5. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

To consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny committees on items not otherwise included on the Cabinet Agenda.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

6. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

21 - 40

This report:

- Aims to ensure the council presents a robust legally balanced 2026/27 budget.
- Highlights the significant amount of uncertainty at this time caused by fluctuations in the predicted outcome of the governments Fair Funding Formula review.
- Provides an update on the implications of the November local government finance policy statement, alongside the Chancellor's 26 November National Budget.
- Presents an update on the latest assumed MTFP position of the

council.

- Includes updates in respect of the existential threat to the council's financial sustainability caused by the accumulated and growing deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as pertaining to the high needs block expenditure on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).
- Proposes not to change the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) for 2026/27 and therefore to continue with the same scheme the council has operated with since April 2019.

7. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Expenditure Forecast 2025/26

41 - 54

This report responds to the agreed action in the quarter two budget monitoring report for 2025/26 for the Corporate Director for Children's Services to bring forward to December Cabinet a detailed report on the DSG high needs expenditure forecast and available mitigation measures. This report also seeks Council approval for additional resources required over the approved budget.

The quarter two budget monitoring for the DSG reported to the council's Cabinet on 26 November was a projected increase in the high needs funding gap for 2025/26 from the budgeted gap of £57.5m to £71.8m. This reflects higher than expected growth in demand in the later months of the last financial year with this unabated and with a significant increase in the costs of pupil placements.

The cumulative deficit at 31 March 2026 is projected to be £183.1m.

8. Corporate Performance Report - Q2

55 - 88

BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024.

The shared vision is the corporate strategy which sets out the council's vision, priorities and ambitions as well as the principles which underpin the way the council works as it develops and delivers its services.

Incorporated in the vision is a set of measures of progress for achieving the vision, priorities and ambitions.

This is the performance monitoring report for Quarter Two 25-26, presenting an update on the progress measures.

The council's delivery against its priorities and ambitions can also be monitored through the [performance dashboard](#) which is available on the council's website providing up-to-date real time information on the progress measures.

9. Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council 2026-2036

89 - 206

With the UK Government progressing major waste legislation and policy reforms, the Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36 has been drafted setting out clear ambitions and commitments, with consideration to the key drivers for change, to provide a pathway for enhancing our waste

and recycling services over the coming decade.

This strategy will direct the retender of a major waste disposal contract in 2027 and sets out ambitions and supporting actions for progressing towards achievement of our waste and carbon targets by 2035.

10. Statutory Duty to Biodiversity

207 - 316

Access to nature is of vital importance for the health and well-being of residents and visitors, supporting mental and physical health.

BCP is an area of high nature value but access to green spaces is unequal, and biodiversity is generally declining across the UK and within BCP.

This report outlines the actions taken by BCP Council to comply with the Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. It summarises our Green Infrastructure strategy framework, a report on Biodiversity net gain, our mitigation policies and delivery, green space capital improvements and countryside management.

It presents BCP's first report on biodiversity and a summary of monitoring, reporting and our actions for delivery for nature recovery. These plans will ensure nature is considered fully, declines are reversed and that access to nature is provided. It will support the greening of our urban environment and are part of the work as foundation level Nature Towns.

11. Improving biodiversity in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

317 - 362

BCP Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and has committed, in its Shared Vision 2024 – 2028, to create 'vibrant places where people and nature flourish'.

Three council-owned sites have been identified where different land management approaches would increase the diversity of wildlife, create nature corridors and improve residents' health and wellbeing by making natural areas more accessible to explore and enjoy. These are Erlin Farm, Millhams Mead and Solent Meads.

To avoid creating new pressure on the budget at a time of financial challenge across the council, this paper sets out a sustainable funding proposal and options for a mechanism to deliver this.

A previous [Cabinet paper](#) approved the principle of creating a mechanism to enable BCP Council to sell Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) units from council-owned land, either in-house or via an arms-length organisation. This paper focuses on the funding mechanism and outlines options with a recommended approach.

Since BNG became law in February 2024, approximately £187k worth of funding for nature (in the form of BNG unit purchases) has gone to other areas of England from development activity which has taken place in BCP Council's Local Planning Authority (LPA) area. This means areas outside BCP are benefiting from improved biodiversity and the associated improved health and wellbeing impacts. The recommendations in this paper would establish a mechanism to ensure the benefits of the BNG planning policy would remain within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Where the current use of a site is proposed to change, a period of public and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken to ensure the best

approach for nature and residents. This will come forward in a future report for a further decision.

None of the changes will involve building on these sites, this would fundamentally contradict the objective of creating more habitat and increasing biodiversity.

[PLEASE NOTE: Should Cabinet wish to discuss the detail of the confidential appendix at Appendix 7 the meeting will be required to move into Confidential (Exempt) Session].

12. Designation of High Street Rental Auction area for Bournemouth town centre

363 - 370

High Street Rental Auctions, as part of new government legislation, will enhance the council's ability to bring long-term vacant properties on the high-street back in to use via an auction process.

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 gives the Authority the power to go ahead with the High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) a new permissive power. As per the guidance, once the Authority has designated specific streets or areas as HSRA areas (following a mandatory 28 day consultation) which satisfy the test that the area is important to the local economy due to a concentration of high street uses. The designation is registered as a local land charge.

The Authority can then only use the powers in that area designated. This does not stop more areas being designated later provided they also meet the test and can be funded.

BCP Council undertook a public consultation to gauge opinions from key stakeholders over the required period of 28 days during the summer of 2025. The results highlighted a 75% approval for the programme. There is clearly a local desire for HSRAs to be implemented and bring new life to the high street.

The next step in the process is for Cabinet to designate the high streets within Bournemouth town centre. Without this, the power of HSRAs cannot be implemented.

It should be noted that the HSRA process is multi-stage and may take several months from designation to the first auction, due to statutory notice periods and preparatory work.

13. Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution

The Chief Executive to report on any decisions taken under urgency provisions in accordance with the Constitution.

14. Cabinet Forward Plan

371 - 384

To consider the latest version of the Cabinet Forward Plan for approval.

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 November 2025 at 10.15 am

Present:-

Cllr M Cox – Vice-Chairman (In the Chair)

Present: Cllr M Cox (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Cllr D Brown, Cllr R Burton, Cllr J Hanna, Cllr R Herrett, Cllr A Martin, Cllr S Moore and Cllr K Wilson

Also in attendance: Cllr P Canavan (Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Cllr S Carr-Brown (Chair of the Childrens Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and Cllr C Rigby (Chair of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Apologies: Cllr M Earl (Chairman) and Cllr A Hadley

75. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

76. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to Minute No.59 being amended to read:- *Cllr S Moore declared another interest in agenda item 8, BCP Council Libraries – Draft Library Strategy as a member of the friends of ~~Branksome~~ Library Canford Heath.*

77. Public Issues

Cabinet was advised that there had been no petitions or questions submitted by members of the public on this occasion, but that three statements had been received in relation to Agenda Items 7 by members of the public.

Public Statement from Susan Stockwell on Agenda Items 7 (Individual Performance Framework Update, 8 (Vitality Stadium land – draft heads of terms and 9 (BCP Homes Asset Management Plan Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan)

Could the following points be considered:

Item 7 exit interviews for staff offered on leaving and five years later

Item 8 lease plan include secure cycle storage and bin storage locations, item 9 identities of all social housing providers to be published and

Item 9 s278 Highway Act agreements including protection by third party warranty, in building/alteration of stock, which is exempt from CIL but

discretionary s278 improvements will allow the council to meet its "wider social and environmental objectives"?

Public Statement from Nick Douch on Agenda Item 10 (Poole Crematorium – update and next stage opportunity). Read by Democratic Services

I speak on behalf of local funeral professionals and families we support across BCP & Dorset. We are here once again discussing the future of Poole Crematorium almost six years after cremations ceased. The report before you has been shaped by external advisers, yet it overlooks the knowledge and experience of those who work in this field every day. The decline of this service is not the result of unavoidable pressures but the outcome of poor management and repeated failures to act. Residents, businesses and staff have carried the burden of this decline. Whatever decision you make today must place the needs of our community first. Poole deserves a reliable and accessible crematorium that restores public confidence and protects local jobs. Local families deserve a commitment to restore this service, rebuild trust and ensure mistakes of the last six years are never repeated.

Public Statement from Emma Regan on Agenda Item 10 (Poole Crematorium – update and next stage opportunity). Read by Democratic Services

I want to highlight the impact that the closure of Poole Crematorium has had on our community. I have seen first-hand the distress it has caused to bereaved families and to colleagues supporting them. We have had to explain that the crematorium was first closed entirely, then reopened without a cremator—despite around £600,000 of taxpayers' money being spent on the site.

Although we reassure families that their loved ones are treated with dignity, they must still be taken to Bournemouth for cremation. This has forced difficult choices between the funeral director they trust and the location where the cremation actually happens. Elderly residents, in particular, have struggled with longer journeys, with some choosing not to attend services at all.

This situation has been deeply disappointing for many. I urge the council to reconsider its position and restore cremation services at Poole Crematorium—an essential, valued service our community deserves.

78. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet was advised that two recommendations had been received from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on items not otherwise indicated on the Cabinet agenda, and that one recommendation had been received from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Chris Rigby presented the recommendations from the Committee as set out below, copies of which had been circulated to

Members of the Cabinet and published on the Councils website prior to the meeting.

Recommendation from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 2 April 2025

Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda Item 8 – Recommendations from the Safer Accommodation Strategy Working Group.

The Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the following recommendation to Cabinet on this item:

RESOLVED that the Environment and Place O&S Committee recommend to Cabinet

- 1. That as part of the Safe Accommodation Strategy development, officers consider an awareness campaign and/or guidance materials on the different types of financial support that are available to support those fleeing domestic abuse, in particular in relation to different types of housing tenure (e.g. shared tenancies, joint mortgages), in order to break down a potentially significant barrier to survivors accessing support to end their abuse.*
- 2. That the engagement plan for the Safe Accommodation Strategy should ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are heard and reflected within the Strategy.*
- 3. That an all councillor briefing session be added to the Safe Accommodation Strategy engagement plan, to ensure members are adequately informed about the strategy and able to contribute views, and to enable them to fulfil their role within the community by communicating the benefits of the Safe Accommodation Strategy to residents.*
- 4. a) that the provision of safe accommodation and associated commissioning process be reviewed,*
b) that scrutiny members be invited to review and input into this review, prior to the commencement of commissioning, through an additional meeting of this working group.
- 5. That the use of temporary accommodation be continuously reviewed and specific KPIs be established for monitoring the success of the new safe accommodation model, including occupancy rates, length of stay, outcomes for survivors (e.g., successful move-on to permanent housing), and survivor satisfaction. These KPIs should be reviewed regularly by the relevant scrutiny committee to ensure accountability and transparency.*
- 6. That Cabinet, with the support of the council's Corporate Management Board, be requested to take a view on forthcoming decisions that may be of significant or contentious public impact, regardless of decision-making thresholds, and an all councillor briefing be held before any such decisions are made, to enable all councillors, and particularly ward councillors, to be properly informed.*

(Unanimous Decision)

Recommendation from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 8 October 2025

Environment and Place Agenda Item 6 – Plant-based and reduced meat and dairy diets: draft position statement and action plan

The Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the following recommendations to Cabinet on this item:

1. *All mentions of the word vegan replaced with Plant-Based throughout the paper.*

Voting: Unanimous

2. *Switching the target from 20% for plant-based concessions to 25%.*

Voting: For:8, Against:0, Abstention:1

3. *That Council adopt the position statements and strategy for plant based diets in BCP Council with the amendments above.*

Voting: Unanimous

The Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown presented the recommendations from the Committee as set out below, copies of which had been circulated to Members of the Cabinet and published on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions (Children's Services O&S Committee agenda item 9)

Comment to Cabinet:

The committee agreed to make Cabinet aware that the Committee appreciates the detrimental impact of school exclusions, which were highlighted in the report, and recognises the work that is underway to address this. The committee agreed that through this work the council's primary focus is improved outcomes for the children of BCP but that this work will also likely bring budgetary savings such as:

- *A reduction in exclusions and associated costs (e.g. transport, AP placements, tribunal processes)*
- *Improved outcomes for vulnerable pupils, reducing future demand on social care, youth justice, and post-16 support service*
- *A reduction in the need for unregistered and costly AP as more needs are met by schools*

(Unanimous Decision)

The Deputy Leader thanked the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees for their important work and for the recommendations and notes to the Cabinet.

In accordance with the Constitution formal responses to the recommendations from the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided by the relevant Portfolio Holders to the Scrutiny Committee at their next available meeting.

79. Council Budget Monitoring 2025/26 at Quarter Two

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report provided the quarter two 2025/26 projected financial outturn information for the general fund, capital programme, housing revenue account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the quarter one position was a projected overspend of £3.7m reflecting the increasing financial challenges facing local government from social care demand within both adults and children's services, and that demand in these areas had grown further over the second quarter but with reduced expenditure in other services limiting the increase in the projected overspend to £4.2 million.

Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet advising that the Committee had recently had a budget meeting. In addition, Councillor Canavan raised the issue of vacant properties.

Cabinet members spoke of their frustrations with the budget and of the pressures on adult social care and children's services.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) noted the budget monitoring position for quarter two 2025/26;**
- (b) requested a detailed report to December Cabinet from the Corporate Director for Children's Services on the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant expenditure forecast and available mitigation measures in 2025/26. This report will need to seek Council approval for any additional resources over the approved 2025/26 budget; and**
- (c) requested the council's senior leadership team and portfolio holders consider what further action can now be taken to ensure the actual financial outturn is within the Council approved budget for 2025/26, including bringing forward any planned savings already approved by Council for 2026/27 that can be delivered early.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

Reason

To comply with accounting codes of practice and best practice which requires councils to regularly monitor the annual budget position and take any action to support the sustainability of the council's financial position.

To comply with the council's financial regulation concerning approval for budget virements.

80. Individual Performance Framework Update

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Resources and Governance presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that BCP Council's individual performance framework sought to improve employee engagement, productivity, efficiency, and innovation, and that the framework emphasised career development, wellbeing, and retention to achieve better outcomes and services for communities and residents and deliver our [shared vision](#) for BCP Council.

Cabinet was informed that as set out in our People and Culture Strategy 2023-2027, BCP Council aims to develop a high-performance culture, and to increase fairness and transparency in our performance decisions.

In relation to this Cabinet was advised that the purpose of the report was to review the effectiveness of BCP Council's individual performance management framework introduced in April 2024 and outline plans to enhance the framework over the next 12 months.

Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet questioning the involvement that the trade unions had had in this process.

In relation to this Councillor Canavan was advised that the trade unions had been heavily involved and engaged during this process and that various issues had been talked through with the trade unions.

RESOLVED that Cabinet noted the report.

81. BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and Housing Revenue Account 30 Year Business Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regulatory Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report presented the BCP Homes Asset Management Plan and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan principles for approval.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the HRA Business Plan was a strategic financial framework that ensures the long-term sustainability of council housing by aligning investment in existing homes, compliance, decarbonisation, and new housing supply with prudent financial management.

Cabinet was informed that the plan was underpinned by robust stock condition data, prudent financial assumptions, and a sustainable borrowing strategy, and that it supported the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35, significant investment in existing stock, and ongoing compliance with regulatory standards.

Further to this Cabinet advised that the plan prioritised financial resilience, risk management, and alignment with corporate priorities such as

decarbonisation and tenant engagement, and that adoption of these recommendations will ensure BCP Homes continues to provide safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes, while maintaining the financial viability of the HRA and supporting the Council's wider social and environmental objectives.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) approve the HRA Asset Management Plan at appendix 1;**
- (b) approve the Baseline+ scenario for the HRA 30 Year Business Plan; and**
- (c) note that adjustments to the HRA 30 Year Business plans will be made on an annual basis alongside annual HRA budget setting and reported to Cabinet and Council accordingly.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Regulatory Services

Reason

The recommendations are made to secure the long-term financial sustainability and legal compliance of the Council's housing services. By adopting this plan, the Council ensures it can continue to provide safe, decent, and energy-efficient homes, supported by robust stock condition data and prudent financial assumptions. The plan enables the delivery of 937 new homes by 2034/35 and significant investment in existing properties, all while aligning with corporate priorities such as decarbonisation and tenant engagement. Regular review and scenario testing provide resilience against risks like inflation, interest rate changes, and evolving government policy. This approach maintains transparency, accountability, and good governance, ensuring that the Council's housing ambitions remain both affordable and achievable.

82. Poole Crematorium - update and next stage opportunity

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Partnerships presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'E' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report provided feedback on the summary results of early market engagement completed in April 2024 and current service performance, and that the report sought Cabinet approval to go to market to procure a concessionaire to operate Poole Crematorium, enabling the reintroduction of cremation services at the site through a third-party provider.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: -

- (a) noted the feedback from the completed Early Market Engagement exercise;**
- (b) approved the procurement of a concession to operate from Poole Crematorium, Gravel Hill, Poole;**

- (c) delegates authority to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to finalise the concession specification and undertake the procurement process; and**
- (d) agreed to receive a future further report on evaluated bids, and if appropriate approve the award of contract.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Communities and Partnerships

Reason

To allow officers to take forward a market offer to inform Council decision making as to the future of the Poole Crematorium site, in light of ongoing public, business and political interest in resecuring the cremator(s) facility.

83. Sea Cliff and Chine Management

The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial presented a report on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'F' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that along the BCP coastline there is approximately 15.5 miles of sea cliffs and chines, and that the responsibility for much of the management of the sea cliffs and chines falls to BCP Council (either as landowner or leaseholder).

Further to this Cabinet was informed that in order to address cliff slips and falls, past engineering efforts during the 20th century have introduced various forms of cliff drainage and stabilisation works including pinning and netting, slope regrading and installation of over 700 sand drains along large sections of the BCP coast, engineering that would cost many tens of £millions at today's prices

Further to this Cabinet was advised that ongoing work to develop a new BCP cliff management strategy had identified that costs for cliff management along the BCP frontage over the next 20 years are currently estimated to be in excess of £41m, and that in order to address some of the issues being identified in the immediate term, one-off funding of £1.446m had been allocated by the finance team for cliff management over this financial year and next, and that it was planned to prioritise this funding on items identified through the Cliff Management Working Group.

Councillor Patrick Canavan addressed the Cabinet advising that he welcomed the report as a ward councillor covering 'East Cliff' and highlighted that the council at some point would need to provide some form intervention for the cliff erosion and that the cost to the authority for such works could not be underestimated.

Cabinet members spoke in support of the report and thanked officers for their work on this.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) note the challenges being faced in managing BCP's sea cliffs and chines, including the impacts of climate change and limited resources allocated to this in the recent past;**
- (b) support the immediate allocation of £1.446m from reserves to support responses to current cliff management issues and mitigate the lost income from commercial services on the seafront; and**
- (c) delegate to the Director of Commercial Operations in consultation with the Chief Operations Officer and Portfolio Holder the allocations of the funding.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Climate Response, Environment and Energy

Reason

To support achievement of the BCP vision for where people, nature, coast and towns come together in sustainable, safe and healthy communities, by contributing the delivery of the following objectives:

- People and places are connected by sustainable and modern infrastructure.
- Our communities have pride in our streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces.
- Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice
- Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature.

84. Home to School Transport

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'G' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report presented the findings of a strategic review undertaken by an external provider into the Local Authority's home to school transport arrangements focussing on our arrangements and provision for children and young people pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the key objective of the review was to identify strategic and operational opportunities that support the development of independent travel options and make improvements to how home-to-school transport is delivered with a focus on potential efficiencies and service improvement, and that it identified key opportunities to introduce travel options that meet individual needs and help prepare young people for adulthood and promote long-term independence.

In relation to this Cabinet was advised that the key issues included the complexity of transport arrangements, market capacity challenges, and the

need for improved commissioning models that deliver better outcomes and value for money, and that the report presented a range of options and opportunities for future delivery and contained details of the investment necessary to achieve cashable savings and cost avoidance.

Cabinet was informed that the report sought approval to proceed with a formal tendering exercise to commission an external provider to implement a phased delivery of change proposals that encourage independent travel, build independence and reduce journey times for children and young people, and that the approach will be supportive of young people's development to help young people gain confidence and practical skills for travelling safely on their own and will result in making school transport more efficient and sustainable.

The Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Sharon Carr-Brown addressed the Cabinet advising that the Committee at their meeting the previous evening had debated the item in detail following which the Committee had agreed the following recommendation: -

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to endorse the recommendation within the report to Cabinet, this being that Cabinet:

'Agree to tender an external provider to deliver a transformation project over three years with a total cost of £1.5 million funded by the flexible use of capital receipts to deliver service improvements and by the end of the project on-going savings in SEND school transport projected at £3 million (net of additional resource requirement)'

(Majority Decision)

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills thanked the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their debate and discussion the previous evening.

RECOMMENDED that Council Agree to tender an external provider to deliver a transformation project over three years with a total cost of £1.5 million funded by the flexible use of capital receipts to deliver service improvements and by the end of the project on-going savings in SEND school transport projected at £3 million (net of additional resource requirement).

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Children, Young People, Education and Skills

Reason

The recommended approach promotes independence by equipping children and young people with essential travel skills, while addressing rising complexity and cost pressures. A phased delivery plan ensures smooth transition, co-production with families, and ongoing evaluation. By building internal resilience and leveraging external expertise where needed, the Council retains strategic control and delivers a more sustainable, value-for-money service—reducing long-term costs and improving outcomes.

85. Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-2026

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Education and Skills presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'H' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that there was a statutory requirement to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which must provide specified information about the local provision of youth justice services, and that the report summarised the Youth Justice Plan for 2025/26, with a copy of the Plan appended.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that the Youth Justice Plan needed to be approved by the full Council.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the Youth Justice Plan 2025-2026.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Children, Young People, Education and Skills

Reason

Youth Justice Services are required to publish an annual Youth Justice Plan which should be approved by the Local Authority for that Youth Justice Service. Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service is a partnership between Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council. Approval is therefore sought from both Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and from Dorset Council.

86. Vitality Stadium land - draft heads of terms

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that AFC Bournemouth had approached BCP Council in relation to their plans to expand Vitality Stadium at Kings Park, and that on 1 October 2025 and on 14 October 2025, Cabinet and Council respectively approved the recommendations that officers negotiate Heads of Terms in relation to Option C (two leases) and then return to Cabinet and Council for a decision relating to those Heads of Terms.

Cabinet was informed that the report presented the negotiated Heads of Terms and associated values (agreed in principle, without prejudice and subject to contract and Council approval) agreed with AFC Bournemouth and recommended that they are accepted.

In addition, Cabinet was advised that the report requested authority for officers to instruct BCP's property legal team accordingly and progress the leases to completion.

RECOMMENDED that Council: -

- (a) notes the decision of the Cabinet meeting held 1 October 2025 and Council Meeting held 14 October 2025;**

- (b) **approves the Heads of Terms (HOTs) recommended by officers for the Leasehold disposal of two parcels of land at Kings Park to AFC Bournemouth (Option C); and**
- (c) **instructs BCP officers to agree the recommended HOTs with AFC Bournemouth, instruct BCP's legal team accordingly and progress the two leases to completion.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Finance

Reason

This report sets out the heads of terms for the re gearing of existing agreements between BCP Council and AFC Bournemouth at Kings Park to enable expansion of the Vitality Stadium. The regear will result in two leases, the terms of which reflect Best Consideration, in line with BCP Councils constitution and financial regulations.

By approving these recommendations, it will also:

- Enable existing leases to be regearred onto more appropriate terms
- allow this significant investment to be made into the area, improving the area for fans and park visitors
- and help AFC Bournemouth achieve compliance with Premier League regulations

87. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.

88. Poole Business Improvement District (BID)

Exempt Information – Category 5 (Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings).

The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'I' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the Poole Business Improvement District's (BID) second 5-year term will finish in June 2026, and that the BID was currently preparing for a new ballot on 16 March 2026 for a third term.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the report sought Cabinet approval to allow Poole BID to go to ballot for a third term.

The meeting moved back into public session at the conclusion of this exempt item.

89. Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution

Cabinet was advised that no urgent decisions had been taken in accordance with the Constitution since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

90. Cabinet Forward Plan

The Deputy Leader advised that the latest Cabinet Forward Plan had been published on the Council's website.

The meeting ended at 12.05 pm

CHAIRMAN

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CABINET



Report subject	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to ensure the council presents a robust legally balanced 2026/27 budget. • Highlights the significant amount of uncertainty at this time caused by fluctuations in the predicted outcome of the governments Fair Funding Formula review. • Provides an update on the implications of the November local government finance policy statement, alongside the Chancellor's 26 November National Budget. • Presents an update on the latest assumed MTFP position of the council. • Includes updates in respect of the existential threat to the council's financial sustainability caused by the accumulated and growing deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as pertaining to the high needs block expenditure on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). • Proposes not to change the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) for 2026/27 and therefore to continue with the same scheme the council has operated with since April 2019.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Acknowledges the ongoing progress being made to address the funding gap for 2026/27. b) Endorses the latest position regarding the developing 2026/27 Budget and MTFP position. c) Recognise the significant level of uncertainty at this time due to fluctuations in the predicted outcome of the governments Fair Funding Formula.

	<p>d) Approve the implementation of a restricted voluntary redundancy process to enable the delivery of 2026/27 savings from specific service-based restructures.</p> <p>e) Request Portfolio Holders, Corporate Directors and Budget Holders bring forward the necessary additional savings, efficiencies, additional income proposals and service adjustment proposals to enable the 2026/27 Budget to be legally balanced.</p> <p>f) Approve the continuation of the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) for 2026/27.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To comply with accounting codes of practice and best practice which requires councils to have a rolling multi-year medium term financial plan.</p> <p>To provide Cabinet with the latest high-level overview of the 2026/27 Budget and 3-year medium-term financial plan including any updates on the government's proposals to return the SEND system to financial sustainability in 2025.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Mike Cox, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Adam Richens, Director of Finance adam.richens@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. Cabinet at its meeting on the 29 October 2025 received its latest MTFP Update report. In receiving the report Cabinet acknowledged the ongoing progress with the process to deliver a legally balanced budget position for 2026/27 and MTFP. The report also recognised this work had been undertaken in the context of the February 2025 approved General Fund Budget which had been established based on conventional local government financial management processes and revenue sources. The 2025/26 approved budget was based on a 4.99% Council Tax increase and the delivery of £9.6m in additional annual savings, efficiencies, and additional resources.

2. **Figure 1:** October 2025 Medium Term Financial Plan position

	Oct 2025 MTFP Position			
	26/27 £m	27/28 £m	28/29 £m	Total £m
Service Pressures (net of any specific grant changes)				
Annual – Net Funding Gap	8.2	(4.0)	6.7	10.9
Cumulative MTFP – Net Funding Gap	8.2	4.1	10.9	

3. As set out in the October Cabinet report the position was challenging. Increases in the provisions for the pay award, the National Living Wage (NLW), and for interest costs on the growing Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit had caused the funding gap for 2026/27 to increase to £8.2m. This was net of additional savings, efficiencies, and additional resources taken into account which had been increased to £12.2m. Despite this it was clear that significant additional work still needed to be done to ensure that the council can deliver a balanced budget for next year and continue its strategy of maintaining the financial health of the authority. Another key contextual element was that as per the Quarter One budget monitoring report to September Cabinet the council was forecasting an in-year £3.7m overspend and had put in place mitigation measures including expenditure and vacancy management freezes designed bring spend back within the parameters of the approved budget framework for 2025/26.
4. In support of the 2026/27 budget process Overview and Scrutiny members worked with the Leader and Deputy Leader on a series of budget conversations held on the 17 October 2025 in an attempt to support proactive budget engagement and scrutiny. This event provided the opportunity to discuss key areas of council service in greater depth supported by a pack of relevant budget/financial information made available in advance. The five areas covered by the event were.
 - Library Strategy
 - Remaining Play Strategy Phases
 - Enhancing Youth Services
 - Funding to support Regeneration
 - Funding to support and develop a programme of Public Events
5. Feedback from the event was presented by relevant Overview and Scrutiny Chairs to the 29 October 2025 Cabinet meeting as follows:
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that as part of the Budget setting process, consideration be given to utilising receipts from the existing surplus asset disposal programme for 2026/27 to address some of the repairs and maintenance of publicly facing assets.
6. In addition, a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs in November highlighted that they would appreciate:
 - in support of their consideration of the 2026/27 budget, the Corporate Directors be requested to attend the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting on the 2 February

2026 to set out the consequences to the community, residents and staff of the key proposals within their areas.

- in support of their consideration of the 2027/28 budget, Cabinet consider a request that the detailed list of savings, efficiencies etc. that are being assumed in each of the MTFP Update reports is included within each of those reports.

Policy Statement: 2026/27 Local Government Finance Settlement

7. Ahead of the National Autumn Budget the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution published a policy statement on the 2026/27 to 2028/29 local government finance settlement on 20 November 2025. Pertinent information contained in the statement included:
 - a) Confirmation that the Government will issue a 3-year settlement although Parliament will still be required to pass legislation annually so changes can be made.
 - b) Clarification that the previously announced additional funding will principally be geared towards social care and that the previously referenced £3.4 billion in new funding will be phased in over the 3-year period, rather than all from 2026/27.
 - c) Plethora of data and methodology changes which included the inclusion of housing costs as a measure of deprivation which is expected to spare London from the previously anticipated funding cuts. In addition, the remoteness measure intended to account for higher travel costs will only be applied to social care funding. Both of these changes will have a critical impact on the distribution of resources nationally.
 - d) Four new consolidated specific grants which bring together previous funding streams.
 - a. Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant
Homelessness prevention grant, rough sleeping funding, DA safe accommodation grant
 - b. Children, Families and Youth Grant
Children's social care prevention grant, supporting families funding within the Children's and families grant, holiday activities and food grant, transformation funding, pupil premium plus post-16 grant
 - c. Public Health Grant
Main public health grant, drug and alcohol treatment and recovery improvement grant, local stop smoking service and support grant, swap to stop scheme funding.
 - d. Crisis and Resilience Fund
Household support fund and discretionary housing payments
 - e) Confirmation that the council tax principles over the next 3 years will be 4.99% made up of 2.99% basic increase and a 2% social care precept. Government will only consider requests for increases above this level as part of its Exceptional Financial Support arrangements from authorities with below average tax levels. The government have updated their model and are now assuming that the national average council tax will be £2,060 in 2026/27 which will be £112 above

the £1,947.99 level BCP Council would be charging with a 4.99% increase (£1,855.41 * 1.0499). BCP Council would be generating circa £17m more annually if it was charging at the government assumed average rate in 2026/27.

- f) The government, in introducing the policy statement and the new funding formula, claim to be fixing the foundations of local government by introducing a fairer, evidence-based system that targets funding towards areas with high deprivation. It is confusing therefore, having settled on a formula intended to deliver against this ambition, that it has then decided to continue with the £600m Recovery Grant that it paid in 2025/26 which was intended as a one-year grant targeted at authorities it believed suffered most under austerity. This change undermines the purity of the Fair Funding Formula and has a significant distributional impact as it is not in line with earlier proposals. Clearly the new funding formula did not benefit authorities that received this grant last year by as much as the government anticipated and therefore this decision provides a mechanism for continuing to support them above their fair funding assessment.
- g) A statement that Government recognises local authorities are continuing to face significant pressure from the impact of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits on their accounts and that these authorities will need continued support during the transition to a reformed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system. This will include working with local authorities to manage their SEND system and deficits. The statement referenced that the government would set out further details on its plans to support local authorities with historic and accruing deficits in the provisional 2026/27 local government finance settlement.
8. At this stage the overall impact of these changes to the Fair Funding Formula cannot be confirmed. That confirmation will only come via the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 which is expected to be issued in the week of the 15 December 2025. In advance of this the council has used modelling by Pixel Financial Management who are experts in local government finance and funding. Generally, the key decisions in the policy statement appear to have improved the position of London and Metropolitan councils at the expense of County and Unitary authorities
9. However there has to be a significant caveat in the modelling has and continues to fluctuate significantly in line with the development of the understanding of how the new formula will be applied. Consequentially it should be highlighted that the position as set out in Figure 3 could change significantly for either the better or worse once the provisional local government finance settlement is issued in December.
10. It is also important to note that government when they talk about the impact of the new funding formula will reference core spending power which includes the additional amount the council can raise annually via council tax increases.

2025 National Autumn Budget announcement

11. On the 26 November 2025 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, delivered her 2025 Autumn Budget statement to parliament accompanied by a set of economic and fiscal outlook forecasts from the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR). Specific announcements particularly salient to local government and the council's MTFP included:
 - a) A high value council tax surcharge that will be levied on properties from 1 April 2028 onwards. This surcharge will be administered through the council tax framework and

will apply to the owners of the properties whereas council tax is applied to the occupant(s) of a property. The surcharge will apply to properties being valued at over £2 million based on 2026 prices, whereas council tax is based on 1991 values.

Figure 2: High Value Council Tax Surcharge bands and charges.

Threshold (£m)	Rate (£)
2.0 – 2.5	2,500
2.5 – 3.5	3,500
3.5 – 5.0	5,000
5.0+	7,500

Properties will be revalued every 5 years, and the rate payable will be increased annually by the consumer price index (CPI). Authorities will be compensated for additional administration costs under the new burdens scheme.

The suggestion is that local authorities will be the billing and collection agent for HM Treasury and will not benefit from this income locally, however one suggestion is that councils will, instead of passing the money to government, retain the money and see a compensating reduction to their Revenue Support Grant (RSG). A public consultation is anticipated early in 2026. Social housing properties will be exempt from the surcharge.

- b) Government are proposing that they will take over the responsibility for day-to-day funding of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) from 1 April 2028 onwards which is when the current statutory override ends. The current accumulated deficit and any further increase in the deficit between now and the 31 March 2028 will be retained by BCP Council with any support for these elements announced as part of the December 2025 provisional local government finance settlement for 2026/27.
- c) Confirmation of the changes to business rates which were anticipated, with the introduction of two lower multipliers for Retail, Hospitality & Leisure (RHL), to be funded by a new High-Value Multiplier (HVM).
- d) Confirmation that from 1 April 2026, the National Living Wage will increase by 4.1% to £12.71 per hour.
- e) Revision to future years' inflationary forecasts to 2.2% in 2026/27, 2% in 2027/28, 2.1% in 2028/29, and 2% in 2029/30. For 2026/27 this is slightly higher than the 1.9% estimated in the 2025 Spring Statement and will consequentially increase some of the previously assumed service pressures.
- f) The detail of the introduction of an inflation linked Electric Vehicle Excise Duty (eVED) of 3p per mile from April 2028 and changes to salary sacrifice arrangements for pension contributions from April 2029 will need to be considered carefully.
- g) Government will adjust how earnings are treated for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit claimants in supported housing and temporary accommodation, so that most claimants will not be subject to reductions in income for working more hours. The

administration of pensioner Housing Benefit and Pension Credit will be brought together from the Autumn of 2026.

12. The Chancellor also announced a 0.5% cut to all Department Expenditure Limits (DEL) will be applied across Government budgets in 2028/29, 2029/30 and 2030/31. For Local Government DEL, this applies to local government grant funding only and excludes council tax and business rates. This is therefore equivalent to around 0.1% of Core Spending Power in 2028/29. The impact of this has not been included in the tables set out as Figure 1 and 2 above and are expected to be detailed in the December provisional local government finance settlement.

Latest draft 2026/27 budget and MTFP position

13. Figure 3 below sets out the latest MTFP position to 2028. As a reminder to Cabinet, the table sets out changes in the revenue budgets on an annual basis, either positive numbers which represent additional costs to be met, or negative numbers which represent forecast cost reductions, savings or additional income. The variances are shown in the year in which they are expected to be first seen and are then assumed to recur on an ongoing basis in each of the following years. One-off changes will be seen as an entry in one year and will then be reversed out in a following year.

14. **Figure 3:** Latest updated MTFP position

	Updated Budget 2025/26 £m	Nov 2025 MTFP Position			
		26/27 £m	27/28 £m	28/29 £m	Total £m
Service Pressures (net of any specific grant changes)					
Wellbeing Directorate	175.0	11.8	7.9	8.2	27.9
Children's Directorate	110.3	9.2	8.2	8.2	25.5
Operations Directorate	59.7	1.3	2.8	3.0	7.1
Resources Directorate	49.8	(0.0)	0.3	1.6	1.8
Service Pressures (net of any specific grant changes)	394.9	22.3	19.2	20.9	62.4
Savings, Efficiencies, Fees & Charges					
Wellbeing Directorate		(3.5)	(1.1)	(0.9)	(5.5)
Children's Directorate		(1.4)	0.0	0.0	(1.4)
Operations Directorate		(4.4)	(2.0)	(1.3)	(7.7)
Resources Directorate		(1.1)	(0.5)	(0.1)	(1.7)
Transformation		(4.4)	(7.4)	(1.2)	(13.0)
Savings, Efficiencies, Fees and Charges		(14.7)	(11.0)	(3.6)	(29.2)
Corporate Items - Cost Pressures	16.7	8.8	4.4	6.3	19.6
Funding - Changes	(408.9)	(12.1)	(12.2)	(7.6)	(31.9)
Debt interest due to accumulated SEND deficit	8.1	1.8	1.9	1.2	4.9
Annual – Net Funding Gap	2.8	6.1	2.4	17.3	25.8
Application of one-off business rates resources to MTFP	(2.8)	2.8	0.0	0.0	2.8
Annual – Net Funding Gap	0.0	8.9	2.4	17.3	28.6
Cumulative MTFP – Net Funding Gap		8.9	11.3	28.6	

Please note: The MTFP as presented does not provide for any potential impact of the governments future waste strategy

15. The position as set out above continues to be underpinned by numerous key assumptions which have been informed by many factors such as government announcements, economic forecasts or targets, and professional judgements. The key assumptions currently being used in building the 2026/27 Budget and MTFP are summarised in Figure 4 below.

16. Figure 4: Latest key assumptions

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Council Tax (Includes 2% Social Care Precept)	4.99%	4.99%	4.99%
Pay Award	2.5%	2.0%	2.0%
Minimum Increase in Fees & Charges	2%	2%	2%
National Living Wage (NLW) % Increase in the National Living Wage	4.1%	2%	2%
	Dec-25	Dec-26	Dec-27
Bank of England - Base Rate	4.00%	3.50%	3.50%
<i>Current BoE Base Rate: March 2025 4.5%</i>			

Please note:

a) The increase in fees and charges should be regarded as a minimum increase to those not set by statute. The principle of full cost recovery may mean increases above these levels for example based on the specific cost profile of the service.

Financial Strategy to support maintaining a balance budget for 2026/27.

17. Overall, the funding gap for 2026/27 has increased since the October 2025 Cabinet MTFP update report with the funding gap over the 3-year period increasing significantly. The main changes not set out elsewhere in this report are as set out below.

Quarter Two Budget Monitoring

- a) As set out in a report to Cabinet on the 26 November 2025 the council is currently forecasting that it will overspend its 2025/26 approved budget by £4.2m (1.2% of its net budget) after the release of the budgeted contingencies. Overall, the position has deteriorated by £0.5m compared to the Quarter One reported position and reflects the ongoing challenges facing local government from social care demand within both adults' and children's services.
- b) The report requests the council's senior leadership team and portfolio holders consider what further action can be taken over and above the freeze on non-essential expenditure and vacancies agreed in October, to bring expenditure back within the parameters of the approved budget framework for 2025/26. This will include consideration as to whether any previously agreed savings for 2026/27 can be brought forward.
- c) No resources have currently been set aside to cover this forecast overspend and all things being equal, if it materialised, it would impact on the previous work of the administration to rebuild the council's level of reserves.

Pension Fund

- d) BCP Council is a member of the Dorset Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Dorset Council. The funds actuary Barnett Waddingham are required to revalue the fund every three years (tri-annual revaluation) to determine both the value of its assets and liabilities and the contribution rates for each employer

in the fund. The latest revaluation was undertaken as of April 2025 and the preliminary results provided to the employers in November 2025.

- e) The March 2025 position for BCP Council was a funding deficit of £53.1m with a resulting funding level of 96.4% compared to a funding deficit of £53.9m of 31 March 2022 equating to a funding level of 95.8%. Generally, the back-funding payments over the last 3 years, improved market conditions and changes to life expectancy have acted to reduce the deficit (increase the funding level) whereas assumptions of higher inflation and salary costs have acted to leave the overall position unchanged as set out below.

Figure 5: BCP Council Pension Fund – Funding levels

Local Authority	Funding Level			
	31-Mar-16	31-Mar-19	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-25
Bournemouth Council	79%			
Christchurch Council	88%			
Dorset County Council	80%			
Poole Council	86%			
BCP Council	82%	92%	96%	96%

- f) In respect of the ongoing (primary) and secondary (back funding) contribution rates requested by the actuary these are set out below with key variables being the assumptions around future inflation, salary increases and the discount rate. BCP Council is required to satisfy itself as to the reasonableness of these contribution rates and is now actively considering its response. That discussion/challenge may alter the proposals as set out.

Figure 6: BCP Pension Fund contributions proposed by the actuary

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Ongoing (Primary) Rate	15.6%	16.2%	16.8%	17.4%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%	16.3%	16.3%	16.3%
Secondary (Backfunding) Rate	£9.43m	£5.89m	£6.10m	£6.32m	£3.97m	£4.13m	£4.29m	£7.27m	£5.83m	£5.49m

- g) At this stage the consequential impact on the General Fund base revenue budget as included in Figure 3 was an annual positive impact of £3.2m from the reduced ongoing (primary) rate. This positive impact is then diminished by the increase in the secondary (back funding) element.

Extended Producer Responsibility Payments

- h) This policy was introduced by the government to help achieve environmental goals such as recycling by making producers responsible for their products along their entire lifecycle including the post-consumer stage. In 2025/26 the council was guaranteed an allocation of £9.447m to help offset costs associated with waste collection and disposal.
- i) During November 2025 the Council was notified of a £9.703m allocation for 2026/27 however it is worth stressing that this amount is not guaranteed and therefore there will be a high degree of uncertainty in regard to the final amount

eventually receivable. That said the amount is a £256k increase between years which has a particularly positive impact on the MTFP as the council has been assuming it would decrease by 20% in 2026/27 with a further decrease in future years.

Service Pressures

- j) Future years' forecasts have been updated to reflect the latest predictions of service costs with particular reference to the relentless ongoing demand for, and cost of, social care. These forecasts also recognise the ongoing impact of the pressures in the current financial year and the slight change to future year inflationary factors announced by the Office for Budget Responsibility in their paper issued to accompany the Chancellor's Autumn Budget. Not included at this stage is the announcement of an eVED of 3p per mile from April 2028 with work ongoing to quantify this cost.

Savings, efficiencies and additional income

- k) The financial strategy agreed as part of the May 2025 Cabinet MTFP Update report requested Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Budget Holders, working with their Portfolio Holders, to develop savings proposals in support of the financial planning process. Figure 3 includes further progress from this workstream with ongoing consideration of the necessary further proposals via the Bi-weekly Cabinet/Corporate Management Board meetings.
 - l) These savings also now reflect the transformation/invest to save proposal being considered by Cabinet in late November and being presented to December Council around home to school transport.
18. Clearly there is still work to be done to ensure that the council can continue its strategy of maintaining the financial health of the authority through a balanced 2026/27 budget and MTFP. In support of this process, it is being recommended that a restricted voluntary redundancy process is established to specifically enable the delivery of service-based restructure proposals. Value for money criteria referenced in the 2025/26 financial strategy will continue to be used to assess any such proposals. In essence this approach is not to make any individual redundant unless the payback in savings from their post is less than 2-years and for individuals to work their notice periods and take any outstanding leave entitlements.
19. Work will now focus on further refining the MTFP as presented and as the current financial planning assumptions are tested further. Any changes will be reviewed alongside the potential for bringing forward additional proposals for balancing the 2026/27 budget.

Financial Benchmarking - Debt

20. The 29 October 2025 Cabinet MTFP Update report included benchmarking information in respect of unearmarked reserves, council tax, and the council taxbase. At that time the data set for debt had not been released. Appendix A1 and A2 attached now provides an analysis of the council's debt levels in comparison with other unitary authorities on both an absolute (A1) and a net revenue expenditure (NRE) basis (A2). The NRE basis is a common approach to factor in the different size of each of the unitary authorities. This benchmarking demonstrates that based on the Consolidated Financing Requirement (CFR) as at the 31 March 2025, which is the measure of a council's indebtedness, BCP Council on both an absolute and NRE expenditure basis is below the median for unitary councils. Our debt is 88% of our

NRE whereas the median position is 111% of NRE. However, it should be emphasised that:

- a) this position excludes any debt associated with the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs accumulated deficit which, in line with a Statutory Instrument, local authorities are required to ignore.
- b) over 25% of BCP Council's debt relates to its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which some other unitary councils may not have on the basis that they may have previously transferred the stock of council homes to a Housing Association.

21. It may also be worth emphasising that that the data set used in this benchmarking excludes Thurrock, Slough and Cumberland Councils.

Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS)

22. No changes are proposed to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2026/27 which will mean a consistent policy has been applied by the Council from 1 April 2019 onwards.

23. Ongoing consideration will be given to changing the existing LCTSS to a 'banded scheme' reflecting evolving best practice to reduce the burden of administration for both claimants and the council. Any changes proposed would not be designed to reduce expenditure on LCTSS but to deliver operational and administration efficiencies and better meet the needs of residents.

24. As of 1 November 2025, BCP Council was providing LCTS to 21,598 claimants: a reduction of 4.3% over the previous 12-month period.

Options Appraisal: Budget Related

25. Ultimately the budget process results in a consideration of alternative savings, efficiency, income generation and service rationalisation proposals. This may include consideration of alternative council tax strategies.

Options Appraisal: Local Council Tax Support Related

26. Numerous alternative LCTSS are possible however the viability of any proposal that would increase the cost met locally would need careful consideration, especially in the current financially challenging environment. Public consultation is required to consider any change with engagement not just limited to claimants but also council taxpayers who cover the cost of the scheme.

Summary of financial implications

27. Any financial implications of the report's recommendations are considered, alongside alternative options, elsewhere within this report.

Summary of legal implications

28. The council has a fiduciary duty to its taxpayers to be prudent in the administration of the funds on their behalf and an equal duty to consider the interests of the community which benefit from the services it provides.

29. It is the responsibility of councillors to ensure the council sets a balanced budget for the forthcoming year. In setting such a budget, councillors and officers of the council have a legal requirement to ensure it is balanced in a manner which reflects the needs of both current and future taxpayers in discharging these responsibilities. In

essence, this is a direct reference to ensure that Council sets a financially sustainable budget which is mindful of the long-term consequences of any short-term decisions.

30. As a billing authority, failure to set a legal budget by 11 March each year may lead to intervention from the Secretary of State under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999. It should however be noted that the deadline is, in reality, 1 March each year to allow sufficient time for the council tax direct debit process to be adhered to.

Summary of human resources implications

31. There are no direct human resources implications associated with this report. However, the 2026/27 budget is likely to have a direct impact on the level of services delivered by the council, the mechanism by which those services are delivered and the associated staffing establishment.

Summary of sustainability impact

32. The 2025/26 approved budget protected the staffing resources associated with climate change and ecological emergency activity. In addition, as at the 31 March 2025, £0.962m was available in an earmarked reserve to support project activity.

Summary of public health implications

33. The Department of Health and Social Care public health grant allocation for 2025/26 is £23.379m for BCP Council which is an increase of 5.87% from the 2024/25 allocation. It has been agreed that £10.988m will contribute towards shared contracted services with Dorset Council as part of the phased transition away from a shared public health service.

34. In addition to the basic allocation, we have also received the following additional allocations.

- £3.023m drug & alcohol treatment and recovery improvement grant (DATRIG)
- £429.9k for the local stop smoking and support grant (LSSSASG)

Summary of equality implications

35. Officers are expected to deliver the services they are responsible for with due regard to the equality's implications. A full equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the final February 2026 report to members as part of the annual budget process.

Summary of risk assessment

36. The risks inherent in the financial position of the council include the following issues set out in detail as part of the 11 February 2025 report to Council in relating to the 2025/26 budget and medium-term financial plan.

- Accumulating DSG Deficit
- Cashflow Crisis
- New Pay and Grading Structure
- Council Tax – Taxbase
- Financial Outturn 2024/25

- Legal Claims
- Uncertainty
- Pay Award
- Local Government Funding Reforms.
- Extended Producer Responsibility
- Loss or disruption to IT systems and Networks from a cyber-attack
- Council Owned Companies and Joint Ventures
- Intervention.
- Children's Services
- Wellbeing Services
- Housing: Temporary Accommodation including Bed and Breakfast
- Delivering savings, efficiencies, and additional income generation
- Realisation of capital receipts to fund the council's transformation programme
- Carters Quay.

37. These risks will continue to be monitored and, where possible, any appropriate mitigation strategies considered. At the time of writing this report, particular developing financial risks which will continue to be closely monitored with any mitigations being explored include.

- There is significant risk associated with the current assumptions around the resources the council will receive as a consequence of the Fair Funding Formula. The outcome will not be known before the provisional 2026/27 local government finance settlement is announced in late December. Until such time it should be highlighted that the outcome of various national models vary significantly and therefore the outcome could be a large last-minute change. Pixel Financial Management, on whose modelling our current estimates are based, highlight that their modelling is very sensitive to the amount in the quantum, the distribution of any growth, and the interaction with the damping floors.
- Ongoing concern about the existential challenge to the council's financial sustainability caused by the historic and accumulating DSG deficit. The government have signalled the end of the DSG Statutory Override from 1 April 2028 onwards, but it is this mechanism that currently allows us to ignore the fact that the accumulated deficit is greater than our general fund reserves (both unearmarked and earmarked).
- Uncertainty caused by global macroeconomic factors.
- 2025/26 in-year financial performance with a £4.2m forecast overspend predicted for the year based on the Quarter Two report to Cabinet on 1 October 2025.
- The current funding gap for 2026/27 net of the current progress in developing the necessary savings strategies required to deliver a legally balanced budget.

- Government's agenda for the NHS and particularly Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and their consequential impact on council operations and funding arrangements.

Background papers

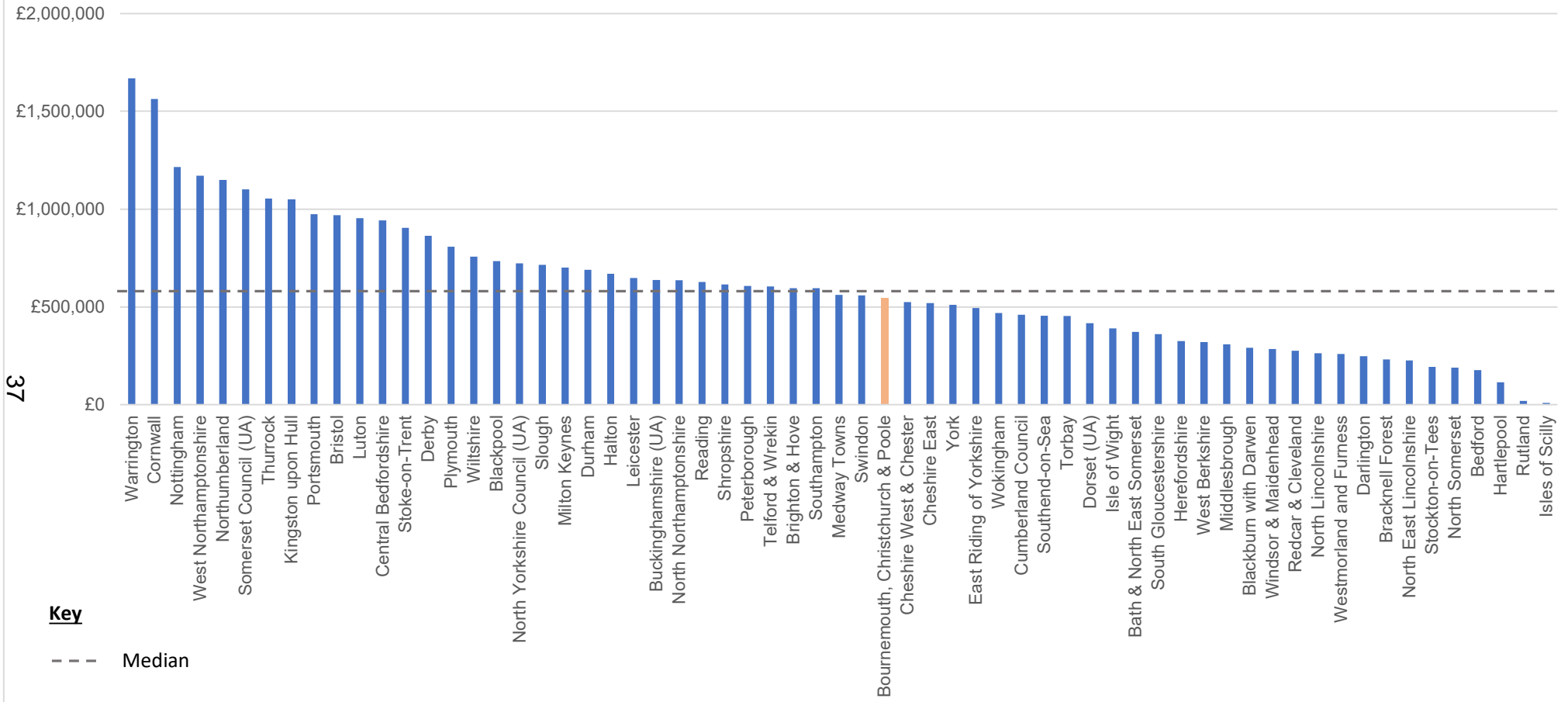
38. December 2024: Assessing the serious cashflow issue caused by ever-increasing demand and cost outstripping High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant government funding.
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=5906&Ver=4>
39. February 2025: Budget 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan report.
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=284&MId=6294&Ver=4>
40. May 2025: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update report.
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6062&Ver=4>
41. July 2025: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update report
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6064&Ver=4>
42. October 2025: Quarter One Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6066&Ver=4>
43. October 2025: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update report
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6067&Ver=4>
44. November 2025: Quarter Two Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26
<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=285&MId=6068&Ver=4>

Appendices

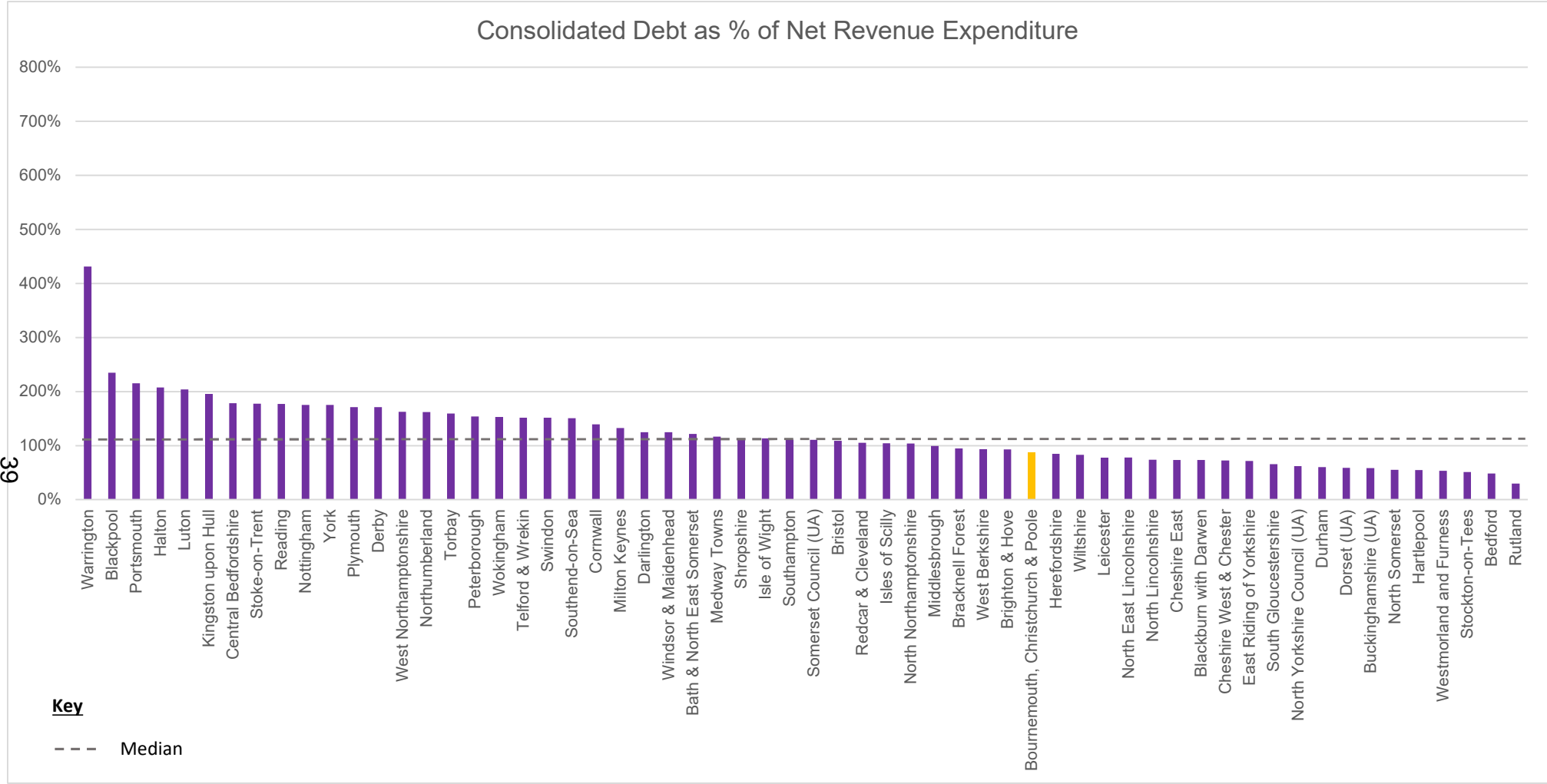
Appendix A: Debt Benchmarking

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Consolidated Debt at 31 March 2025 for all Unitaries



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CABINET



Report subject	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Expenditure Forecast 2025/26
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report responds to the agreed action in the quarter two budget monitoring report for 2025/26 for the Corporate Director for Children's Services to bring forward to December Cabinet a detailed report on the DSG high needs expenditure forecast and available mitigation measures. This report also seeks Council approval for additional resources required over the approved budget.</p> <p>The quarter two budget monitoring for the DSG reported to the council's Cabinet on 26 November was a projected increase in the high needs funding gap for 2025/26 from the budgeted gap of £57.5m to £71.8m. This reflects higher than expected growth in demand in the later months of the last financial year with this unabated and with a significant increase in the costs of pupil placements.</p> <p>The cumulative deficit at 31 March 2026 is projected to be £183.1m.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that CABINET recommend to COUNCIL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approval of a £14.3m increase in the 2025/26 high needs budget. This brings the forecast expenditure to £71.8m more than the grant made available by government as part of the DSG. b) Request the Corporate Director of Children's Services implement the deficit management measures outlined in this report.
Reason for recommendations	The council's financial regulations require that all budget overspends are approved by the Council.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton – Children and young People
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley – Director of Children's Services

Report Authors	Lisa Linscott, Director of Education
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	Decision

Background

1. DSG high needs funding shortfalls have been well documented over recent years, with the latest report from the National Audit Office (NAO) in 2024 showing that while there has been a 58% real terms increase in DfE high needs funding between 2014/15 and 2024/25 to £10.7 billion, 43% of local authorities will have deficits exceeding or close to their reserves by March 2026. Overall, this contributes to a national cumulative deficit of between £4.3 billion and £4.9 billion.
2. Whilst funding has increased, this has not kept pace with the rise in the number of EHCPs, resulting in funding per plan decreasing by 35% over the same period. The system is both unsustainable financially, and crucially, not delivering outcomes for children despite record spend.
3. State special schools are over capacity. This may mean children are not in the most appropriate setting, including more expensive independent schools where the number of children with EHCPs increased by 17,000 between 2018/19 and 2023/24. This costs local authorities £2.0 billion in 2022/23, a real-terms increase of 46% from 2018/19. The NAO report concludes that if left unreformed, the SEND system is economically unsustainable. Looking ahead, for 2027/28 there is an estimated mismatch of between £2.9 billion and £3.9 billion when comparing current funding, maintained in real terms, against forecast costs.
4. SEND tribunal and appeals data underlines how challenging the SEND system has become. Since April 2018, in addition to judgements relating to education provision, the SEND Tribunal has also been able to make non-binding recommendations on the health and social care elements of EHCPs. Statistics from the Ministry of Justice show that in 2023/24, 17,000 outcomes in relation to SEN appeals were recorded, a 43% increase compared with the previous year, 2022/23. Data from 2014/15 shows 3,300 recorded outcomes for SEN appeals meaning that since the 2014 reforms, appeals have increased exponentially by four times (415%). Furthermore, 11,000 SEN appeals were decided by tribunal in 2023/24. This compares with only 792 in 2014/15. In 2023/24, nationally the local authority success rate was 1.3% of cases that went to a full hearing, meaning they won only 150 out of 11,157 cases. The increase in appeals is likely due to several factors, including the growth in families seeking assessments, the continued effect of the 2014 SEND reforms, and the expansion of the tribunal's powers to make recommendations on health and social care.
5. DfE statistics show that the number of EHCPs has increased to unsustainable levels over the past decade, increasing from 240,183 in 2014/15 to 638,745 by January 2025. This is an increase of 166% across this time period, and in the last year alone, January 2024/2025, there has been an increase of 10.8%. In 2024, 105,340 EHC needs assessments were carried out; this is 15.7% more than in 2023. 46.4% of

plans were issued within the 20-week statutory timescales. Timeliness has decreased over time as demand has increased. In the 2024/25 academic year there were 482,640 pupils in schools in England with an EHCP. This is an increase of 11.1% from 2023/24. 5.3% of all pupils in England now have an EHCP, an increase of 4.8% from the previous year.

6. The workforce challenges are widespread, with shortages among services such as speech and language therapists, health visitors and Educational Psychologists (EPs). In 2023, the DfE report into educational psychology services found that 88% of local authorities' Principal EPs reported that they were currently experiencing difficulties recruiting. Early support is essential for helping children thrive and a key moment to build relationships with parents. The statutory requirement for EP advice for all EHCPs means that this valuable resource is deployed for assessment rather than intervention purposes. EPs themselves have called for their role to do more early intervention and systemic work as part of a graduated response to prevent children and young people's needs from escalating, and therefore potentially reducing the demand for EHCPs.
7. School capacity data from 2023/24 shows that around 8,000 more secondary pupils are on roll in special schools than the reported capacity. Around two thirds of special schools report they are at or over capacity. It is important to acknowledge that current measurements of capacity do not take type of need into account, meaning the real term levels of capacity may be even more stretched. Since 2014/15 there has been an increase of 60% in placements in state-funded special schools, while placements in independent and non-maintained special schools (INMSSs) have risen 132%. Based on the current system, local authorities forecast that the total anticipated number of pupils in years Reception to 11 with an EHCP that will need a place in specialist provision to be an estimated at 273,000 by 2028/29.
8. The Isos Partnership research has previously looked at factors that were contributing to higher demand and cost. Those typically reported to them by local authorities included:
 - a. Extension of local authority responsibilities to include the 16-25 age range without financial support
 - b. Increased demand for special school places, with pressures on local capacity leading to increased use of placements in the independent/non-maintained sector
 - c. Reduced inclusivity of (some) mainstream schools
 - d. Higher rates of school exclusion and use of alternative provision
 - e. Greater complexity of need, with particular growth in numbers of children with an autism diagnosis and those with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)
9. While the Isos Partnership research identified some influence of increasing levels of need and demographic changes, a number of the above factors were reported to be linked to the impact of national policy, particularly expectations generated by the national SEND reforms 2014 (without funding to match statutory requirements) and increased attainment pressures on mainstream schools (which were making it more difficult for them to prioritise effective provision for SEND and inclusion).

10. The Schools White Paper due in autumn 2025 was to set out reforms to start tackling the system widely regarded as broken. It has been delayed to early 2026 and will likely be too late to inform the 2026/27 DSG high needs budget for councils. The Local Government Association (LGA) meanwhile has provided assurance that this change in timing does not change the commitment to supporting local authorities with the significant pressures from funding DSG deficits. It is understood that the LGA is working closely with HM Treasury and the Department for Education to finalise the details with more information to be provided through the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in late December.

BCP High Needs Budget and Forecast 2025/26

11. The budget projection for 2025/26 at quarter two is for a funding gap of £71.8 compared with the budget of £57.5 due to expenditure on high needs budgets as set out in the table below:

Table 1: High Needs Block Budget 2025/26

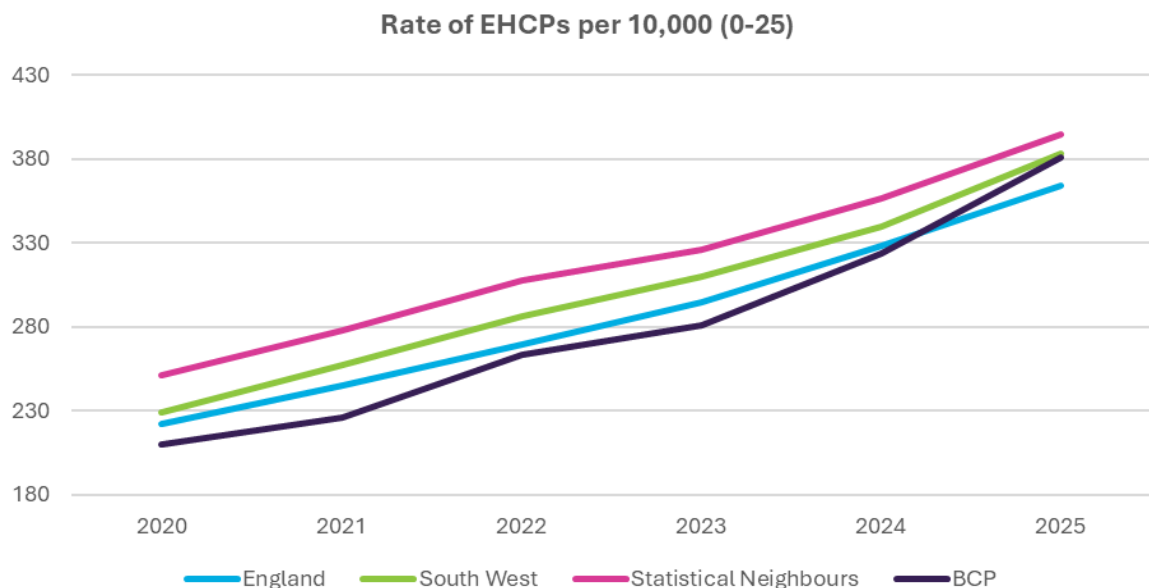
Expenditure Area	2024/25 Actual £000's	2025/26			Annual Increase £000's
		Budget £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's	
Independent & NMSS	30,248	31,237	38,742	7,505	28%
Post 16 only providers	8,063	11,982	9,194	(2,788)	14%
Special Schools	19,020	18,306	21,720	3,414	14%
Mainstream & Units	15,570	15,522	19,518	3,996	25%
Other EHCP provision	11,624	14,612	17,016	2,404	46%
EHCPs top up	84,525	91,659	106,190	14,531	26%
Centrally commissioned (including place funding)	19,511	23,226	22,577	(649)	16%
TOTAL SEND EXPENDITURE	104,036	114,885	128,767	13,882	24%
TOTAL ALTERNATIVE PROVISION	7,870	8,326	8,190	(136)	4%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	111,906	123,211	136,957	13,746	22%
DSG FUNDING	(62,232)	(65,709)	(65,175)	534	5
FUNDING GAP	49,674	57,502	71,782	14,280	45%

12. Demand in the system from pupils with high needs has continued to rise over the second quarter of 2025/26 with the high needs funding gap increase now projected at £14.3m over that budgeted (£13.75m additional expenditure and £0.53m reduced funding).
13. There are many assumptions in the year end projection with a significant data lag in the system for new cases and changes in provision. An allowance for future cases has been allocated across provider types according to recent trends so individual EHCP categories may be less reliable than the overall total.

BCP EHCP numbers:

14. The scale of increase in EHCP numbers in recent years has been unprecedented making this difficult to forecast. This growth for BCP is typically higher than for other councils with the prevalence in BCP moving from below the national average to above.
15. Rate of EHCPs per 10,000 population (0-25): The council's [SEN2] data provides information on the numbers of children and young people with an EHCP as of January each year.
16. The data shown below in figure 1 shows that BCP's rate of EHCPs is now above the England average rate whilst remaining below the southwest and almost equal to statistical neighbours. The steeper gradient from January 2024 to 2025 will reflect the extra capacity created by the council to clear the backlog of cases that had grown over the previous year and with this backlog substantially cleared by December 2024.

Figure 1



17. In the absence of concrete information about how the national SEND system is to change, a reasonable assumption would be that the current trajectory for growth will continue. The 15-year deficit recovery plan developed two years ago had assumed demand for new ECHPs had started to peak and would gradually reduce each year from the actions included in the SEND improvement plan. The planned trajectory has not been realised and the scale of expenditure growth in 2025/26 indicates that new demand is still rising.
18. The report to the council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November provides actions currently underway or planned but the financial impact has not yet been established. The committee report is comprehensive, with two examples expected to have high system improvement and financial impact included below.
19. Funding has been secured from the DfE SEND Intervention Support Fund to drive improvement and transformation within Education Services leading to development in three key areas which should have some impact on the budget:

- a. The BCP graduated approach and ordinarily available provision toolkit to provide timely, high-quality support and services to children and young people through early intervention.
 - b. A sustainable three tier alternative provision model based on best practice with improved monitoring and oversight.
 - c. Inclusive whole school practice with the support of an established educational charity (The Difference).
20. As part of the SEND sufficiency strategy, 140 additional specialist places were delivered during the academic year 2024/25 and the plan for delivering beyond this is mapped out in a separated report to the November Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The proportion of children in independent and non-maintained specials schools has been reducing, but it is still above the national average, and the growth in EHCPs means that the number of children placed in these schools is still rising.

Alternative Provision Budget and Permanent Exclusions

21. Alternative provision is less than 10% of the overall high needs budget but has still grown by around a third since 2023/24. Some of this growth has been due to the increase in children with mental health issues or those entering or returning to education after a period of elective home education. The larger part of the budget is spent on pupils permanently excluded from schools, being re-integrated after an exclusion or at risk of exclusion.
22. Details of the rate of permanent exclusions is provided in the table below.

Table 2 shows the permanent exclusion rate in BCP compared with regional and national benchmarks (per 10,000 children)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 (Provisional)
BCP	0.12	0.09	0.14	0.23	0.17	0.20
SW	0.07	0.05	0.09	0.13	0.15	n/a
Stat Neighbour	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.10	0.12	n/a
England	0.06	0.05	0.08	0.11	0.13	n/a

The above table shows:

- BCP's permanent exclusion rate has fluctuated over the six-year period, starting at 0.12 in 2019/20 (12 permanent exclusions per 10,000 children), dipping to 0.09 in 2020/21, then rising sharply to 0.23 in 2022/23.
- Although the rate dropped to 0.17 in 2023/24, the provisional figure for 2024/25 is 0.20. BCP's exclusion rate has consistently exceeded the Southwest regional average, statistical neighbours, and national figures in every year. For example, in 2022/23, BCP's rate of 0.23 was significantly higher than the national 0.11, the South West's 0.13, and statistical neighbours' 0.10.

23. Details of the number of Permanent Exclusions is included in the table below:

Table 3: Number of Permanent Exclusions by academic year

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 (Provisional)
BCP	60	48	76	105	91	105

The number of exclusions increased from 60 in 2019/20 to a provisional 105 for 2024/25.

24. The report to the council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November provides further data and analysis with the following conclusions:
- a. The data reveals a persistent and disproportionate pattern of permanent exclusions among pupils with special educational needs in BCP, indicating ongoing systemic challenges in supporting this group.
 - b. Exclusion rates for pupils with an EHCP in BCP have also risen sharply and this is significantly higher than the national EHCP rate and suggests that even those with the highest level of statutory support are at increasing risk of exclusion locally. In contrast, pupils without SEND in BCP have consistently lower exclusion rates, aligning more closely with national averages.
 - c. The data suggests that current systems may not be adequately meeting the needs of SEND pupils, and that exclusion is being used as a response to unmet need rather than as a last resort. Strategic investment in SEND support, staff training, and behaviour pathways will be essential to reversing this trajectory

DSG Management Plan

26. The DfE published DSG management guidance in June 2022: [High needs budgets: effective management in local authorities](#) This document summarises some of the best practices identified adopted by top-performing councils in England to manage high-needs deficits. These practices are drawn from research and sector guidance. However, the report states that 'Judging their impacts on the management of high needs funding is a complex task which really requires a more longitudinal evaluation. However, it indicated that it is possible to provide some quantitative evidence of changes which may help identify practices that have had a particular impact.'. It is of note that of the ten 'good practice' local authorities in the report, all ten are reporting a deficit in 2025/26.
27. The above report cited the following recommendations based on the findings of the case studies, with a brief statement on BCP Council's position in relation to each recommendation:
- a. **'Local authorities should invest properly in SEND leadership, with dedicated time for strategic functions to avoid constant distractions from operational pressures'**: this is built into the SEND Improvement governance in BCP Council. Key leadership roles within Education and Skills have been recruited to and SEND is of a high strategic priority.
 - b. **'Authorities should review their joint commissioning arrangements to support more balanced contributions to high needs provision from the three key services (Education, Health and Social Care)'**: there have been some challenges with this, that are being addressed through more robust financial decision-making protocols and commissioning processes. Collaboration with partners informs joint commissioning plans through joint planning and data sharing.

- c. **‘Officers with SEND and Finance responsibilities should have joint accountability for effective management of this area, with high priority given to effective communication and mutual support, building on the positive practices identified in this report.’**: Joint accountability is in place and communication is improving but keeping the data up to date for committed expenditure on pupil placements and other costs remains challenging for commissioners, with the impact on being able to set robust budgets, forecasts and undertake medium term financial planning. There is already a programme of work in place to address this.
- d. **‘Local authorities should review their capacity for SEND support (and its funding base) to help strengthen their influence on the range of relevant outcomes. They should develop clearer agreements with services which set out commissioning expectations and monitoring arrangements.’**: Outreach provided by special schools has been a SEND support service funded by the high needs block over many years. Re-integration officers have also been introduced, and we should be seeing reduced reliance on alternative provision, but this is instead still growing. Early Years support includes area SENCos, a pupil assessment and outreach service (Dingley’s Promise) has recently been introduced, and a portage service has been funded for many years. Support services that schools could purchase had been declining over the years prior to LGR as schools reported that they were too expensive, with these services not reinstated for BCP. There has been a lack of robustness to the monitoring of the services that are commissioned so this has been addressed and going forward more robust monitoring will be in place. The service is currently learning from other LAs in relation to what kind of early support services they are funding from the High Needs Block.
- e. **‘Local authorities should review their current staffing levels and structures for SEND casework and enhance these where necessary, as part of their broader strategy for improving management of high needs expenditure and quality of service delivery.’**: A redesign of the SEND Service was completed in 2024, informed by good practice, parents and carers, and financial resource available. The phased pod structure is now embedded and receives positive feedback in terms of the approach. However, the high levels of request for statutory support mean that the teams struggle to meet statutory requirements. This is in line with the picture nationally.
- f. **‘Local authorities should review and further develop their approaches to partnership with key stakeholders, taking into account some of the positive practices described in this report (in addition to any broader policy emphasis on this area).’**: the work of the local area partnership has significantly improved. The partners have created and embedded a culture of shared values: Trust, Empathy, Belonging, Communication, and Respect. The strengthened partnership working is demonstrated by shared accountability, clear roles and responsibilities and significant progress in SEND Improvement Board meetings.
- g. **‘When creating new specialist provision, local authorities should be clear about the expected range and levels of need that this will cater for. They should also consider the potential impact on future demand and whether this can be financially sustained. The case for any proposed development**

should include detailed projections on the balance between investment and savings.': detailed modelling has taken place in relation to SEND sufficiency. Special school satellites and resourced provision in mainstream schools have recently been introduced but the effectiveness of these provisions now requires review.

- h. **'With regard to developments in local mainstream provision, investment should be targeted at strengthening inclusion, with impact monitored and evaluated at that level.'** This is a clear priority across the current development work, evidenced in the SEND and AP Improvement Plan. All BCP schools' data share, enabling a system leadership approach to addressing the challenges and strengths what the data reveals. Termly Head Teacher Forums enable meaningful discussion and prioritisation of actions in relation to inclusion. The Belonging Strategy is in the course of being delivered.
- i. **'Local authorities should set out more clearly their expected pathways for young people with different levels of need, ensure that these are presented earlier and more clearly to young people and their parents, and evaluate quality and outcomes on a more regular basis. Pathways should be realistic but ambitious.'** some of the pathways have been strengthened as part of the delivery of the previous SEND Improvement Plan. The Balanced System and Early Years support for speech and language is a good example of this. However, some pathways are at different stages of development. There is a strong mental health transformation plan in place for example, but this work is only just starting.
- j. **'Local authorities should learn from positive examples of innovative approaches to mainstream funding (including the option of greater devolution of resources to individual schools/groups of schools with clear expectations of outcomes).'** this has not been in place to date. However, a shared targeted funding model is being developed for consideration.

SEND and Alternative Provision Plan

- 25. The revised SEND and Alternative Provision Plan was approved by the SEND Improvement Board in September 2025. It was revised with partners including Parent Carer Forums, BCP Council, NHS Dorset Integrated Care Board (ICB), education settings and health providers. Actions remain under the eight headings identified under the previous plan:
 - a. SEND Leadership, Management and Governance
 - b. Communication and Co-production
 - c. Early Identification and Intervention
 - d. Inclusion
 - e. Pathway
 - f. Sufficiency
 - g. Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)
 - h. Managing Resources
- 26. Funding has been secured to support demand management measures to impact the trajectory of high needs funding and help stabilise the system. This includes new investment to support schools in creating inclusive environments that meet the needs of all children and young people. Investment is made up of the:

- a. SEND Intervention Fund noted above of just under £600,000
 - b. SEND Inclusion Fund of £1.2m from the transfer of surplus school block funding to the high need block. The funding is earmarked to support outreach support, training and the recruitment of Inclusion Leads.
- 27. Further details of investment are detailed below as part of key actions included in the updated SEND and Inclusion Improvement Plan which includes:
- 28. **Belonging and Inclusion:** During the summer, the council hosted a well-attended Belonging Conference, bringing together school leaders, practitioners, and national experts to share best practice and strengthen our collective response. We are now working with The Difference—a charity focused on inclusive leadership—and the Ted Wragg Trust to embed inclusive practice and build capacity across our schools.
- 29. **Three-Tier Alternative Provision (AP) Model:** With a total investment of £143,000 from the SEND Intervention Fund, the Council is working with the Difference and in partnership with local schools, to develop a model of alternative provision aligned with plans set out in the government's national SEND and AP Plan. A multi-agency working group is in the process of developing a BCP three-tier AP model, which aligns with plans set out in the government's national SEND and AP Plan. The three-tiers will comprise of: Targeted early support within mainstream school, time-limited intensive placements in an alternative provision settings and longer-term placements to support return to mainstream or a sustainable post-16 destination. The model is designed to offer flexible, graduated support for children at risk of exclusion. This model includes:
 - i. Tier 1: School-led internal provision
 - ii. Tier 2: Commissioned outreach and short-term placements
 - iii. Tier 3: Full-time specialist placements
- 30. **Inclusion Practice in Schools:** We have funded and filled 50 places for our school leaders on 'The Difference's' Inclusion Leadership Course. This professional development initiative is designed to help school leaders improve whole-school inclusion, reduce lost learning and enhance outcomes for children and young people with vulnerabilities.
- 31. **Co-production of best practice guidance in relation to Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA):** The council is developing best practice guidance to support schools in responding to Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA). The guidance sets out clear strategies for identifying and addressing emotional barriers to attendance, with a focus on early support, inclusive practice, and multi-agency involvement. It aims to help schools create safe, nurturing environments where pupils feel a sense of belonging and are supported to re-engage with learning.
- 32. **Development of 'Way Forward' meetings:** *Way Forward* meetings are planned to provide structured support and planning when an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment Request (EHCNAR) is declined, or a decision is made not to issue an EHCP. These meetings bring together professionals and families to

review the child's needs, explore alternative support options, and agree next steps to ensure continued progress and inclusion within education settings.

33. **Updating our SEND and Alternative Provision Sufficiency Strategy:** An updated strategy is in development which will incorporate a dedicated secondary-phase focus to address the growing demand for secondary specialist pathways and alternative provision. This includes support for the implementation of a three-tiered model of AP—ranging from school-led interventions to specialist placements—ensuring a more flexible and graduated response to need. The strategy is being co-developed with partners and informed by data, lived experience, and national best practice, and will be monitored through the SEND Improvement Board to ensure accountability and impact.
34. **Development of Ordinarily Available Toolkit:** The council is utilising some of the above DfE SEND Intervention Support funding to second a school leader, supported by suitably experienced and qualified professionals, to develop Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) and the graduated approach across the area. The OAP toolkit will help schools distinguish between pupils who can thrive with consistent universal support and those who require additional interventions, and build their skill and capacity to meet need, particularly in relation to out high prevalence needs.
35. **The Graduated Approach:** Linked to the OAP toolkit, the graduated approach provides structured guidance for teachers and school leaders to identify, assess, and record the needs of pupils requiring additional or special educational provision. It supports schools in planning appropriate support based on individual needs, reviewing progress systematically and ensuring that interventions are evidence-based and proportionate. By embedding this approach, schools are better equipped to intervene early and consistently, reducing the likelihood of escalation to exclusion.
36. **Inclusion Lead Pilot:** As part of a pilot, we have recently appointed three Inclusion Advisors to support schools develop inclusive practice. The impact of their work will be monitored and evaluated, and if effective this is a model that could be scaled up.
37. **Outreach offer:** The Council has commissioned outreach services in partnership with our local special schools to provide support for mainstream schools including specialist advice and support to meet the needs of complex children and/or cohorts within their school. There is further scope for outreach services from our Alternative Providers, and this is being explored.
38. **Education Effectiveness Framework:** Working with our local school partners and learning from best practice in other areas, the council is developing a robust Education Effectiveness Framework aimed at driving continuous improvement across all educational settings. The framework will bring together key strands including inclusive practice, targeted support for schools, and a commitment to equity in outcomes for all learners. By working collaboratively with school and MAT leaders, as well as other partners, the framework will provide clear guidance on responsibilities and ensure every child, regardless of background or need, has access to high-quality teaching and learning.

39. **Transition:** BCP Council has established a cross-phase transition working group to improve the experience of children and young people as they move between different stages of education. The group focuses on strengthening continuity of support, sharing key information between settings, and promoting a sense of belonging during transitions—particularly for vulnerable learners who may face additional challenges.
40. **Admissions Re-design:** Work to progress the project to re-design SEND Admission arrangements will start in November 2025. This is a major piece of work that will significantly improve our placement decision making which is a necessary foundation for commissioning sufficiency of specialist places. The purpose of the redesign is to create a fair, transparent and complaint admissions system for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, ensuring appropriate placement decisions are made through improved processes and robust governance arrangements. The project will be implemented in 4 phases over a 7-month period with implementation in from April 2026 and a period of a further 7 months thereafter for continuous review and refinement.
41. **Updated In Year Fair Access Protocol:** An updated In-Year Fair Access Protocol is in development to ensure that children requiring school placements outside the standard admissions cycle are supported through a fair, transparent, and timely process. Developed in partnership with a task and finish group of headteachers, the protocol includes a decision-making matrix that enables consistent, objective evaluations of each case. At the heart of this approach is a commitment to child-focused discussion and decision making ensuring that every placement considers the individual needs, circumstances, and best interests of the child. This collaborative framework strengthens inclusion and equity, balancing the needs of pupils and schools while promoting positive outcomes for all learners. After extensive consultation, the new protocol is expected to go live during November 2025.
42. **Transitions:** Establishment of a cross-phase transition working group to improve the experience of transitions between phases of education for our children and young people. The working group will identify best practice locally, regionally and nationally to improve outcomes.
43. **Multi-agency Belonging Forums:** Implement best practice from other local authorities who have established multi-agency forums as a way for schools to both support each other to meet the needs of children and young people with vulnerabilities and gain support from partner agencies.
44. **Pre EHCP funding:** BCP Council is currently developing its thinking around a pre-EHCP funding model to strengthen early intervention and reduce escalation to statutory Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The aim is to provide timely, targeted support for children with emerging or lower level SEND needs within mainstream settings, without requiring a full EHCP assessment. The model would offer schools access to additional resources such as specialist input, equipment, or short-term interventions based on clear criteria and evidence of need. Co-produced with schools and parent/carers representatives, the model would be designed to promote inclusion, reduce delays in support, and ensure that children's needs are met earlier and more effectively. The next step is to

engage our partners to develop the idea and review best practice in other local authority areas.

45. **Revised High Needs Deficit Recovery Plan** is in the early stages of drafting with the following priority areas, all of which tie in closely to the SEND and AP Improvement Plan with the governance arrangements to be in place by January 2026.

- a. Build skill and capacity to meet need in mainstream
- b. Provide support at an earlier stage
- c. Develop support while waiting
- d. Strengthen support at transition points
- e. Deliver SEND sufficiency of places and proactive commissioning
- f. Provide timely and high-quality statutory support
- g. Provide strong financial oversight and governance

New governance arrangements are in development, which include creation of a suitably high level of Board that fills the gap left by the disbanding of the Safety Valve Board. Clear governance is aimed to increase trust among DfE, schools, and local partners and reduce the high needs block deficit over time, improving the council's financial position.

Options Considered

46. Options to reduce discretionary spend were considered but discounted as these are supporting early intervention in schools and early years settings or individual children. Reductions in these services could result in higher future costs and start to disrupt the service improvements being made. Reductions could not be made at any scale and the majority of spend is underpinned by staffing or third-party contracts.

Summary of financial implications

47. The November Cabinet budget monitoring report for quarter two provided the following year end projection of an overspend of £13.7m on high needs expenditure with an accumulated deficit of £183.1m.

Table 4: Summary position for dedicated schools grant

Dedicated Schools Grant	£m
Accumulated deficit 1 April 2025	113.3
Prior year additional funding – early years	(1.9)
Budgeted high needs funding shortfall 2025/26	57.5
High needs funding reduction 2025/26	0.5
High needs overspend 2025/26 - TBC	13.7
Projected accumulated deficit 31 March 2026	183.1

48. The statutory override to prevent the deficit being considered against the council's reserves position has been extended to March 2028. The 26 November 2025 Budget Statement included that government are proposing to take over the responsibility for day-to-day funding of SEND from that date onwards.

49. The current accumulated deficit and any further increase between now and the 31 March 2028 will be retained by BCP Council with any support for these elements announced as part of the December 2025 provisional local government finance settlement for 2026-27.
50. The development of a deficit management plan to limit further expenditure growth is therefore still relevant and will be dependent on the government's aspirations and timing of system change outlined in the awaited Schools White Paper expected early next year.

Summary of legal implications

51. Relevant legislation includes the assessment and (if applicable) relevant plan implementation process in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and related Code of Practice (the Statutory Obligations).
52. A failure to meet the statutory obligations could result in relevant claims being made, the consequences of which could result in legal proceedings and damage to the council's reputation.

Summary of human resources implications

53. None

Summary of sustainability impact

54. None

Summary of public health implications

55. None

Summary of equality implications

56. There are no recommendations in this report that have any equality implications

Summary of risk assessment

57. There is an ongoing risk from the DSG accumulated deficit on the financial stability of the council.

Background papers

Schools Forum November 2025 meeting

Children's Overview and Scrutiny November 2025 meeting

Appendices

None

CABINET



Report subject	Corporate Performance Report - Q2
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	[Public / Exempt] Report
Executive summary	<p>BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024.</p> <p>The shared vision is the corporate strategy which sets out the council's vision, priorities and ambitions as well as the principles which underpin the way the council works as it develops and delivers its services.</p> <p>Incorporated in the vision is a set of measures of progress for achieving the vision, priorities and ambitions.</p> <p>This is the performance monitoring report for Quarter Two 25-26, presenting an update on the progress measures.</p> <p>The council's delivery against its priorities and ambitions can also be monitored through the performance dashboard which is available on the council's website providing up-to-date real time information on the progress measures.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) Consider the Quarter Two performance</p> <p>(b) Note that work continues to expand the data available on the interactive performance dashboard</p> <p>(c) Note the positive activities highlighted in the report</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Our shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole sets out the priorities and ambitions against which the council's performance will be judged, and as such is a vital component of the council's performance management framework.</p> <p>An understanding of performance against targets, goals and objectives helps the council to assess and manage service delivery and identify emerging business risks</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Millie Earl, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Service Director	Isla Reynolds, Director of Marketing, Communications and Policy
Report Authors	Chris Shephard, Head of Policy. Strategy and Partnerships Liz Orme, Policy & Strategy Officer Pippa Quinton, Policy Apprentice Performance leads across the council
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. BCP Council adopted 'A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole 2024-28' in May 2024 which was developed following a process of stakeholder engagement from June to October 2023.
2. The vision includes a comprehensive set of progress measures that track performance against the ambitions and focus areas of activity.
3. Since the vision was adopted, work has been carried out to establish and evolve baseline data, targets and intervention levels for the progress measures.
4. A performance dashboard has been created which we have been using successfully to support the monitoring of our progress towards the council's vision, using technology to enhance transparency and support data-driven decisions. This dashboard is updated by performance officers across the council, providing real-time information as it's available and is accessible on the council's website. The dashboard continues to be updated and evolved.
5. The Corporate Strategy Delivery Board meeting allows officers to meet monthly to monitor delivery of the council's vision at a strategic level. This also allows the board to conduct delivery deep dives and risk reviews, allowing for areas of concern to be addressed in a timely manner and best practice can be celebrated and shared. The board also allows the Council to prioritise key areas of activity.

An interactive performance dashboard to monitor performance

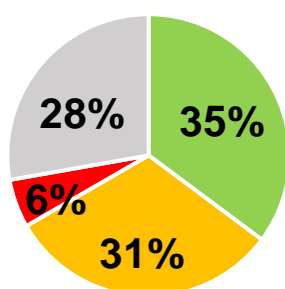
6. A live and interactive [performance dashboard](#) is available alongside quarterly reports, providing a real-time tracking tool that effectively addresses Cabinet's previous concerns regarding the timeliness of the reports. This is because quarterly performance reports are static snapshots of performance, often two to three months out of date by the time they reach Cabinet.
7. The performance dashboard supports the council's approach towards data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement in organisational performance.

8. Furthermore, transparency and accountability is enhanced through the public-facing live performance dashboard, accessible at all times by residents, councillors and officers.
6. The dashboard's purpose is to maintain a strategic perspective of overall council performance, and it is reviewed regularly with directors to ensure the best data is provided. Cabinet also has the flexibility to introduce additional measures if necessary for more detailed performance monitoring.
7. The dashboard is developing in phases, with further plans to enhance data availability, links to other dashboards and data sources and provide various lenses to view the data eventually replacing the need for a paginated performance report.
8. The dashboard was reviewed for accessibility and usability and changes to the design and content are being made as a result.
9. Links have been made to a [sustainability dashboard](#) demonstrating further information on the council's advancements towards achieving our net zero targets.
10. Subsequent phases will include:
 - a. Progress on strategic programmes of work,
 - b. Analysis of the latest data regarding the health of the people and places within the BCP area,
 - c. Sharing an overview of corporate risks.

Summary of Quarter Two Performance

11. Quarter Two data shows some significant changes in performance (Figure 1) explained by most annual and bi-annual measures being moved to pending (grey). The percentage of measures that are on target (green) has moved from 58% in Quarter One to 35% in Quarter Two. The percentage of pending measures has increased from 4% in Quarter One to 28% in Quarter Two. These measures are now showing as pending (grey) because data is not yet available so there is no data to report in this quarter. Where performance is being monitored (amber), the percentage has moved from 36% in Quarter One to 31% in Quarter Two. The percentage of those measures requiring action (red) has moved from 2% in Quarter One to 6% in Quarter Two.

Figure 1: Quarter Two Performance Summary



12. Appendix A has more detail for each measure including the latest performance compared to the target and the baseline, and an updated commentary.

13. The direction of travel for each measure is also provided in Appendix A. This shows whether performance is improving, declining or remains the same level compared to the previous update. For Quarter Two, there are fewer measures showing a positive direction of travel compared to Quarter One with 20 measures showing a positive direction of travel (20 compared to 27), 7 fewer measures showing a negative direction (13 compared to 20), and 2 more measures have stayed the same (6 compared to 4).

14. It is important to note the excellent performance in the following measures:

- The number of available Council and public Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265 in the latest Government figures.
- We are seeing a strong increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) served for fly tipping and littering offences with 1428 issued including 8 PSPO offences, 17 for fly-tipping, 3 for waste duty of care and 1400 for litter. This is up on last quarter (760) and up on target (840).
- Footfall across the 3 town centres is up, 22.54m from 21.74m last quarter and over target (20m).
- We are improving from 95% to 96% the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people and their families. This is consistently high performing (8 consecutive quarters), higher than the national benchmark (85%) and comparator authorities.
- There has been a strong reduction in the number of secondary school aged children excluded from school with 7 permanent exclusions (0.067%), from 35 (0.137%) in the spring term.
- There is a marked reduction in the percentage of children and young people returning to early help within 12 months from 13% to 10%.
- number of current council employees supported to undertake apprenticeships has increased from 123 to 126.
- We have achieved 6 successful grant applications, a 100% success rate. These are:
 - £95,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Debris Screen Health and Safety Works.
 - £6,222,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defences.
 - £1,501,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Museum Estate and Development Fund.
 - £73,000 awarded by Veolia for Queens Park Play Area.
 - £376,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Poole Museum.
 - £93,000 awarded by DEFRA for King Charles III England Coast Path.

15. There are more details in the positive exception reports in Appendix 2. There are some without exception reports. This is due to officers in those areas being fully

immersed in inspections, the implementation of Pay and Reward, or other major projects.

16. There are also those measures that are doing less well and are areas of focus. Some of these for Quarter Two are:

- The percentage of all major planning applications determined on time has fallen from 88% in Quarter One to 69% in Quarter Two.
- The percentage of waste diverted from landfill fell to 86.25%, below Quarter One, target and intervention level.
- The number of homeless households in bed & breakfast has increased from 44 in Quarter One to 65 in Quarter Two.
- The number of people rough sleeping has increased from 49 in Quarter One to 66 in Quarter Two.
- We continue to see a significant downward trend on 'Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks', from 58.54% to 24.60%.

17. There are more details in the exception reports at Appendix 3 including an exception report included relating to the Residents Survey which was requested by Cabinet at the review of Quarter One performance. There are some without exception reports. This is due to officers in those areas being fully immersed in inspections, the implementation of pay and reward and other major projects.

18. It is also interesting to note two new measures relating to the Corporate Strategy ambition of "Our inclusive, vibrant and sustainable economy supports our communities to thrive". These are to "Increase non-financial support given to BCP-based businesses" and to "Increase in the creation of new business enterprises".

These replace the measure "Increase the number of jobs created and/or safeguarded through Government and/or external funding", which helped deliver the Corporate Strategy ambition of "Employment is available for everyone and helps create value in our communities". This change is due to the external funding that was driving this measure, ending. The changes ensure performance relating to job creation through entrepreneurship, and business support, continues to be measured, just under a different ambition. This change has been approved by Corporate Strategy Delivery Board at November's meeting.

19. Performance continues to be monitored by services and by the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board to ensure appropriate mitigations are in place and actions being taken.

Summary of financial implications

20. There are no financial implications as this is a performance monitoring report for the corporate strategy. The corporate strategy is an important document to identify and establish project priorities for council budget-setting and contains programmes of work aimed at improving strategic finance, under the Our Approach priority.

Summary of legal implications

21. There are 3 measures that require action in Quarter Two. Any potential risks and mitigations have been and will continue to be assessed by the relevant service area and reviewed by the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board.

Summary of human resources implications

22. One of the key strategies linked to delivery of the corporate strategy - the people and culture strategy - aims to foster a high-performance culture. Through a performance framework, colleagues understand their roles and contribution to BCP Council's vision and ambitions. It includes regular 1:1s, SMART objectives, and annual reviews. Personal objectives are linked to corporate ambitions in the shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. A dashboard is being developed with ICT to provide council leadership teams with performance insights, enhancing alignment to performance reporting. Additionally, programmes under Our Approach priority aim to positively impact human resources.

Summary of sustainability impact

23. The programmes of work underpinning the Place and Environment priority of the corporate strategy are designed to have a positive impact on sustainability outcomes.

Summary of public health implications

24. The programmes of work underpinning the People and Communities and Our Approach priorities in the corporate strategy are designed to have a positive impact on public health outcomes.

Summary of equality implications

25. The work programmes supporting the corporate strategy aim to positively impact protected groups. Equality impact assessments are conducted for these programmes, particularly under the People and Communities and Our Approach priorities.

Summary of risk assessment

26. There are 3 measures from Quarter Two that require action, and 17 that require monitoring. Potential risks and mitigations are assessed by the relevant service area and are regularly reviewed by Corporate Strategy Delivery Board

Background papers

- [A shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole](#)
- [BCP Council Corporate Performance Dashboard](#)

Appendices

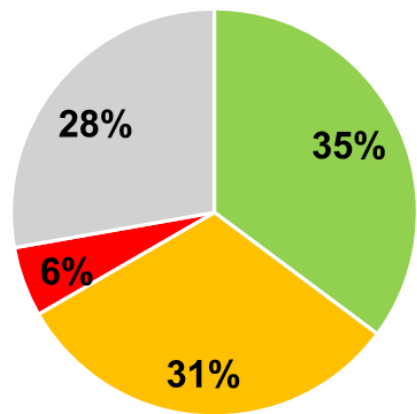
Appendix 1: Quarter Two - Corporate Performance Report – Overview of Q2 Performance

Appendix 2: Positive Exception Reports

Appendix 3: Exception Reports

Quarter 2 2025-26 - Overview of performance

This report provides an update of quarter two in the 2025/26 year on the progress measures in the council’s shared vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. More detail is available in the [performance dashboard](#).

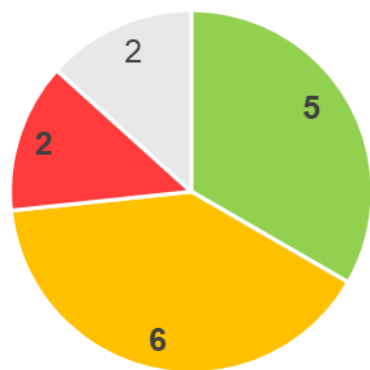


Q2 Overall

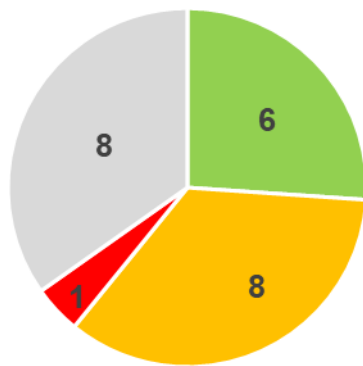
- 19 Measures are on target (green)
- 17 measures require monitoring (amber)
- 3 measure requires action (red)
- 15 measures are pending a RAG rating (grey) mostly due to these being annual or bi-annual measures

Across the three corporate priority areas, this breaks down into:

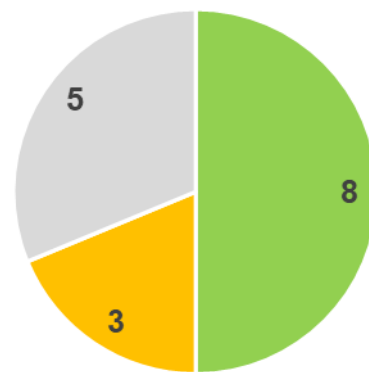
Our Place and Environment



Our People and Communities



Our Approach



More detail about each measure is set out in the following tables.

Explanation of performance tables

- **Frequency:** How often new data is available
- **High or low figure is better:** Whether good performance is a higher figure or a lower figure.
- **Baseline figure:** A reference point from which the latest progress can be monitored. The time period the baseline data relates to is noted.
- **Target:** The performance level (goal) the council is aiming to achieve. Rationale for target levels are provided in the performance dashboard.
- **Direction of travel & RAG:** This column shows whether performance is improving, declining or remaining at the same level compared to the previous update. This is indicated by a directional arrow.

Whether the Q2 data is on target is shown by the RAG rating:

- **Red:** Performance has not met its target and has reached a level of intervention at which action is required to improve performance.
 - **Amber:** Performance is not on target but has not reached a level at which action is needed. This requires monitoring to ensure performance stays on track.
 - **Green:** Performance has met or exceeded its target.
 - **Pending:** RAG rating not set. This could be because more data is needed to set targets to know if performance is on track, or new data is not yet available, such as with annual or biannual measures.
- **Commentary:** Provides further detail on performance.

Our Place and Environment

There are currently fifteen measures that sit under the six ambitions of 'Our Place and Environment' priority. Two of these are measured **annually** and two measured **biannually** and are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2, and eleven are measured **quarterly**.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
People and places are connected by sustainable and modern infrastructure								
PE1A.1	Increase the total number of sustainable passenger trips in the BCP area per year	Quarterly	High	24.85M (June 2025)	27.71M (March 2026)	24.84M (September 2025)	↔	The number of bus passenger trips shows a very slight decline from the previous quarter. The increase in the national fares cap from £2 to £3 is affecting bus patronage and lack of noticeable growth in the national economy is also a factor.
PE1A.2	Increase the number of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points	Quarterly	High	220 (June 2025)	240 (September 2025)	265 (September 2025)	↑	<p>The number of council and public electric vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265, exceeding the target. Earlier delays were caused by procurement and contract issues, but these have now been resolved and site programming is underway.</p> <p>The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) bid secured 1,100 charging sockets and six rapid charging hubs, with the first hub now set to be operational in early 2026 and more to follow. A homeowner charging gulley trial is also starting imminently, supported by £93,000 in grant funding. Despite previous setbacks, these developments provide a strong foundation for delivering EV infrastructure across the area.</p>
Our communities have pride in our streets, neighbourhoods and public spaces								
PE2B.1	Increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) served for fly tipping and littering offences	Quarterly	High	760 (June 2025)	844 (September 2025)	1.43K (September 2025)	↑	<p>1428 fixed penalty notices issued including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 PSPO offences • 17 flytipping • 3 waste duty of care • 1400 litter <p>The increase in FPNs issued this quarter is due to additional mobile resource to support visitor influx.</p>
PE2D.1	Reduce levels of police recorded antisocial behaviour (ASB)	Quarterly	Low	2,370 (June 2025)	1,775.5 (September 2025)	2,573 (September 2025)	↓	There is a slight rise in anti-social behaviour (ASB) data for the last quarter compared to the same quarter last year. There is joint work currently being done between the Police and BCP Council around writing an ASB strategy and a new strategic ASB group is being formed.
PE2D.2	Increase enforcement outcomes relating to street-based antisocial behaviour (ASB)	Quarterly	High	1,475 (June 2025)	1,926 (September 2025)	1,069 (September 2025)	↓	<p>Street based enforcement stats Q2:</p> <p>Number of CSAS incidents attended: 632</p> <p>Number of alcohol seizures: 22</p> <p>Number of dispersals: 344</p> <p>Early intervention notices: 10</p> <p>Support referrals:34</p> <p>Community Protection Warnings (CPW) – 23</p> <p>Community Protection Notices (CPN) – 1</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions (ASBI) – 1</p>

								Closure – 2 We have seen an overall year-on-year reduction in anti-social behaviour statistically and a quarterly reduction in the new metrics being tracked over the summer period, which bucks the previous years' trends. As such individual engagements and enforcement will be lower.
PE2A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live	Biannual	High	75% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PE2B.2	Increase residents' satisfaction with street cleaning	Biannual	High	48% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Our inclusive, vibrant and sustainable economy supports our communities to thrive								
PE3A.1	Increase the number of businesses in the BCP area	Annual	High	15,495 (December 2024)	15,500 (December 2025)	15,600 (September 2025)	↑	The number of enterprises measure tracks the size of the business stock in the BCP Council area and is Office of National Statistics (ONS) data (UK Business Counts).
PE3B.1	Increase non-financial support given to BCP-based businesses	Quarterly	High	0	475 (March 2026)	280 (September 2025)	↑	The businesses supported is a new measure, agreed at the Corporate Strategy Performance Board on 11 November 2025 and tracks the number of BCP based businesses that are supported. Support includes enquiries received and responded to, and attendance at events.
PE3C.1	Increase in the creation of new business enterprises	Quarterly	High	0	30 (March 2026)	9 (September 2025)	↑	The new enterprises measure is new, agreed at the Corporate Strategy Performance Board on 11 November 2025, and tracks the number of new enterprises (businesses) set up following our UKSPF funded 'Ignite' business start-up courses. There are courses for both BCP residents and BCP based university students.
Revitalised high streets and regenerated key sites create new opportunities								
PE4A.1	Increase footfall across our three town centres	Quarterly	High	21.74M (June 2025)	20M (September 2025)	22.54M (September 25)	↑	As expected, the summer season delivered a strong footfall performance, amounting to 22.5 million visits to Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole town centres in Q2, reflecting the area's enduring appeal as a summer destination. This represents a significant improvement compared to the Q1 figures with an additional 2 million visitors. The growth is particularly positive given that town centre footfall has generally faced static or declining trends post-Covid, driven by changing consumer habits, increased online shopping, and economic pressures. Achieving sustained growth in this metric is challenging, making these results a positive indicator of the resilience of BCP's visitor economy.
PE4B.1	Increase the percentage of all major planning applications determined on time	Quarterly	High	88% (June 2025)	80% (September 2025)	69% (September 2025)	↓	Planning application determination data is sourced from central government and provides year-to-date quarterly performance updates. 32 major planning applications were determined in Q2, although throughput and total number of decisions is high in terms of the number of

								decisions issued in time, performance has dipped in Q2. This has been in part due to issuing decisions on a number of older applications where the applicant had been unwilling to agree to an extension of time. Other factors which have influenced this is staff sickness which reduced capacity to handle and determine major planning applications. This has been highlighted to the planning team and the team managers will be working closely with the senior planning officers to ensure performance increases in Q3.
PE4B.2	Increase the percentage of all non-major planning applications determined on time	Quarterly	High	83% (June 2025)	92% (September 2025)	88% (September 2025)	↑	Performance has increased in Q2 and remains strong in this area. Staff recruited earlier in the year have now had time to establish themselves within the team and the department is seeing the benefits of a period of stability. It is anticipated that performance will continue to improve and meet targets.
Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice								
PE5E.1	Increase the percentage of waste diverted from landfill	Quarterly	High	89.07% (June 2025)	90% (March 2026)	86.25% (September 2025)	↓	A temporary decrease in our landfill diversion rate is due to a decision made by our waste contractors to send residual waste to landfill rather than to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities. This decision was taken during a period when EfW facilities were undergoing scheduled maintenance resulting in a shortage of available capacity. We will monitor this situation although we believe Q3 & Q4 will show some improvement.
PE 5A.1	Reduce the tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions from our vehicles and buildings (tCO2e).	Annual	Low	12,911 (October 2024)	Carbon Neutral by 2045	13.4% reduction in 2024/25 against annual reduction in 23/24	↑	Progress has been made during 2024/25, showing an overall reduction in emissions by 13.4%, this has been achieved by retrofit investment on the corporate estate, increased purchase of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, investment in the electric vehicle fleet and more accuracy in the revised staff travel survey.
Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature								
Measures under discussion with Green Space and Conservation team.								

Our People and Communities

There are twenty three measures that sit under the seven ambitions of ‘Our People and Communities’ priority. Eight are measured **annually**, twelve are measured **quarterly**, two are **termly** and one is collected **every two years**. Annual/biannual measures are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
High quality of life for all, where people can be active, healthy and independent								
PC1A.2	Increase the percentage of people with a learning disability living independently in settled accommodation	Quarterly	High	81.2% (June 2025)	80% (March 2026)	79.7% (September 2025)	↓	We have maximised opportunities to de-register residential homes i.e., to support the transition of individuals – particularly those with learning disabilities (LD) or mental

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								<p>health (MH) needs – into settled, supported accommodation.</p> <p>Commissioning is refocusing on developing appropriate supported accommodation to divert people away from residential care. A Working Age Adult Framework is to be tendered Spring 2025 to maximise procurement opportunities for supported living. Ongoing work with Housing to develop a Strategic Housing Plan to inform specialist housing development. Work continues to address updating the records of people with an unknown accommodation status. Strategic Housing Plan now completed by PPL (Private Public Ltd) and subgroups being set up by Housing to take forward specific developments by primary support groups. Framework due out this year to provide the care and support against each property.</p> <p>Supported Housing</p> <p>Commissioning is currently working with housing and development to increase specialist accommodation capacity through the specialist housing strategy. We have a development due in March 2026 which will provide 13 MH and 13 LD one bed (2 person) flats. Allowing us to nominate either for one person or couples.</p> <p>We are also working through a consultation pre planning on another development that will provide an additional 12 one bed flats for LD. Planning to go in 2026.</p>
PC1A.3	Increase the percentage of people with a mental health issue living independently in settled accommodation	Quarterly	High	70.8% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	70% (September 2025)	↔	<p>We have maximised opportunities to de-register residential homes i.e., to support the transition of individuals – particularly those with learning disabilities (LD) or mental health (MH) needs – into settled, supported accommodation.</p> <p>Commissioning is refocusing on developing appropriate supported accommodation to divert people away from residential care. A Working Age Adult Framework to be tendered in Spring 2025 to maximise procurement opportunities for supported living. Ongoing work with Housing to develop to a Strategic Housing Plan to inform specialist housing development. Work continues to address updating the records of people with an unknown accommodation status. Strategic Housing Plan now completed by PPL (Private Public Ltd) and subgroups being set up by Housing to take forward specific developments by primary support groups. Framework due out this year to provide the care and support against each property.</p> <p>Supported Housing.</p> <p>Commissioning is currently working with housing and development to increase specialist accommodation capacity through the specialist housing strategy. We have a development due to come online March 2026 which will</p>

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								provide 13 MH and 13 LD one bed (2 person) flats. Allowing us to nominate either for one person or couples. We are also working through a consultation pre planning on another development that will provide an additional 12 one bed flats for LD. Planning to go in 2026.
PC1B.1	Increase the number of registrations from people in the most deprived areas accessing health and wellbeing support (LiveWell Dorset)	Quarterly	High	257 (June 2025)	267 (September 2025)	222 (September 2025)	↓	<p>The service continues to reach clients living in our most deprived neighbourhoods. Registration numbers are below that of Q2 2024/25, however the proportion reached – 30% – is higher than Q2 2024/25 and is above our 25% target of registrations from clients living in our most deprived neighbourhoods. Q2 2024/25 had a greater number of registrations which has set a higher target for this quarter. Reasons for a reduction in registration numbers includes the loss of the ability to direct targeted marketing and communication campaigns via social media, the loss of the Public Health Dorset website and the organisation's social media account no longer being used. To resolve this, a number of campaigns are planned through targeted marketing and alternative social media advertising.</p> <p>LiveWell Dorset has changed the basis on which the indicator is constructed, now looking at the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods locally when previously it was looking at the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally, which increases the target audience quite significantly.</p>
PC1A.4	Increase the percentage of Adult Social Care users who are satisfied with the care and support they receive	Annual	High	59% (March 2025)	62% (December 2025)	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new information is available. New information should be available in March 2026.
PC1A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who have a good satisfaction with life	Annual	High	70% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PC1C.1	Increase the percentage of physically active adults	Annual	High	71.50% (June 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. When new national averages are released, we will be able to set our target.
PC1C.2	Increase the percentage of physically active children and young people	Annual	High	61% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. When new national averages are released, we will be able to set our target.
PC1A.5	Increase the percentage of carers who are satisfied with the care and support they receive	Biannual	High	36% (March 2024)	38% (March 2026)	-		This is a biannual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. New data should be available in spring 2026.
Working together, everyone feels safe and secure								

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
PC2A.1	Reduce levels of police recorded serious violent crime	Quarterly	Low	333 (June 2025)	313 (September 2025)	363 (September 2025)	↓	The figures were slightly higher in July than last year (137 to 122) but almost identical figures for August and September. The highest volume of serious violence is still sexual violence, and some work is being done to monitor public place sexual violence in a more comprehensive manner. The partnership structure for managing serious violence is changing also with a new Serious Violence Multi-Agency action group being formed with a police officer leading which is a change from our current serious violence delivery group structure.
PC2B.1	Increase the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area during the day	Annual	High	87% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
PC2B.2	Increase the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area after dark	Annual	High	54% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Those who need support receive it when and where they need it								
PC3C.1	Increase the number of individuals entering drug treatment	Quarterly	High	3,195 (March 2025)	3,127 (June 2025)	3,156 (June 2025)	↓	Q2 actual figures will not be available until end of November (the verified data via central government is about 8 – 12 weeks after the end of the quarter). Drugs activity can only be reported via verified data which is in the public domain Due to the government time lag in finalising publicly available figures, quarterly reporting for this measure will be one quarter behind. Since verification, we can now report that the actual Q1 figure is 3,156 adults in treatment. Q2 figures will be reported in full at Q3 and will be updated as soon as available on the live Corporate Performance dashboard.
PC3A.1	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks	Quarterly	High	58.54% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	24.60% (September 2025)	↓	Since September 2024, we have been unable to resource the Educational Psychology (EP) team sufficiently to keep up with the number of requests for Education Health and Care Needs Assessments and Plans. BCP are showing an increase in the rate of Initial Requests per 10,000 population (0-25) between 2020 and 2024 with a rate of 105.7 in 2024 compared to 41.3 in 2020. BCP are above all the comparators in 2024 (Eng 88.1, SW 95.9 and SN 93.4). In 2024 our 20-week timeliness improved as a result of a cash injection to resource the EPS at the level which was required for them to meet the demand for EP assessments. Once this resource was spent, it has contributed to, but is not wholly accountable for, the extended timescales seen with the 20-week process more recently. From August 2025 the EP Team are prioritising assessments for children based on vulnerability factors

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								weighed against enough new requests to enable the ECHP process to be completed in line with national average performance. The notable dip in performance in Q2 may be attributed in part to previous prioritisation of EP assessments which focussed only on a child's vulnerability factors. There were also some delays with BSO functions which are now resolved. Another factor is historic turbulence in staff turnover at EHCCO level which is now stabilising.
PC3B.1	Reduce the attainment gap and improve learning outcomes for children and young people in receipt of free school meals	Annual	Low	50.1 (Sept 2024)	35 (March 2026)	50.60 (September 2025)	↔	Provisional data collected locally is provided, national data will be published in the Autumn term, and the measure will be updated accordingly when available. BCP Council schools are significantly above national, regional and SN benchmarks from the previous year. However, we are unable to provide a direct comparison until the 2024/25 national benchmarking data is released by the Department for Education. There is a slight improvement on the previous year, based on the BCP Council provisional data.
PC3D.1	Ensure that the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people and their families	Quarterly	High	95% (June 2025)	85% (March 2026)	96% (September 2025)	↑	This performance is significantly above national benchmarks (85%) and has remained consistently higher than all comparator authorities for an incredible eight consecutive quarters. Such positive performance is a direct reflection of the commitment of staff to children and families, and the clear processes in place to ensure consistency and timely assessments.
Good quality homes are accessible, sustainable and affordable for all								
PC4B.1	Reduce the number of homeless households in bed and breakfast	Quarterly	Low	44 (June 2025)	40 (September 2025)	65 (September 2025)	↓	Households in bed & breakfast have increased in the past quarter, with the Housing service experiencing the highest level of demand during this period in the past 5 years. Homelessness demand has increased by 9% over the past year, with more recent drivers coming from no-fault evictions from the private rented sector. The impact of the future legislative changes in this market are forecast to continue to have a homelessness impact. Additional central Government grant resources will be focused on supporting the homelessness prevention agenda, with targeted interventions supporting household most likely to be at risk.
PC4A.1	Reduce the number of people rough sleeping	Quarterly	Low	49 (June 2025)	50 (September 2025)	66 (September 2025)	↓	The overall prevalence of rough sleeping continues to show reductions from the same period last year with an 11% reduction. Whilst seasonality continues to influence the total count, the profile of those rough sleeping has seen a marked change. There are 75% fewer people rough sleeping long term. Those new to rough sleeping are only seen a few times before they are helped into alternative accommodation, meaning that people are staying on the street for a shorter time. There are fewer people on the street now who are long term rough sleepers due to a concentrated effort by the council and

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								partners to find them the homes and support they need to prevent the risk of returning to the street.
PC4C.1	Increase the number of both completed new affordable and social rented homes	Quarterly	High	0 (June 2025)	100 (March 2026)	2 (September 2025)	↑	100 homes completed by end of March 2026 on target. 2 new homes completed this quarter at Craigmoor Avenue. 7 new homes at Grants Close, Bournemouth and High Street Christchurch due for completion in November 2025. Further build completions expected at Hillbourne and Templeman House in early 2026. 152 affordable homes currently under construction.
Local communities shape the services that matter to them								
PC5A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Annual	High	30% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Employment is available for everyone and helps create value in our communities								
PC6A.2	Increase the uptake of supported employment for those with learning disabilities	Quarterly	High	4.6% (June 2025)	4.5% (March 2026)	4.7% (September 2025)	↑	<p>The Supported Employment Review has been agreed as one of the six priorities of the co-produced Day Opportunities Strategy. Our Fulfilled Lives, strengths-based approach in Adult Social Care ensures that employment is explored with those people who are able to work. Dorset Work Matters is a joint project between Dorset HealthCare and Dorset Mental Health Forum and helps people who are accessing mental health services to find paid employment. Employment specialists have been working with people to reconnect them with their passions, interests, and skills, and use this as a focus for them to find employment. The employment specialists are skilled at working with employers to negotiate personalised reasonable adjustments and to ensure that the right support is in place to sustain work.</p> <p>The individual placement support workers have received an expansion in their funding over the next 5 years. The funding will include an extra 5 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) workers and a new team lead.</p>
PC6A.3	Increase the uptake of supported employment for those with mental health issues	Quarterly	High	2.6% (June 2025)	2.6% (March 2026)	2.4% (September 2025)	↓	<p>The Supported Employment Review has been agreed as one of the six priorities of the co-produced Day Opportunities Strategy. Our Fulfilled Lives, strengths-based approach in Adult Social Care ensures that employment is explored with those people who are able to work. Dorset Work Matters is a joint project between Dorset HealthCare and Dorset Mental Health Forum and helps people who are accessing mental health services to find paid employment. Employment specialists have been working with people to reconnect them with their passions, interests, and skills, and use this as a focus for them to find employment. The employment specialists are skilled at working with employers to negotiate personalised</p>

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								<p>reasonable adjustments and to ensure that the right support is in place to sustain work.</p> <p>The individual placement support workers have received an expansion in their funding over the next 5-years. The funding will include an extra 5 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) workers and a new team lead.</p>
Skills are continually developed, and people can access lifelong learning								
PC7B.1	Reduce the number of primary school aged children excluded from school	Termly	Low	0.012% (March 2025)	0.01% (March 2026)	0.012% (September 2025)	↔	<p>Data from Summer 2025 is currently latest available, showing 0.012%, which is in line with national averages and equivalent to 3 permanent exclusions, the same as the Spring term.</p> <p>It should be noted that the low number of children that are excluded from primary school can result in this indicator fluctuating greatly when in reality the number of children does not significantly change.</p> <p>Analysis of primary aged children excluded in the 2024/25 academic year highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 92% (11 of 12) children either had an EHC Plan or were in the process of being assessed for one. - 92% (11 of 12) children were open to or had been referred to Children's Social Care or Targeted Family Support Services, however, only 38% of those referred accepted the offer of support. <p>This demonstrates that children with additional support needs are more likely to be excluded and suggests that sufficiency issues and current challenges assessing the needs of children with special educational needs may be a factor in the increase of primary aged children being excluded.</p> <p>The following actions have been taken to address the rise in primary aged children being excluded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional funding has been secured to commission The Difference, a nationally respected organisation that has successfully supported schools and Local Authorities to reduce exclusions, to work with our schools to develop inclusive practice that will reduce exclusions. - A three-tier alternative provision model, that focuses on early intervention and preventing exclusion is being co-designed with schools and other stakeholders. - An Alternative Provision Panel at which schools can request additional resources to support children that are at risk of exclusion has been established.
PC7B.2	Reduce the number of secondary school aged children excluded from school	Termly	Low	0.137% (March 2025)	0.082% (March 2026)	0.067% (September 2025)	↑	<p>Data from the Summer 2025 is currently latest available, showing 0.067%, equivalent to 7 permanent exclusions, a decrease from 0.137% (35 permanent exclusions) in the Spring term.</p> <p>Although this indicator suggests improvement, data for the full academic year 2024/25 would indicate the BCP rate of</p>

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								<p>exclusion from secondary schools continue to remain high and significantly above the national average. 53% of exclusions in 2024/25 were of children with identified special education needs. There was a 48% increase between 2023/24 and 2044/25 of the number of children being excluded for drug and alcohol-related issues.</p> <p>The following actions have been taken to prevent children from being excluded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have commissioned 50 places for school leaders on 'The Difference's' Inclusion Leadership Programme. The Difference are a national education charity, which works with MATs and LAs to reduce lost learning.- A three-tier alternative provision model, that focuses on early intervention and preventing exclusion is being co-designed with schools and other stakeholders.- An Alternative Provision Panel at which schools can request additional resources to support children that are at risk of exclusion has been established.

Our Approach

There are sixteen measures that sit under the seven principles of ‘Our Approach’ priority. Six are measured **annually** and are shaded grey unless being reported in Q2 and ten are measured **quarterly**.

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
Working closely with partners, removing barriers and empowering others								
A1A.1	Increase the number of assets transferred to communities	Annual	High	1 (March 2025)	6 (March 2026)	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as ‘pending’ until new data is available. New data should be available in March 2026.
Providing accessible and inclusive services, showing care in our approach								
A2B.1	Raise the proportion of interactions that come from online platforms	Quarterly	High	71% (June 2025)	85% (March 2026)	78% (September 2025)	⬆	Now that the new Dynamics platform is in place with improved functionality to support the roll out of self-serve options, the aim is to actively channel shift activity away from phone lines and on to self-serve options. A programme is being put together to deliver these changes. This will form part of the Customer Strategy refresh, which is currently being scoped now that the transformation programme has delivered the technological advances to the underlying systems. A deep dive is taking place into all aspects of the contact centre, a proportion of which will focus on increasing self-service.
A2A.1	Increase the proportion of people who use care services who find it easy to find information about services	Annual	High	68% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as ‘pending’ until new data is available. New data and a new target should be available in March 2026.
A2A.2	Increase levels of trust in the council	Annual	High	48% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
Using data, insights and feedback to shape services and solutions								
A3B.1	Increase satisfaction with the way the council runs things	Annual	High	41% (December 2023)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.
A3A.1	Reduce percentage of upheld Ombudsman complaints per 100,000 of the population	Quarterly	Low	0.25% (March 2025)	0.25% (September 2025)	0.21% (September 2025)	⬆	During the last quarter the Ombudsman made 16 decisions relating to BCP complaints. Of these, 15 were not upheld, leaving one case which was upheld. This equals the same number that was upheld in the previous quarter meaning performance has not changed. The low number of upheld complaints reflects improved complaint handling at stage 1, and the commitment to a more centralised approach to complaints training
Intervening as early as possible to improve outcomes								

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
A4A.1	Decrease the percentage of Children and Young People returning to Early Help (targeted support) within 12 months	Quarterly	Low	13% (June 2025)	15% (March 2026)	10% (September 2025)	↑	The most common closure reasons preceding re-referral in Q2 were the Level 1 and Level 4, which suggests that both early closure and escalating needs are key drivers of re-referral, which has remained consistently low. The focus remains on the wider Early Help network to continue to provide intervention, therefore Level 1 closures may indicate that some children's needs were underestimated or support ended too soon/ was not effective, while Level 4 step-ups reflect children and families whose needs intensified needing a higher level of support/ intervention. We are strong performers in this area indicating that our level 3 support works well and meets the needs of most families.
Developing a passionate, proud, valued and diverse workforce								
A5B.2	Increase the percentage of equality monitoring data collected from staff	Quarterly	High	64.49% (June 2025)	70% (September 2025)	65.56% (September 2025)	↑	<p>Slight increase in overall completion rates.</p> <p>People and culture have now devised a way to import Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) information captured on the Recruitment System to Dynamics F&O which should ensure no data provided by colleagues is missed going forward.</p> <p>Director of People and Culture to emphasise to DSG members the importance of encouraging colleagues within their service to complete their EDI data.</p> <p>Overall completion rate: 65.56%</p> <p>Disability completion rate: 76.75% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Ethnicity completion rate: 76.54% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Marriage/Civil Partnership completion rate: 50.23% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Gender Identity completion rate: 51.25% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Religion completion rate: 69.16% of colleagues have provided this data</p> <p>Sexual Orientation completion rate: 69.43% of colleagues have provided this data</p>
A5C.1	Increase the number of successful candidates from underrepresented groups for council jobs	Quarterly	High	4.8% (June 2025)	6% (September 2025)	3.92% (September 2025)	↓	Out of the 3,897 applicants who responded this quarter, 11.03 % declared a disability (430 applicants). Out of those applicants successful in the recruitment process, the % of candidates declaring a disability is 14.95 % (16 applicants). The differential between overall applicants and successful candidates for this underrepresented group remains a positive figure for the last quarter.
A5B.1	Increase levels of employee engagement	Annual	High	60% (March 2024)	62% (September 2025)	63% (September 2025)	↑	Employee engagement continues to trend upward, exceeding our target for 2025. Starting from a baseline of 60% in 2024, we set an ambitious goal of 62% and achieved 63%, reflecting a sustained improvement in engagement levels across the organisation. This progress is thanks to the hard work of services across the Council, which have focused on improving engagement. Individual data shows

Ref	Measure	Frequency	High or low figure is better	Baseline figure	Target	Q2 Data	Direction of travel & RAG	Commentary
								significant improvement, largely attributed to the rollout of the new Performance Framework and the associated impact of creating dedicated time for discussions around Learning and Development opportunities. In addition, the certainty and successful delivery of the Pay and Reward Programme is believed to have played a vital role in contributing to this increase, reinforcing confidence and fairness across the workforce.
Creating an environment for innovation, learning and leadership								
A6B.1	Increase the number of current council employees supported to undertake apprenticeships	Quarterly	High	123 (June 2025)	126 (September 2025)	126 (September 2025)	↑	In the last quarter, 11 existing colleagues successfully completed their apprenticeships and 4 withdrew from their programmes, which accounts for the slightly lower increase to normal, although we remain on target.
A6B.2	Increase the number of newly recruited colleagues into apprenticeship posts	Quarterly	High	39 (June 2025)	40 (September 2025)	39 (September 2025)	↔	The number of apprentices employed since the last reporting period has not changed and remains on target.
Using our resources sustainably to support our ambitions								
A7A.2	Increase the percentage of successful grant applications	Quarterly	High	100% (June 2025)	92% (September 2025)	99.64% (September 2025)	↔	Total of 6 bids, all successful. £95,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Debris Screen Health and Safety Works. £6,222,000 awarded by Environment Agency for Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defences. £1,501,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Museum Estate and Development Fund. £73,000 awarded by Veolia for Queens Park Play Area. £376,000 awarded by Arts Council England for Poole Museum. £93,000 awarded by DEFRA for King Charles III England Coast Path.
A7A.3	Increase the percentage of business rates collected	Quarterly	High	31.65% (June 2025)	49% (September 2025)	57.04% (September 2025)	↑	This remains on target.
A7A.4	Increase the percentage of council tax collected	Quarterly	High	27.25% (June 2025)	49% (September 2025)	52.9% (September 2025)	↑	The % collected at the end of quarter 2 is slightly less than last year, but in excess of any intervention level.
A7A.1	Increase the percentage of residents who think the council provides value for money	Annual	High	33% (March 2025)	-	-		This is an annual measure not reported at Q2 so it has been marked as 'pending' until new data is available. This measure relates to the Resident's Survey, so new data will be available when the next survey takes place.

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Positive Exception Performance Report:

Please use this report to highlight outstanding performance during the last quarter, the factors that drove the good performance, and the reason it is important. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the number of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 265

Quarterly Target: 240

Reason for level of performance (what drove success?):

The number of available Council and public Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers has increased to 265 in the latest Government figures. As soon as we commence the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Work, which is imminent, we will exceed targets.

It took longer than expected to meet the target this quarter as procurement took much longer than expected due to staffing issues at the time. The procurement of local electric vehicle infrastructure grant (LEVI) was delayed and although we have made the award three months late, we still needed to iron out the contract amendments between both parties. The programming of sites ready for delivering is on-going.

The outcome of the local electric vehicle infrastructure grant (LEVI) bid was excellent news for BCP Council moving forward, we had set a minimum of 750 7kw charging sockets and the winning bidder Connected kerb came in at 1100 charging sockets, 550 dual charger bollards for streets without off-street parking.

The six charging hubs have been delayed due to the supplier, the first of these was finalised last week (Littledown) with more hubs following very soon. These will be multiple rapid charging locations with their own substation (when required) including Seldown which will power the two new electric buses arriving at the end of this financial year for route one.

The homeowner chargers that will be installed through the charging gulley programme trial is about to commence, this was held up by waiting for the grant funding that we now have of £93,000, awarded last Thursday 30th Oct. We can use £1,200 towards each installation. We are starting with a ten-gulley trial, which we hope to expand out after an agreed timescale. After all the various delays, we now have a great foundation to deliver on all fronts.

Completed by: Martin Jolly

Date: 13th November 2025

Service Unit Head approval: John McVey

Date: 13th November 2025

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the number of Fixed Penalty Notice's served for fly tipping and littering offences

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 1428

Quarterly Target: 844

Reason for level of performance:

The summer months see an increase in visitor numbers and anecdotal concerns regarding litter in key locations such as beaches and open spaces. As such, Public Protection and Wise Ltd work together to ensure maximum resourcing in Q2 to ensure litter enforcement was robust. This year WISE Ltd also supported enforcement of the Coastal Public Spaces Protection Order for issues such as urination and fires.

Actions/Next steps:

Public Protection and Wise Ltd will continue to monitor footfall trends to ensure robust enforcement of environmental crime. There is also a communications campaign in progress to educate around the impact and enforcement in relation to flytipping

Learnings to share:

Planned resourcing that is scaled up based on predicted demand

Completed by: Sophie Sajic

Date: 19/11/25

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase footfall across our three town centres

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 22.54m

Quarterly Target: 18m

Reason for level of performance:

The summer season has delivered a strong footfall performance across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole, reflecting the area's appeal as a summer destination. Quarterly figures show significant improvement in what is typically a challenging metric.

This success is underpinned by targeted interventions from the Economic Development team, including:

- Strategic Support: Continued backing for the four Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and proactive engagement with key stakeholders such as Legal & General, Savills, and a broad network of independent businesses.
- Branding Initiatives: The "Support Local" campaign has reinforced town centre identity and demonstrated the Council's commitment to local businesses.
- Events and Community Empowerment: By supporting third-party events and enabling communities to develop their own, the Events team has fostered a sense of ownership and vibrancy. Groups such as Powerhouse, Poole Quay Events Forum, and Christchurch Chamber are advancing plans with Council support.

These combined efforts have strengthened town centre resilience and contributed to a positive visitor experience.

Actions/Next steps:

Sustaining strong footfall across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole during the festive season while mitigating weather-related risks is a big focus and concern but key interventions have been put in place to help with mitigation.

Festive Activities

- The launch and promotion of Christmas lights in all three town centres to attract visitors
- Supporting seasonal events to create a festive atmosphere and increase dwell time

Events

- Collaboration with community groups and BIDs to curate festive events
- Ensure event calendars are widely promoted across Council channels and partner networks

Small Business Saturday (6th Dec)

- Delivery of a public-facing campaign highlighting local businesses and asking the public to identify their favourite shops and local experiences
- Provide further 'Support Local' stickers to amplify reach

Learnings to share:

Working together works - Partnering with BIDs, local businesses, and community groups makes events and interventions stronger and more successful

Consistent messaging helps - The "Support Local" campaign showed that clear, joined-up marketing brings more awareness to town and district centres

Events bring people in - Seasonal events are key for footfall. Planning early and promoting well makes a big difference

Data helps us react quickly - Tracking footfall means we can change plans and target marketing if needed

Weather matters - Bad weather can reduce footfall, good weather helps us as a conurbation. Having consistent online messaging helps keep people engaged

Completed by: Hannah Porter

Date: 13.11.25

Positive Exception Performance Report:

Please use this report to highlight outstanding performance during the last quarter, the factors that drove the good performance, and the reason it is important. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Ensure that the timeliness of assessments to determine the child's needs is conducive with offering the right service at the right time to children, young people, and their families.

2024/25 Q4 outturn: 94%	2025/26 Q1 outturn: 96%	2025/26 Q1 target: 85%
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Reason for level of performance (what drove success?):

The dedication and professionalism of our social work teams continue to shine through in our assessment timeliness, with an outstanding 96% of assessments completed within the statutory 45 working day timeframe. This performance is not only significantly above national benchmarks (85%) it has remained consistently higher than all comparator authorities for an incredible seven consecutive quarters. Such sustained excellence is a direct reflection of an unwavering commitment to children and families, and an ability to deliver timely, high-quality interventions even in the face of complex and demanding caseloads.

Quarter 1 has seen further improvement, with the average time to complete assessments reduced to just 21 working days—two days faster than the previous quarter and four days quicker than the same period last year. This remarkable progress is a testament to the relentless focus on efficiency and the ability to adapt and refine practice to meet the needs of the community. It speaks volumes about the skill, energy, and determination of our social work teams, who continue to go above and beyond to ensure that every child receives the support they need without delay.

Most impressively, 59% of assessments were completed within 20 working days—an extraordinary achievement that places us 28.8 percentage points above the national average of 30.2%. This result is not just a number; it represents the real impact of teams that are deeply committed to safeguarding and early intervention. Their hard work, resilience, and passion for making a difference are driving transformative outcomes for children and families across the directorate. We are immensely proud of their achievements and grateful for their continued excellence.

Reason for significance:

These improvements in assessment timeliness are profoundly important to the children and families in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP), as they directly impact the speed and quality of support provided during critical moments in their lives. When assessments are completed quickly and efficiently, it means that children experiencing vulnerability or risk are identified sooner, and the right interventions can be put in place without delay. This can be life-changing—ensuring safety, stability, and access to services that promote wellbeing and development.

Completed by: Nigel Burton

Date: 10/09/2025

Exceptional Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance meeting or exceeding target, what was achieved, why did it happen, and what the next steps are/could be. This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard): *Decrease the percentage of Children and Young People returning to Early Help (targeted support) within 12 months*

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 10%

Quarterly Target: 15%

Reason for level of performance:

The Early Help and Targeted Intervention Service (EH&TIS) place resilience and empowerment at the heart of their work with families. This can be evidenced in the robust performance shown against the percentage of children and young people being re-referred into BCP Early Help Services. We can see from the data that the majority of re-referrals in Q2 are families that are returning for support at least 2 years after their initial referral, with some coming back 3 and 4 years later. This indicates that the reasons for re-presentation are likely to be novel ones rather than a repetition of prior support needs which would be expected, given the fluctuating needs of some families, however 10% re-referrals is testament to the majority of families being supported to build resilience, strong networks and that have learnt the extent of their own capability.

It is also worth noting the improvement in performance between Q1 and Q2, where re-referral rates have dropped by 4 percentage points from 14% in Q1 to 10% in Q2. This is further evidence of the ability of the EH&TIS to maintain performance over time in an area that evidences sustainable change for the families we work with.

There are several contributory factors to the consistent performance of EH&TIS against the decrease in % of children and young people returning to EH&TIS within 12 months:

The right help at the right time:

EH have strong processes in relation to their practice standards and graduated response. This allows sound decisions to be reached in relation to threshold, ensuring that families are receiving the correct service for their needs, with minimal points of handover or duplication. Once families are allocated to a lead professional, Early Help Support Workers (EHSW) build discussions on closure in from the very start of the work, ensuring that families have the opportunity to share what success looks like for them and can then work with us to not only reach their goals, but to develop the resilience to achieve the same result without our support.

Strong holistic assessment and planning:

EHSW's work with families to create robust assessments with the child's voice at the centre. Significant effort is put into assessing and analysing family strengths and needs, supporting families to create a plan that involves a network that can be utilised when things become difficult. Families own their assessment and are an integral part of planning and family network meetings. Putting families at the heart of this work ensures that they are invested in their own outcomes and contributes to a lower level of re-referrals.

A passionate workforce:

EHSW's and their management teams are passionate about what they do. There has been significant change within the area of Early Help, with staff teams being reconfigured, new skills being required and new processes to adjust to. Teams have successfully compartmentalised and, in doing so, have ensured

that the tide of change has not affected the high quality and level of service that families receive. EHSW's are passionate advocates of families' autonomy and of their strengths. They ensure their voices are heard and that they have the support that they need around them to truly thrive. When families know that they are capable, they are less likely to experience learned helplessness and require services in the future.

Strong Partnerships:

Our EH Strategy focuses on the power of networks, both within families and as professionals. We work with families to build their personal networks of professionals, community, friends and family but we also know the power of our EH Partnership network and where families might benefit from services outside of the EH&TIS. Our Early Help Advice Point is able to effectively triage families being referred into services, whether for the first time or subsequently, and to ensure that they are signposted to the correct service to best meet their needs. These conversations are based upon the families' wishes and feelings and, again, are built on the premise that where a family feels they have choice and are autonomous, they are more likely to engage and have successful outcomes.

Actions/Next steps:

These improvements in re-referral numbers are profoundly important to the children and families in BCP, as they reflect that families are receiving the right support at the right time. When re-referral rates are low, we know that families that previously sought support have built resilience and autonomy, that they are advocating for themselves and finding their own solutions without the need for intervention from professionals. This is our goal for all our families, and we will work towards continual improvement in this area to ensure the best outcomes for our families.

Learnings to share:

The re-referral numbers are very low and have remained consistently so. The most common closure reasons preceding re-referral in Q2 were closure to Universal services at Level 1 and escalation to services at statutory Level 4. There is not enough data to indicate a trend and further analysis of data over a longer period would be required to assess whether early closure and escalating needs were the drivers of re-referral. It is also worth noting that across our system, we would expect some families to experience challenges beyond the scope of EH that require statutory intervention. Equally, we would expect a number of families to experience some issues 'going it alone' as this is a big step. A pattern in either would be concerning but, at this point and with the data we have, there is no pattern that indicates that there is an issue with the timeliness of closure or a lack of impactful work being delivered.

We will monitor the trends to ensure that any patterns are identified and analysed at the earliest opportunity.

Completed by: **Nina Wilson – Service Manager**

Date: 13/11/2025

Service Unit Head approval with date:

Nigel Burton - Head of Service for MASH, Assessment and Out of Hours Teams

Date 13/11/2025

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the percentage of all major planning applications determined on time

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 69%

Quarterly Target: 80%

Reason for level of performance:

Planning application determination data is sourced from central government and provides year-to-date quarterly performance updates. 20 major planning applications were determined in Q2, although throughput and total number of decisions is high in terms of the number of decisions issued in time Performance has dipped in Q2. Factors which have influenced this include:

Determining a number of older applications – We have been issuing a number of older applications where the applicant had been unwilling to agree to an extension of time

Staff sickness at the senior planner level – This has reduced capacity to handle and determine major planning applications. We have some officers on long term sick leave, and it has been necessary to re-allocate their case load. This puts pressure on exiting staff and applicants are often unwilling to agree to extensions of time if the application has already gone beyond the decision date.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – This has been a source of delay for a number of major planning applications, due to the complexity of the matter and the limited resource to provide detailed feedback on BNG (There are only 2 ecologists at the Council). Due to the time it has taken to agree a suitable solution some applicants lost patience and did not agree an extension of time.

Delays in consultee responses – This often leads to applications going beyond the decision date and a number of agents are often unwilling to agree extensions of time in these situations as they are unhappy with the length of time it is taken the consultee to respond.

Reduction in Agency Staff – We have been gradually reducing the number of agency staff which has impacted on our capacity at senior planner level. This results in higher caseloads for the existing staff putting more pressure on them to deliver.

Committee overturns – Some applications were overturned at committee and the time it took to agree reasons for refusal went over the agreed extension of time. Applicants were unwilling to agree a further EOT as app was now being refused.

Summary of financial implications:

Increased risk of being placed on special measures if government performance targets are not met.

Increased risk of planning fees having to be refunded if the government's planning guarantee is not met.

Summary of legal implications:

Increased potential for number of appeals due to higher number of refused planning applications

Summary of human resources implications:
Increased/ high workloads for existing staff, could affect staff moral leading to staff looking elsewhere for a job. High workloads could result in increased levels of stress for the team and possible staff sickness
Summary of sustainability impact:
No Impact
Summary of public health implications:
No Impact
Summary of equality implications:
No Impact
Actions taken or planned to improve performance:
<p>Staff training on BNG so they are less reliant on seeking advice from the ecologist thereby reducing delays in the consultee process.</p> <p>New protocol being put into place with regards to procedure for seeking an extension of time to a planning application. Case officer to review an application no later than 6 weeks after receipt, if it looks likely that it will not be possible to determine in time then to seek an EOT at that point. Should an agent decline then to determine the application within the timeframe.</p> <p>A new policy on accepting amended plans has recently been adopted. This sets out a clear procedure for when we will accept amended plans or not. This will enable the case officer to have a clear framework for assessing and determining the planning application. This includes refusing applications which are unacceptable rather than seeking to negotiate a solution which often elongates the process unnecessarily and leading to applications being determined past the decision date.</p> <p>New report templates have been developed to streamline the report writing process and help reduce time spent by case officers writing reports allowing them to focus on issuing decisions.</p>
Completed by: Jon Bishop Date: 05/11/2025
Service Unit Head approval with date:

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):

Increase the percentage of waste diverted from landfill

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 86.25%

Quarterly Target: 90%

Reason for level of performance:

A temporary decrease in our landfill diversion rate is due to a decision made by our waste contractors to send residual waste to landfill rather than to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities.

This decision was part of their contingency plan to remain within the limits of the Environment Agency site permits. It was necessary during a period when several regional EfW facilities were undergoing scheduled maintenance resulting in a shortage of available capacity.

We will continue to monitor this situation and anticipate an improvement in our diversion rate during Q3 and Q4.

Summary of financial implications:

The cost to BCP Council remains the same regardless of where our contractors send waste.

Summary of legal implications: n/a

Summary of human resources implications: n/a

Summary of sustainability impact:

While we remain committed to minimising landfill use and promoting sustainable waste management, our ability to influence these decisions is limited by the current contract, which allows our contractors to select the final disposal facility.

Summary of public health implications: n/a

Summary of equality implications: n/a

Actions taken or planned to improve performance

We continue to work closely with our contractors to encourage our landfill diversion rate to be as high as possible. We are pleased to report that waste is once again being processed through the usual Energy from Waste and Mechanical Biological Treatment routes, which is expected to improve our landfill diversion rate in the future.

Completed by: Mariana Tomasova, Strategic Waste Officer

Date: 31.10.2025

Service Unit Head approval with date:  **04/11/2025**

Exception Performance Report

Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.

This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.

Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard): Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans issued within 20 weeks

2025/26 Q2 outturn: 24.6%

Quarterly Target: 70%

Reason for level of performance:

Since September 2024, we have been unable to resource the Educational Psychology (EP) team sufficiently to keep up with the number of requests for Education Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessments and Plans. The rate of Initial Requests per 10,000 population shows that BCP have seen an increase in initial requests between 2020 and 2024 with a rate of 105.7 in 2024 more than double compared to 41.3 in 2020. BCP are above all the comparator groups in 2024 including the national average at 88.1, the regional average at 95.9 and also above statistical neighbours 93.4.

In 2024 our 20-week timeliness improved due to a cash injection to resource the Educational Psychology Service at the level which was required for them to meet the demand for EP assessments. The benefit of this funding was clearly seen in the data, with a period of strong performance (above 70%) between Jun 24 and April 25. Bids to secure funding to resource the Educational Psychology Team at a higher level were unsuccessful and the impact of this was forecast from mid 2024. Several further bids have been made to fund the service at the level required to keep pace with the increased demand in order to comply with our statutory duties –unsuccessfully.

The ceasing of this additional resource contributed significantly to, but is not wholly accountable for, the extended timescales seen with the 20-week process more recently. Some delays were attributed to administrative processes between the Business Support Team and Assistant EHCCO's /EHCCO's. These are now resolved and will need close monitoring.

The Educational Team have been prioritising children for assessment based on vulnerability factors and, enough new requests to enable the ECH process to be completed in line with national average performance. The notable dip in performance in Q2 may be attributed in part to previous prioritisation of EP assessments –until August 2025 -which focussed only on a child's vulnerability factors. Other factors are historic turbulence in staff turnover at EHCCO level which is now stabilising although this may not mean that the timescales will improve as the rise in referrals to the system are increasing year on year.

Summary of legal implications:

Failure to adhere to statutory timescales as set out in the Children and Families Act a2014 /SEND Code of Practice 2015

Actions taken or planned to improve performance:

Several bids to resource the Educational Psychology Service at the level required to meet demand have been made through 2024 and 2025. Review current practice of how EP advice for SEND statutory assessments are carried out once the Principal Educational Psychologist is in post later 2025 /early 2026

<p>Completed by: Stefanie Gehrig Clark – Head of Performance, Governance & Systems</p> <p>Date: 17 October 2025</p>
<p>Service Unit Head approval with date:</p> <p>Jeanette York, Head of SEND Assessment and Review – 20 October 2025</p> <p>Karen Chester, Interim Head of SEND Strategic – 20 October 2025</p>

Exception Performance Report	
<p>Please use this report to explain the reasons for performance not meeting target, the risks this presents in each of the sections and the actions and intervention planned or in place to improve performance and mitigate the risks identified.</p> <p>This report will make up part of the overall corporate performance report presented to Cabinet.</p>	
<p>Indicator Description (taken from performance scorecard):</p> <p>Increase the percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live</p>	
2024/25 Q4 outturn: 75%	Target: 84%
<p>Reason for level of performance:</p> <p>The Resident's Survey is now conducted every 2 years. The last one was done in 2024, and the next one is due in autumn 2026.</p> <p>The last survey showed that satisfaction with the local area remained consistent between 2023 and 2024 with 78% of respondents satisfied with the local area as a place to live. This was 3% higher than the national benchmark observed through the LGA poll.</p> <p>Unfortunately, levels of satisfaction didn't increase to the levels observed in 2021 which saw 84% of respondents satisfied with the local area as a place to live.</p> <p>These figures must be seen in the context of the world around us including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - international and national events - the lack of growth in the economy and the continual rise in the cost of living - continual technological advances such as artificial intelligence - how we are as a society following the COVID pandemic <p>And, considered in the context of local challenges that are faced by the Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council's finances - Increasing demand for services, especially social care - A recent history of political change <p>Additionally, levels of satisfaction with the local area vary across the conurbation and although caution is advised as sample sizes at ward level are very small, some areas across the conurbation are markedly</p>	

different. For example, Burton and Grange have very high levels of satisfaction with 96% of respondents saying they are satisfied living in the local area compared to Bournemouth Town Centre where this decreases to 53% satisfied.
Summary of financial implications:
The Council's financial position means an inevitable change in service provision. This is unlikely to change soon despite a forecast balanced Medium Term Financial Plan.
Summary of equality implications:
The resident's survey is open to everyone in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, with every effort taken to ensure people with any protected characteristics were informed about and able to take the survey. The data therefore reflects the views of those who responded. Further work can be done to analyse the results to establish whether the change in satisfaction is stronger amongst those with one or more protected characteristic.
Actions taken or planned to improve performance:
<p>As a Council we continually strive to achieve our ambitions and our shared vision.</p> <p>Through the Corporate Strategy Delivery Board, senior officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review progress every month - encourage and oversee projects that implement new systems and processes that improve efficiency and deliver better outcomes for residents and visitors - monitor and review risks and ensure that there are mitigations in place <p>Successes regularly reported through our quarterly performance report and in other media show that the Council can deliver quality services on the current resource levels, but as demand for services continues to rise and consequently so do costs, to keep at the same level there is a need for more funding.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Government grant continues to decrease. This means savings need to be found each year which will and already is having an impact on service delivery.</p> <p>This does not mean we will not continually strive to achieve our ambitions however, as we continually look for ways to improve and be more efficient. In many cases this means utilising technology, working in different ways and innovating new solutions.</p> <p>The Council has limited ability to change the national or international picture too, but there is continued lobbying of Government through appropriate channels on national issues, and involvement in shaping new policies and partnerships by contributing evidence, data and examples.</p>
Completed by: Lisa Stuchberry and Carly Hoyle
Date: 13.11.25

CABINET



Report subject	Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council 2026-2036
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>With the UK Government progressing major waste legislation and policy reforms, the Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36 has been drafted setting out clear ambitions and commitments, with consideration to the key drivers for change, to provide a pathway for enhancing our waste and recycling services over the coming decade.</p> <p>This strategy will direct the retender of a major waste disposal contract in 2027 and sets out ambitions and supporting actions for progressing towards achievement of our waste and carbon targets by 2035.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <p>a) Notes the consultation report, summarising feedback from residents and stakeholders</p> <p>b) Recommends the Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-2036 for adoption by Council</p> <p>c) Recommends the approval of the following service change to progress supporting actions set out in the Waste Strategy:</p> <p>i) removal of current separate kerbside battery collections where household batteries are collected in a clear bag placed on top of the kerbside recycling bin.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Adoption of the Waste Strategy for BCP Council provides the framework for waste management across the conurbation for the next 10 years and demonstrates a commitment to the provision of high performing waste management services across our three Towns.</p> <p>Drafted, with consideration to the key drivers for change, to provide a clear pathway for progressing our waste and recycling services over the coming decade, offering flexible, comprehensive and efficient waste collections and supporting</p>

	<p>service that engage residents and commercial customers to effectively manage their waste.</p> <p>The strategy providing a key framework to direct the tender of our major waste disposal contracts and progress towards achieving our waste and carbon targets over the period of this strategy, whilst enabling greater engagement in reuse and repair activities and campaigns will reduce waste for BCP Council to manage and enhance community action.</p>
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Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton
Report Authors	Georgina Fry
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

BCP Council position

1. BCP Council manages over 188,967 tonnes of waste from households and businesses each year. In 2024/25, BCP Council reused, recycled or composted 43.9% of our household waste and diverted 89.7% of waste from landfill. Councils achieving higher rates are normally more rural with higher quantities of garden waste to compost than in the BCP area.

National position

2. In England, recycling rates increased from 11% in 2000/01 to 42% in 2021/22. However, in recent years household recycling rates have plateaued around 42-44%, missing the 2020 target of 50%. The UK Government has set new targets to recycle 65% of municipal waste (household and similar commercial waste) and send less than 10% to landfill by 2035.
3. In the last few years, there has been considerable change in the UK Government's approach to waste management and the transition towards a circular economy, emphasising sustainability and resource efficiency through various legislative measures and strategies.
4. Simpler Recycling along with other waste reforms such as the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging are anticipated to drive packaging reduction and increases in recycling performance over the next 5-10 years. The inclusion of Energy from Waste facilities in the Emission Trading Scheme will also encourage the decarbonisation of waste, diverting and recycling waste from the refuse stream to avoid financial penalties.

Our Waste Strategy journey

5. While Councils have some flexibility for services, much is now dictated by legislation and national policy, which going forward will impact how BCP Council is required to collect, handle and dispose of waste, substantially alter the waste composition available to collect and change how these collections are funded.

Data & insight

6. To inform our approach, a comprehensive Waste Compositional Analysis was undertaken in 2023 of both rubbish and recycling bins, highlighting the waste materials in each bin that could be diverted from reuse or recycling. 51% of a household BCP refuse bin could have been recycled in either the kerbside recycling bin, a garden waste bin or a food waste container.

7. Detailed baseline and options modelling of BCP Council's waste collections have been undertaken by SLR consulting, funded by WRAP. Our current waste and recycling collections are comprehensive, easy to use and have a high level of public satisfaction (81% in 2023 Resident's survey). A review of collection routes across all waste streams is planned to rebalance collection rounds and maximise service efficiency.
8. Variations in design and frequency of residual and recycling collections have been initially modelled to consider operational service design for the future. Due to the unknown impact of the various government reforms on our waste composition and tonnages, and the introduction of food waste collections to Poole and flats in April 2026, further modelling and analysis will be needed and progressed before any substantial waste collection service redesign.
9. The Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36 has been drafted, with consideration to the key drivers for change, to provide a pathway in uncertain times, for improving our waste and recycling services over the coming decade and directing the tender of our major waste disposal contracts during 2026.

Strategy development

10. The following seven ambitions were developed prioritising waste prevention and service improvements to underpin our Waste Strategy for BCP Council aligning with national strategy and policy, refer to Appendix One for full strategy:
 1. Engage and enable residents and businesses to reduce waste and recycle more
 2. Use circular economy and waste hierarchy principle
 3. Achieve waste and carbon targets
 4. Deliver effective and efficient waste collections
 5. Dispose of waste sustainably
 6. Use modern waste infrastructure
 7. Deliver futureproof and safe services
11. To progress achievement of these ambitions, 35 supporting actions have been identified, which will be embedded through service and team plans and further developed during the strategy lifetime.
12. These supporting actions will encourage greater diversion of recycling, food waste and garden waste to the correct bins. Greater diversion will increase our recycling rate by up to 8% progressing toward the 65% target and offer financial savings of up to £1m.
13. Any major resulting policy or service changes required during the period of this strategy will be subject to further detailed financial, environmental and performance modelling and consideration, before the business case is presented separately for decision.
14. These ambitions, and supporting actions for achievement, were developed with insight from detailed baseline service and performance analysis of BCP Council waste collections, benchmarking with other local authorities and with consideration to key drivers for change within the waste management sector.

Strategy engagement

15. A public consultation was held from 2-29 June 2025. The consultation provided an opportunity for respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the draft strategy, its priorities, targets, and approach to the management of waste. Respondents to the consultation were also able to provide comments and suggestions on the strategy and its approach.
16. Residents were able to respond online or request a paper version from a library. 312 responses were received, 303 online and 9 paper copies. These included over 940 comments in free text boxes. The Waste Strategy Consultation Report is provided in Appendix 2.
17. There was broad support from respondents for the ambitions. Residents were looking for recycling to be as straightforward and accessible as possible with clear instructions to minimise confusion regarding harder to recycle items. Residents were in favour of improving initiatives and schemes to facilitate the repair, reuse and rehoming of items but felt they needed further support to do this.
18. There was a strong view that services should be consistent across BCP and for better education and communication to help both residents and businesses understand how to recycle items correctly.
19. A full Council member briefing was held in May 2025 and an informal cross party member working group was established, following this briefing who met in October 2025 to consider the required legislative impacts, developed ambitions and public consultation results.

Battery collections

20. Separate kerbside battery collections are currently operated where household batteries are collected in a clear bag placed on top of the kerbside recycling bin. Batteries are stored after collection in a plastic container on the outside of the recycling collection vehicle.
21. In 2025, batteries disposed of in kerbside recycling and rubbish bins have reportedly caused four fires at BCP transfer stations and five in collection vehicles.

Options appraisal

22. Waste Strategy adoption

Option 1 - recommended

- a. Cabinet recommends the new Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36 for adoption to Council. This will provide a pathway for development of waste and recycling services, initiatives and campaigns prioritising waste reduction and highlighting priority spend of waste budgets. The long-term intentions for waste collection and disposal will also support the tender of our major waste disposal contracts.

Option 2

- b. Cabinet rejects the new Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36 for further development. This will negatively impact on the prioritisation and clarity of service delivery, allocation of limited waste collection and disposal budgets

and provide delay to any insight for prospect contractors bidding for major waste disposal contracts in 2026/7.

23. Removal of kerbside battery collections

Option 1 - recommended

- c. To remove kerbside battery collections, reducing the risk of fires caused by batteries during transfer in collection vehicles or at transfer stations.
- d. Supporting communications with the fire service will advise of fire risks associated with putting batteries in any kerbside bin
- e. Residents will instead be directed to local battery recycling drop-off points in nearby shops and at recycling centres for separate and safe storage before recycling. Retailers that sell batteries must provide a free take back point in store.
- f. From Waste Strategy consultation, 71% of respondents had never used the kerbside battery recycling service, 16% of respondents had used the service in the last 6 months.

Option 2

- g. To continue with kerbside battery collections with high fire risk. Batteries and vapes containing batteries disposed of in kerbside recycling and rubbish bins have caused four fires at BCP transfer stations in 2025, including a substantial fire at BCP Council's Hurn transfer station in July, and are suspected of causing five waste collection vehicle fires in the last year.
- h. Improved storage containers are needed on all recycling collection vehicles to comply with legislation and reduce fire risk.
- i. A comprehensive communication campaign (£20k) may encourage safer use of the kerbside battery collections; however this would need to be ongoing as arrangements for battery collections are difficult to communicate clearly, causing confusion for residents. Batteries should be put out on top of the recycling bin in a clear bag, not placed in the recycling bin.

Summary of financial implications

- 24. The Waste Strategy for BCP Council and subsequent delivery plans are being developed in line with the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 25. Any resulting policy or service changes from this Waste Strategy will be subject to further detailed financial and performance modelling, before being presented for decision.
- 26. Capital (£1.537m) and transitional funding (£483k) has been awarded by DEFRA to introduce a food waste service for Poole and flats. Ongoing revenue costs should also be awarded under the new burdens doctrine to BCP Council from 1 April 2026 for food waste collections in Poole and at flats.
- 27. £9.447m of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) payments have been allocated to BCP Council in 2025/26 for the collection and disposal of packaging. Ongoing payment for future years is subject to change on the provision and evidence of effective and efficient waste collections and the tax received from the packaging industry

28. Battery disposal is free for Councils; however, removal of kerbside battery collections will reduce financial burden associated with service disruptions and fire. Fire damage to collection vehicles and transfer stations may result in hefty repair or replacement costs.
29. Any financial investment in enhanced commercial waste services will be balanced by the commercial waste income received as a result.

Summary of legal implications

30. Waste management in the UK is governed by legislation and policies that prioritise the circular economy, reduce landfill reliance, eliminate avoidable waste and increase recycling and resource efficiency. The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 set out legal duties concerning waste collections and management.
31. The Environment Act 2021 specifies requirements for Councils to offer improved recycling collections, with the introduction of statutory food waste collections from every household and business, collection of a core set of materials for recycling, including plastic film by 2027 and separated paper and cardboard, unless separate collections are technically, environmentally or economically unpracticable.
32. Officers will continue to remain informed, attend government briefings and collaborate with other Councils, industry networks and businesses to adapt BCP Council's waste services as needed to comply with legislation and future government policy.

Summary of human resources implications

33. Appropriately skilled or trained officers will implement the service and team plans and any resulting policy and service changes, which will sit under the Waste Strategy for BCP Council 2026-36.
34. Any proposed service change, resulting from this Waste Strategy will consider the impact on staff engagement, recruitment, training, terms and conditions etc, as part of the modelling, planning and decision process.

Summary of sustainability impact

35. Sustainability is a central theme of this Waste Strategy and is woven throughout the ambitions and supporting action.
36. A full Decision Impact Assessment (DIA) has been completed (Appendix 3) for this Waste Strategy, with all impacts as green/positive including for climate change & energy, waste & resource use, natural environment, communities & culture.
37. Any proposed service change, resulting from this Waste Strategy will consider the sustainability impacts, as part of the modelling, planning and decision process.

Summary of public health implications

38. Any proposed service change, resulting from this Waste Strategy will consider the public health impacts, as part of the modelling, planning and decision process.

Summary of equality implications

39. Two EIA screening tools have been completed and reviewed by the EIA panel – one for the Waste Strategy and one for the removal of the kerbside battery collections.

40. As a result of the Waste Strategy, several equality issues have been identified associated with age, disability and race.
41. Mitigating actions for the Waste Strategy impacts include:
- j. Use of plain language and pictorial information, where possible to aid understanding. A glossary has also been included to explain technical terms.
 - k. Once hosted on the BCP Council website, the Waste Strategy document can be adapted by use of text to speech and online translators.
42. As a result of removal of kerbside battery collections, several equality issues have been identified associated with age, disability, race, carers, socio-economic status and pregnancy and maternity.
43. Mitigating actions for the removal of battery collections include:
- l. Batteries can be deposited for recycling at BCP recycling centres and 50+ local shops that sell batteries. A postcode look-up will provide a list of nearby drop-off points linked from our website.
 - m. A mix of digital and non-digital communications will be used to clearly update residents on the service changes, including on the BCP Council website, social media and on bins. New bins will be embossed, and bins stickers will be used to advise against disposal of batteries in the kerbside bins.
 - n. The Customer team will be able to provide information about batteries collections, assist with location searches and answer queries via FAQs.

Summary of risk assessment

44. There are risks associated with the unknown impacts of government legislation and policies on the type and amount of waste that BCP Council will be required to collect and dispose of in the future. Detailed modelling and further waste compositional analysis will be needed before any major policy changes or waste collection service redesign. A review of collection routes across all waste streams is planned to rebalance collection rounds and maximise service efficiency.
45. There are risks associated with not meeting government targets of 65% recycling rate by 2035. These supporting actions will encourage greater diversion of recycling, food waste and garden waste to the correct bins. Greater diversion of recycling may increase our recycling rate by up to 8%, food waste collections in Poole and to flats may increase by up to 7%, relaunching food waste collections in Bournemouth and Christchurch alongside other potential service changes will need to be progressed to achieve the 65% target by 2035.
46. There are risks associated with removing of the separate battery kerbside recycling service that more batteries will be disposed of in the kerbside bins. A supporting engagement campaign with the fire service will be run to divert batteries to the many local disposal points. Bin stickers will include messages about no batteries in bins. A postcode look-up for nearest battery drop-off points will be available online.
47. Any proposed service change, resulting from this Waste Strategy will consider risk impacts, as part of the modelling, planning and decision process.

Background papers

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Kerbside waste and recycling compositional analysis: M.E.L. Waste Insights Alfred H. Knight Group 2022

WRAP (2022) & (2025) Waste and Recycling Technical Support to BCP Council

BCP Council's Residents Survey 2023

Appendices

1. Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council 2026-36
2. Waste Strategy Consultation Report
3. Decision Impact Assessment – Waste Strategy for BCP Council.

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A Waste Strategy for BCP Council

2026-2036

Contents

Introduction	2
Where we are now	3
Waste collections	3
Waste sites	4
Waste performance	5
Waste analysis	5
Resident satisfaction	8
Carbon impact	8
What happens to our waste?	8
Commercial waste services	9
Waste prevention campaigns	9
Waste budgets	9
Key drivers – why we need to act	10
Waste growth	10
National waste policies and legislation	10
Aligning with our corporate strategies	11
Waste disposal contracts	11
Planning and development	12
Enhance our service performance	12
Consultation	12
Waste strategy ambitions and focus areas	12
1. Engage and enable residents and businesses to reduce waste and recycle more	12
2. Use circular economy and waste hierarchy principles	13
3. Achieve waste and carbon targets	14
4. Deliver effective and efficient waste collections	15
5. Dispose of waste sustainably	16
6. Use modern waste infrastructure	16
7. Deliver futureproof and safe services	17
Next steps	18
Glossary	19
Background reports	20

Introduction

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council is a unitary authority formed in 2019. In 2024/25, we managed 188,967 tonnes of waste from 189,550 households and 3,300 businesses.

In England, household recycling rates have risen from 1% in 2000/01 to 44% in 2022/23 but have now plateaued below the 50% target set for 2020. New government targets for municipal recycling aim for 55% by 2025, increasing to 65% by 2035.

As a local council, we are legally responsible for the collection and disposal of household waste and recycling from the kerbside and for the provision and management of recycling centres for residents to deposit waste. We must offer commercial waste collections when requested.

To support sustainable waste behaviours, we engage residents and businesses in targeted waste campaigns and initiatives following the waste hierarchy to encourage reduction and reuse as a priority and promote good recycling habits.

What we do with waste and recycling after it is collected depends on factors such as the availability of local disposal facilities and a market demand for recycled products.

We must balance managing waste within council budgets, established legislation and policies to preserve resources and protect the local and global environment we live in.



The waste hierarchy

The good news is that England's management of waste is undergoing transformational change at the national level. There is an emphasis on creating a circular economy aimed at increasing waste reduction, reuse, and repair.

With much variation in waste services offered by councils across the country, new legislation will provide more consistent recycling collections for households and greater opportunities for recycling at work. New legislation will also influence the types of packaging used by producers, designing out waste and enhancing its recyclability.

The Environment Act 2021 has led to simpler recycling collections, a deposit return scheme for drinks containers and an extended producer responsibility for packaging scheme, where producers pay for disposal. The inclusion of energy from waste facilities in the emissions trading scheme



A circular economy

will encourage the decarbonisation of waste, diverting and recycling waste from the refuse stream to avoid financial penalties.

While councils have limited control over the amount and types of waste thrown away, these measures should help reduce waste, disposal of plastic and single use textiles and make recycling easier with less confusion for residents on how items can be recycled.

Ultimately the contents of rubbish and recycling bins will likely alter and methods of waste collection and disposal for households and businesses will need to adapt over the lifetime of this strategy.

This Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole sets out a pathway for managing our waste over the next ten years, with consideration to the changes and challenges coming ahead.





What remains unchanged is our commitment, we will continue to work with our residents, businesses and communities to manage our waste in the most sustainable way that we can. We will reduce our waste through prevention, reuse and repair, recycle when those things are not possible and dispose of anything that is left in the most environmentally responsible manner available.

Where we are now

Waste collections





In 2024/25, we managed 165,200 tonnes of household waste from 189,550 homes.

We collect waste from standard households using the following collection arrangements:

Collection	Residual	Recycling	Food	Garden
Frequency	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	Weekly (Bournemouth and Christchurch)	Fortnightly subscription
Container (Litres)	1 x 180L	1 x 240L	1 x 23L outdoor container and 1 x 7L indoor kitchen caddy	1 or 2 x optional and chargeable 240L
Colour				

Additional bins can be allocated to households of 5 or more, 2 or more children in nappies or for medical reasons, subject to specific criteria.

The following containers are provided as standard to flat blocks, which make up 27% of households in the BCP area. The numbers of containers will depend on the number of flat units, and the overall capacity should approximately align to standard households:

Collection	Residual	Recycling	Food	Garden
Frequency	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	Weekly (Bournemouth and Christchurch)	Fortnightly - subscription
Container (Litres)	660/1100L	660/1100L	140L outdoor bin and optional indoor 7L kitchen caddy	1 or 2 x optional and chargeable 240L
Colour				

We do not collect extra waste on top or outside of bins or contaminated recycling bins.

All new, replacement or extra rubbish and recycling bins must be paid for by the resident, or landlord, if the property is rented. Exemption applies where bins are reported lost or damaged by our crews during collection or where a permanent resident of the property receives certain income-based benefits.

Our waste collection guidance sets out our collection policies and instructions on our [website](#).

In the kerbside recycling bin, we can recycle mixed paper, cardboard, cartons, cans, foil, glass bottles/jars and plastic bottles, tubs, pots and trays. All items should be loose, clean, dry and empty.

We offer a sharps collection, upon request for residents unable to return sharps waste to a GP or pharmacy.

Waste sites

We operate three recycling centres in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole where residents and businesses can deposit waste and recycle a wider range of items, including garden waste, electrical items, DIY waste, batteries, paint, wood, oil, coffee pods, printer cartridges and textiles.

Each recycling centre has a reuse area, where residents can leave items worthy of another life which are taken to sell at our reuse shop, new to you, currently located at Cabot Lane in Poole. We have 19 textile banks in accessible locations across the conurbation.

The three waste transfer stations we operate allow us to store and bulk waste and recycling where needed from kerbside collections and waste collected from the beach, before it is sent on for treatment or disposal.

Waste performance

In 2024/25, we diverted 89.72% of our 165,200 tonnes of household waste from landfill and achieved a recycling and composting rate of 43.9%, in-line with the national average of 44%. While high performing Councils are usually rural with higher quantities of garden waste to compost than in the BCP area, we know we can do better and want to improve our recycling performance.

Our recycling and composting rate has fallen from 53.9% in 2019/20, partially due to wood processing being reclassified from recycling to energy recovery and a reduction in collected recycling weight from lighter packaging. Household waste per person remains high at 407.18kg per year, compared to the national average of 377kg.

In 2024/25, we managed a total of 188,967 tonnes of municipal waste (waste from households and similar waste from businesses) and recycled 40.60% of it. The UK Government new targets are for municipal waste, so businesses must be encouraged to recycle too.

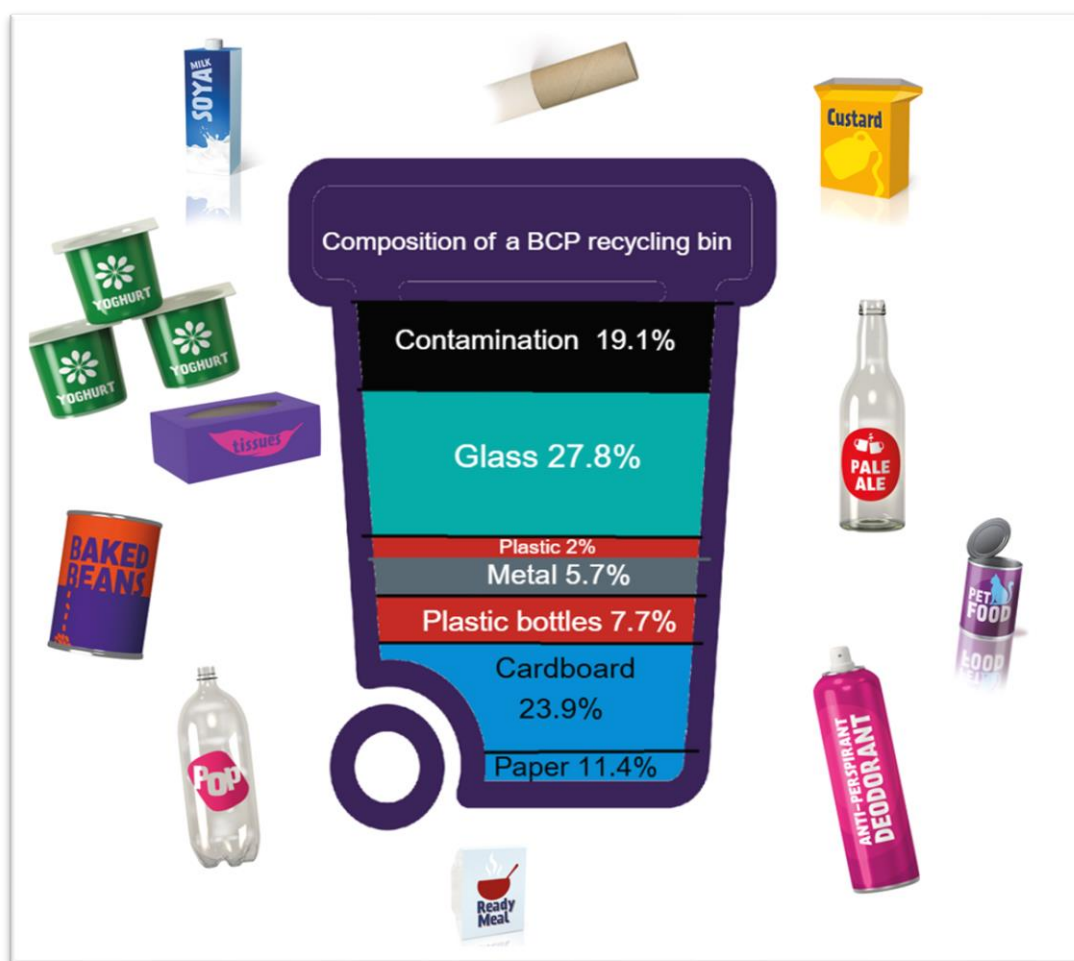
Waste analysis

In May 2022, we collected and weighed a sample of our residents' bins - a waste compositional analysis - to understand what types and amounts of waste are being put in our kerbside rubbish and recycling bins.

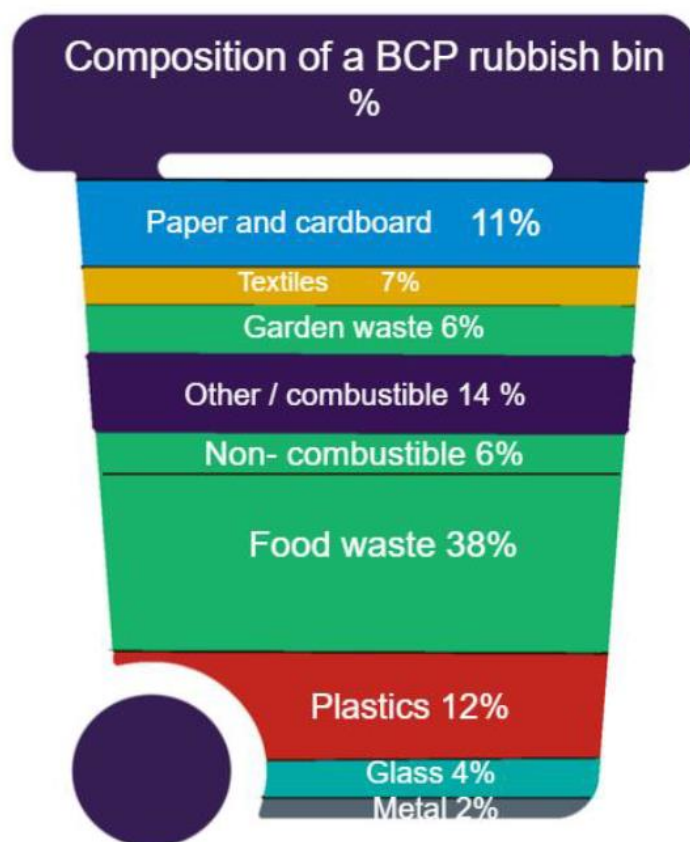
The good news is most households are recycling, 79% of households regularly put out recycling bins for collection, with an average of 3.1 kg per household per week recycled.

We can recycle mixed paper, cardboard, cartons, cans, foil, glass bottles/jars and plastic bottles, tubs, pots and trays in the kerbside bin.

There is still uncertainty from residents about what goes in which bin as a result, contamination in the recycling bin has continued to increase to 19%. This is what residents put in bins, not the amount collected. Our collection crews check bins for contamination, then tag and leave contaminated bins uncollected. Contamination is removed when our recycling is separated into different material types at the Materials Recycling Facility. Contamination is primarily caused by non-recyclable plastics, wet paper or card, and food waste.



BCP households produce on average 5.7 kg of rubbish each week.



Notably, 51% of this waste in the rubbish bins could be recycled at the kerbside, showing a huge potential for improvement. There is still a substantial amount of food waste (38%) in the rubbish bins in Bournemouth and Christchurch that could be collected separately for recycling. 76% of this food waste is avoidable, so could be reduced with better planning and use of food.

Food waste collection yields in Bournemouth and Christchurch are average in comparison to other local authorities of similar type but could be improved through better communications and service updates.

Diverting recyclable waste from the rubbish bin into the kerbside recycling bin is estimated to increase our recycling rate by 8% and offer £1m of disposal costs saving. Introducing food waste collections to Poole and all flats is anticipated to increase our recycling rate by 7%. Additional diversion would be achieved by redirecting food and garden waste from the rubbish to the correct bins.

Proportion that is recyclable	
Paper and card	5%
Garden waste	4%
Food waste	34%
Plastic	3%
Metals	1%
Glass	4%
Total recyclable content	51%

Resident satisfaction

The BCP Council's Residents' Survey 2023 reported 81% of respondents were satisfied with our waste collection service, a 1% decrease since 2021. When asked about our local tips and household waste recycling centres, 58% of respondents were satisfied. However, of the 64% of respondents that have used one of our recycling centres in the past year, 80% were satisfied with the service.

Carbon impact

In 2022, waste contributed 3% of the total greenhouse gas emissions within the BCP area. A 2024 carbon impact assessment highlighted expanding food waste collection across BCP would reduce total carbon emissions, through lower residual waste emissions and an increase in recycling. Vehicle emissions would slightly increase due to expanded collections, but overall environmental impact would be significantly improved.

What happens to our waste?

Residual waste is processed through Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT), Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities or sent to landfill. There are currently no local energy from waste facilities and only one landfill site. Residual waste is therefore transported long distances for disposal, with the end destination dependent on available capacity, market conditions and economic contracts.

Mixed dry recycling is transferred to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Kent, where it is separated into different material streams for recycling. Recycling is a worldwide commodity that is bought and sold daily - as there is more recycled waste than is required by UK businesses, the value is therefore dependent on worldwide economic and trade conditions.

Food waste is processed at an anaerobic digestion (AD) plant in Dorset, producing biogas and bio-fertiliser, while garden waste is composted in open windrow at Hurn. A new biogas facility is being built at Hurn for additional food waste from the BCP and surrounding areas.

The council currently disposes and recycles 188,967 tonnes of waste under various contracts that are due to expire during the period of this strategy. The UK waste management model is for contracts to be put in place between waste collectors and waste disposal/recycling sites, sometimes through a third party.

We currently have contracts with 13 different suppliers to dispose of our waste and recycling, with some end destinations in the UK and some across the world.



Commercial waste services

There are nearly 15,400 businesses in our area, 89% of which are micro-businesses with fewer than 10 employees.

We offer commercial waste collections tailored to the specific needs of the

business for refuse, recycling and food waste and have a customer base of 3,300.

Commercial weighbridges operate at Bournemouth and Poole Recycling Centres, where businesses can dispose of general waste, wood, green waste, soil/rubble and recycling, in 100kg increments to offer a cost-effective solution for small amounts of waste.

Food waste and recycling collection uptake has increased since April 2025, when businesses with 10 or more employees were required legally to arrange separate collections for food waste and recycling. Businesses with under 10 employees will be required to arrange separate collections of recycling and food waste from 31 March 2027.

Additional services operated by our commercial team include bulky household waste collection, skip hire, and grab bags for smaller waste quantities.



Waste prevention campaigns

We encourage residents and businesses to reduce and reuse their waste where possible through various campaigns and initiatives including:

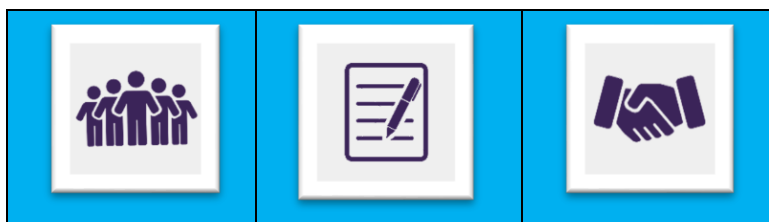
- The Schools Environment Award which promotes eco-friendly behaviours in primary schools
- Reusable nappies incentive scheme offering vouchers, cashback and starter kits to parents
- Love Food Hate Waste campaign to reduce food waste
- Zero waste projects map highlighting local sustainability initiatives such as Repair Cafés, Community Fridges, Toy Libraries, and reusable nappy retailers.
- Home composting to encourage garden and food waste reduction at source
- new to you reuse shop in Poole sells items collected for reuse from recycling centres, supporting waste diversion and reuse.

Waste budgets

In 2024/25, we spent £17.3m on waste collection and sites, plus £19.4m disposing of waste and recycling. The waste service generated £10m of income from our commercial waste, garden waste services and sale of some recycling. In 2025/26 the Council received £9.4m of funding from packaging producers through a new national tax on packaging producers.

The net waste management budget is now around £17.3 million per annum, although this can change quite quickly because of new national government policies and regulations, RPI/CPI, the weather (growing conditions), the country's economic status and events that affect the world economy.

Key drivers – why do we need to act?



Waste growth

Between 2022-2024, our population increased by between 0.6 -1% each year to 408,967. In the last five years, 6,000 new properties have been built in our area and with a government target of 2,958 additional builds each year, our population and waste are set to increase. This may result in the generation of an additional 25,674 tonnes of waste per annum in the BCP area by 2036, although other waste reduction policies will impact tonnage too.

National waste policies and legislation

Waste management in the UK is governed by legislation and policies that prioritise the circular economy, reduce landfill reliance, eliminate avoidable waste and increase recycling and resource efficiency. The Environmental Protection Act 1990, Landfill Tax and Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 set out legal duties concerning waste management, waste reduction and recycling targets.

In December 2018, the Government published 'Our Waste, Our Resources: a Strategy for England'. This strategy and UK's Circular Economy Package that followed, set targets for at least 65% of municipal waste to be recycled by 2035, with no more than 10% ending up in landfill and the elimination of food waste to landfill by 2030.

The Environment Act 2021 specifies requirements for improved recycling collections, with the introduction of statutory food waste collections from every household and business, collection of a core set of materials for recycling, including plastic film by 2027 and separated paper and cardboard, unless separate collections are technically, environmentally or economically unpracticable. This act also introduced the legal framework for:

- Extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging, which makes businesses responsible for the full cost of dealing with the packaging they produce or import once it becomes waste, shifting the financial burden from councils, encouraging better packaging design and more sustainable material use. Councils need to demonstrate they are providing 'efficient and effective' waste services to receive funding.
- Deposit return scheme (DRS) where to reduce litter and boost recycling, from October 2027, a small deposit will be paid for a plastic drinks bottle or can, which is refunded when the container is returned to a shop or return point. This scheme may substantially reduce the number of plastic bottles and cans recycled by residents in our kerbside recycling bins.

There is an increasing momentum to ban types of waste from landfill, such as biodegradable waste, upholstered domestic seating due to chemicals used historically in their manufacture and potentially carpet.

The government is committed to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042, with a plastic tax introduced in 2022, single use plastic ban from 2023 and the inclusion of energy from waste facilities in the emissions trading scheme in 2028, which will have substantial financial implications for councils unless we can reduce high carbon materials such as plastics, textiles and sanitary waste in our rubbish bins.

By the end of 2025, the government plan to establish a comprehensive Circular Economy Strategy for England, supported by the Circular Economy Taskforce, which aims to shift from a linear "take-make-dispose" model to a circular economy that maximises product and material lifespan through repair, reuse, and recycling. The taskforce will initially focus on the five priority sectors which are textiles, transport, construction, agri-food, chemicals and plastics.

As a result of these government policies, we will need to build in flexibility to contracts, demonstrate effective and efficient collections to receive EPR payments and adapt our waste and recycling services to accommodate legislative requirements and changes in the type and amount of waste we are required to collect and dispose.

Aligning with our corporate strategies

This Waste Strategy aligns with and supports our Corporate Strategy—A Shared Vision for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The corporate vision aims to connect people, nature, coast and towns to build sustainable, safe, and healthy communities.

The Waste Strategy is linked to the council's strategic priorities, which are built on values of openness, transparency, and accountability. Our approach ensures that people remain central to our services and decisions, guided by clear principles focused on place, environment, and community wellbeing. Highlighted as a specific focus area in our Corporate Strategy and rooted in this Waste Strategy is to *Ensure the BCP area has sufficient fit-for purpose waste infrastructure to manage all the waste it produces.*

In July 2019, we declared a climate and ecological emergency. This significant step demonstrates our commitment to addressing climate change and mobilising resources and community efforts towards a sustainable future. We are committed to making our operations carbon neutral by 2030 and for the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole area to be net zero by 2045, 5 years ahead of the national target.

Waste disposal contracts

We need to retender some of our major waste disposal contracts as our current contracts end in August 2027. Retendering currently is risky and challenging as market conditions are changing and there is uncertainty around the impact of the government's new waste reforms on the type and amount of waste we need to collect. New government policy changes may substantially increase waste collection and treatment costs. This waste strategy will provide a framework to support compliance and contract procurement.

Planning and development

The Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan (2019) outlines strategies for waste facility development through 2033, focusing on the waste hierarchy, self-sufficiency, and environmental protection. Local planning policies specify that waste storage guidelines should be considered in new developments.

Enhance our service performance

From the waste analysis we can divert 51% of our waste from the rubbish bin for recycling or composting. This will action resource efficiency and deliver financial benefits in disposal costs. Reducing our waste and recycling as much as we can is right thing to do to help preserve our global natural resources for generations to come.

Consultation

A public consultation on this Waste Strategy was held in June 2025 to better understand the needs of residents and to seek their views on our proposed ambitions. This consultation was hosted online with the option for residents to request a paper copy and a total of 312 responses were received.

There was broad support from respondents for the ambitions. Residents were looking for recycling to be as straightforward and accessible as possible with clear instructions to minimise confusion regarding harder to recycle items. Residents were in favour of improving initiatives and schemes to facilitate the repair, reuse and rehoming of items but felt they needed further support to do this.

There was a strong view that services should be consistent across BCP and for better education and communication to help both residents and businesses understand how to recycle items correctly.

Our ambitions and supporting actions

Considering where we are now, the future factors that will likely impact waste in the BCP area and what residents have said in the consultation, seven ambitions and supporting actions have been developed, prioritising waste prevention and service improvements.

1. Engage and enable residents and businesses to reduce waste and recycle more

Our ambition is to support our communities to reduce their waste and encourage reuse and repair through education, engagement and services.



You told us:

- You strongly support education and communication to understand waste reduction and recycling.
- You would welcome more information on campaigns that support zero waste projects to assist with reuse and repair
- You would like to receive information of this type via email or on our website.
- You support the introduction of community-based reuse and repair initiatives to help reduce waste.
- You would like to see targeted campaigns focused at specific groups such as landlords, businesses and young people.

We plan to do this by:

- 1.1 Clearly communicating updates on the different materials that can and cannot be recycled in the kerbside recycling bin and at recycling centres
- 1.2 Promoting our comprehensive, flexible and bespoke commercial waste, recycling and food waste collections offered to businesses across the BCP area
- 1.3 Embedding the Reuse and Repair Declaration to support repair and reuse initiatives like the Repair Cafés and other organisations promoting repair and reuse across the BCP area through access to networks and space, and funds where available.
- 1.4 Relocating new to you reuse shop to a more accessible centralised location and considering opportunities to enhance the offer such as opening on additional days or running reuse or repair workshops.
- 1.5 Relaunching the School Environment Award for all schools, supporting them raising awareness about local and global environmental issues and empowering pupils to take charge of their future through environmental projects.
- 1.6 Exploring incentives for the use of reusable products such as sanitary products.

2. Use circular economy and waste hierarchy principles

The circular economy keeps items in use for as long as possible, a cycle of reuse, repair, and recycling to minimise waste and lengthen the lifecycle of products instead of a linear system where items are made, used and then thrown away. We will look for opportunities to support these practices in our own waste services and across the wider organisation.

We want to use the waste hierarchy across the board, not just when we have a legal obligation to follow it.

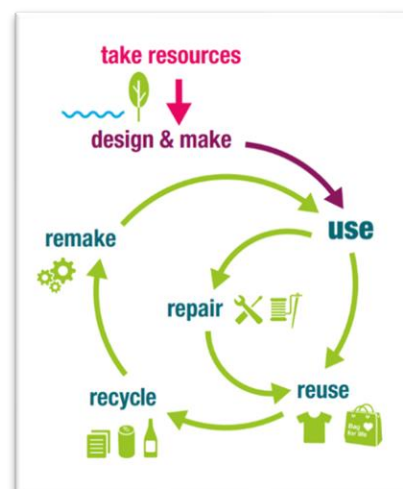


You told us:

- You would like more opportunities and support to repair, rehome and repurpose items.
- You would like to see more community- based reuse and repair initiatives.

We plan to do this by:

- 2.1 Embed the circular economy and waste hierarchy into strategy, policy, and service design across the council.
- 2.2 Prioritise reducing waste, reusing materials, recycling, and recovering energy from non-recyclable waste, while using landfills only when other options are not feasible.
- 2.3 Develop waste services to boost closed-loop recycling and keep materials in use instead of sending them to landfill.



3. Achieve waste and carbon targets

Our ambition is to meet waste targets set by government to recycle 65% of waste and send less than 10% to landfill by 2035. Contributing towards the council's commitment to carbon neutrality from our operations by 2030 and the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole area by 2045, ahead of the UK's 2050 target.

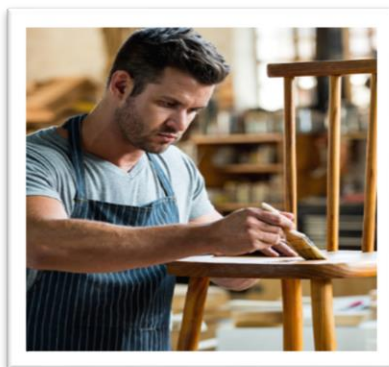
You told us:

- You support the ambition to have sustainable waste targets.
- You would like to see challenging but achievable waste targets for household and businesses.

We aim to:

- 3.1 Achieve waste targets for landfill diversion (>90%) and recycling targets (>65%) by 2035
- 3.2 Contribute to our carbon targets by reducing vehicle and disposal emissions associated with waste and recycling.

We plan to achieve these targets through the supporting actions set out in this Waste Strategy.



4. Deliver effective and efficient waste collections

Our ambition is to deliver waste collection services that efficiently manage available resources and provide reliable and comprehensive collections for residents and commercial organisations.

You told us:

- Having a consistent food waste service across BCP was a priority.
- You would like to be able to recycle more items at home such as plastic bags and wrappers, small electricals and textiles.
- Your rubbish bins are not usually full by collection day, but your recycling bins are more often.
- You would be happy to further separate your recyclable items further at home
- Clearer instructions from us to make it easier to recycle at home.



We plan to do this by:

- 4.1 Delivering food waste collections to all in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. Food waste collections will be introduced to Poole residents and flats in Bournemouth from April 2026. Bournemouth and Christchurch households without a food waste container can request one for free.
- 4.2 Relaunching food waste collections for Bournemouth and Christchurch residents, using targeted communications and service updates to improve ongoing participation in food waste recycling.
- 4.3 Reviewing the frequency of rubbish collections. Initial modelling suggests by collecting your rubbish less often (three or four weekly), we would increase our recycling rate by between 6-8% while reducing our carbon impact and costs.
- 4.4 Banning items in kerbside rubbish bins that can be recycled in other bins such as food waste, garden waste and recycling (where collections are available) Using a sticker on the rubbish bin or embossed into new rubbish bin lids as an educational tool.
- 4.5 Considering a twin stream recycling service, a system where your recycling is collected in two separate containers - one for paper and card (fibres) and one for glass, cans and plastic (bottles and containers). Right now, our modelling suggests separate collections would cost a lot more to operate and increase our carbon impact as more collection vehicles would be needed. We will continue to review twin stream recycling as this is the government's preferred option for recycling collections.
- 4.6 Expanding our kerbside recycling collections to include more materials, such as other types of plastics. Plastic bags and film will be collected for recycling from 2027.

- 4.7 Communicating updates on the different materials that can and cannot be recycled in the kerbside recycling bin and at recycling centres.
- 4.8 Reviewing recycling collection options for textiles, small electricals and batteries. Batteries will not be collected with other kerbside recycling due to the fire risk.
- 4.9 Align communal bin collections from flats with standard households where possible. When extra collections are required due to space restrictions, additional bins and collections will be charged for to recover collection costs.

5. Dispose of waste sustainably

Our ambition is to use waste disposal and recycling methods that reduce our environmental impact, conserve resources for future use, and where possible use the most modern waste management technologies.

You told us:

- You strongly supported this ambition
- You supported waste being treated within 100 miles of BCP



We plan to do this by:

- 5.1 Tendering waste disposal contracts that embed the waste hierarchy and minimise the use of landfill.
- 5.2 Using technologies that make us more efficient subject to market conditions and cost.
- 5.3 Prioritising waste site proximity where possible, so waste travels only as far as it needs to and reduces the significant carbon impact of transporting waste.
- 5.4 Compliance with government policies so we meet our legal requirements and redesigning services if needed to meet that compliance.
- 5.5 Considering environmental impact of available facilities.
- 5.6 Responding to market conditions and providing value for money for BCP Council and national taxpayer.

6. Use modern waste infrastructure

Our ambition is to improve our waste sites and infrastructure by using industry advancements and technological innovations, ensuring continued efficiency in our waste collection and disposal operations.

You told us:

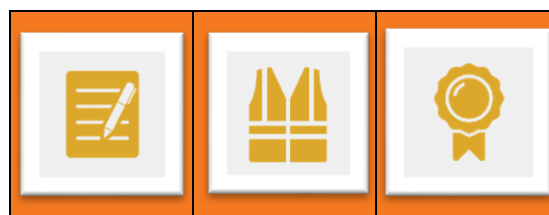
- You would like to see more items accepted at our recycling centres such as hard plastics.
- To have easy access to recycling centres without restrictive policies or booking systems.
- Provide more local reuse facilities.
- More educational opportunities and information at our recycling centres.

We plan to do this by:

- 6.1 Reviewing our recycling centre policies and van permit scheme to manage commercial waste abuse more effectively.
- 6.2 Setting up 'sort it' areas at recycling centres to help residents to separate their waste for reuse and recycling and making it easier to leave suitable items for the BCP re-use shop new to you.
- 6.3 Considering opportunities to reuse and recycle additional items at recycling centres such as paint, plastics, carpet.
- 6.4 Mapping out our requirements for long-term sustainable waste facilities and infrastructure in the BCP area for the next generation, which will include fit for purpose depot facilities, appropriate waste transfer capacity and a review of recycling centre locations.
- 6.5 Considering the use of underground bins in public areas and in locations where standard collection methods are not effective or efficient to overcome issues with space, bin blight, and offer collection efficiency. Work with planning teams to guide developers and identify opportunities for service growth.

7. Deliver futureproof and safe services

Our ambition is to ensure our services adapt with our legal requirements while safely operating our collection services and waste sites in compliance with our operational waste permits.



We plan to do this by:

- 7.1 Horizon scanning for future government policy and collaborating with other councils, industry networks and businesses to adapt.
- 7.2 Reviewing our bin replacement charging policy to ensure collections can operate safely
- 7.3 Banning items in kerbside bins that may cause fire such as vapes, batteries, small electricals. These can be taken to recycling centres for recycling.
- 7.4 Reviewing our site permits issued by the Environment Agency to ensure permit compliance and opportunities for service and site improvements.

Next steps

This Waste Strategy for BCP Council sets out a pathway for the next 10 years. We will embed the ambitions and supporting actions outlined in this strategy into our service and team plans for progression and delivery.

We will monitor success using the waste and carbon targets of Ambition 3 to:

- Achieve our waste targets of landfill diversion (>90%) by 2035
- Achieve our recycling targets (>65%) by 2035
- Contributing towards the council's commitment carbon neutrality from our operations by 2030 by reducing vehicle and disposal emissions associated with waste and recycling

It is likely within these timeframes that there will be huge changes in national policy and legislation, shifts in waste composition and tonnages, emerging technologies and evolving public attitudes towards waste, all of which will influence how we manage our waste services in the BCP area. For this purpose, this strategy must be flexible and adaptable with a review at least every five years or in the case of any substantial change in legislation.

Glossary

Anaerobic Digestion (AD) – A process that breaks down organic waste such as food waste to produce biogas - a renewable energy which can be used to generate heat and electricity and by products known as digestate which can be used as fertiliser and compost.

Bring banks – small recycling points located in public areas for items such as textiles which are not collected at kerbside.

Carbon Impact Assessment – Evaluation of greenhouse gas emissions from waste services.

Circular Economy – An economic model focused on reuse, repair, and recycling to minimise waste with the intention that maximum use is extracted from resources and minimum waste is generated for disposal.

Contamination – Non-recyclable or incorrectly sorted materials in recycling bins.

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) – A system where consumers pay a deposit on plastic and aluminium drinks containers which is refunded upon return.

Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) – A government-led system designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It sets a limit (or "cap") on the total emissions allowed from certain sectors.

Energy from Waste (EfW) – Facilities that generate energy by incinerating waste.

Energy recovery - a waste treatment process used to recover energy and new raw materials from the waste. Recovery waste treatment processes include anaerobic digestion and Energy from Waste (EfW).

Environment Act 2021 – UK legislation introducing reforms such as Simpler Recycling, Deposit Return Scheme, and Extended Producer Responsibility.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) – A policy approach where producers are responsible for the cost of dealing with the packing waste they produce. This means producers must help pay for recycling and disposal, encouraging them to design packaging that is easier to recycle and less harmful to the environment.

Kerbside Collection – Waste and recycling collected directly from households.

Landfill Diversion – The proportion of waste not sent to landfill.

Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) – A plant where mixed recyclables are sorted into separate material streams.

Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) – A process that mechanically and biologically treats residual waste.

Municipal recycling - Recycling of waste collected by or on behalf of a local authority. It includes household waste and some commercial or public sector waste (like from schools or offices) that is similar in nature and composition to household waste.

Organic Waste – Biodegradable waste including food and garden waste.

Procurement - The process of buying goods, works and services from third parties and in-house providers.

Recyclables – Materials that can be processed and reused, such as paper, glass, metals, and certain plastics.

Recycling rate – The percentage of total waste that is recycled or composted.

Residual waste – Waste that is not reused, recycled, composted or anaerobically digested.

Sharps collection – A service for collecting medical sharps waste from residents.

Simpler recycling - A government initiative introduced through the Environment Act 2021 to make recycling easier and more consistent across England. It requires all councils to collect a standard set of recyclable materials from households and businesses, including food waste and plastic film, by 2027. The aim is to reduce confusion, improve recycling rates, and support a circular economy.

Unitary authority - A type of local government that is responsible for all local services in its area. Unlike areas with separate county and district councils, a unitary authority handles everything from waste collection and housing to education and transport. BCP Council is a unitary authority.

Waste composition analysis – A study of the types and quantities of waste in bins.

Waste hierarchy - The waste hierarchy sets out the order in which options for waste management should be considered based on environmental impact.

Waste infrastructure - The buildings, equipment, and systems used to manage waste such as recycling centres, waste transfer stations, collection vehicles and bins.

Background Reports

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole kerbside waste and recycling compositional analysis:
M.E.L. Waste Insights Alfred H. Knight Group 2022

BCP Council's Residents Survey 2023

WRAP (2022) & (2025) Waste and Recycling Technical Support to BCP Council

Waste Strategy Consultation Report 2025

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Waste Strategy Consultation Report

July 2025

Methodology

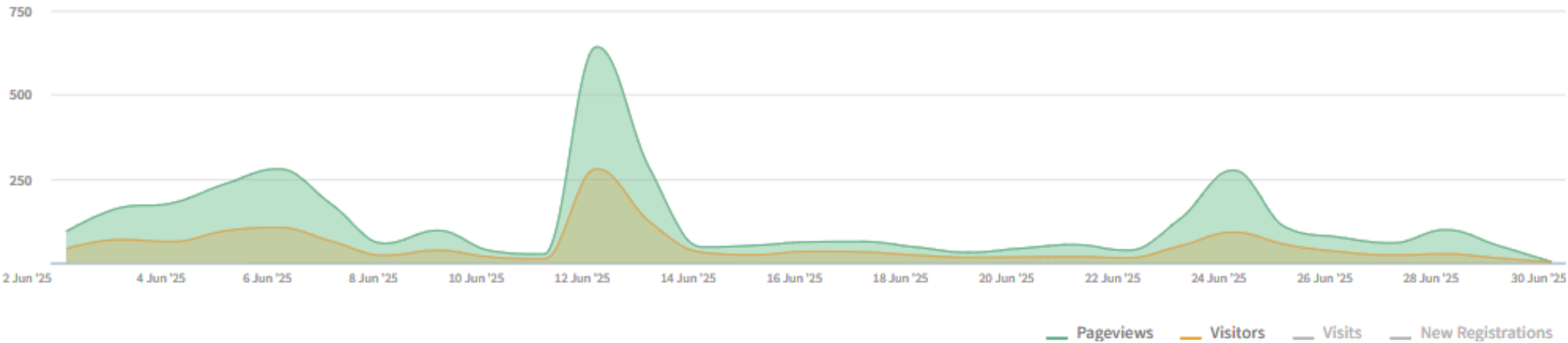
- The consultation ran from 2 June 2025 to 29 June 2025
- It was available at haveyoursay.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/Waste-strategy
- Paper copies were available in libraries
- The consultation was also promoted at Council Recycling Centres
- The following formats were available:
 - online survey
 - paper surveys

Consultation webpage visits



Visitors Summary

Have Your Say Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole from 02 Jun'25 to 30 Jun'25



Aware Visitors (viewed EHQ page)	Informed Visitors (Interacted with EHQ page)	Engaged Visitors (Completed survey online)
1288	770	303

Social Media Activity



5 posts were published on our social media channels during the consultation

124

Channel	Reach	Impressions	Engagement
Facebook	9.1k	9.7k	628
Instagram	1.6k	2.6k	14
X	-	-	-
LinkedIn	-	1.2	32
Total	10,706	13,521	674

Survey Findings

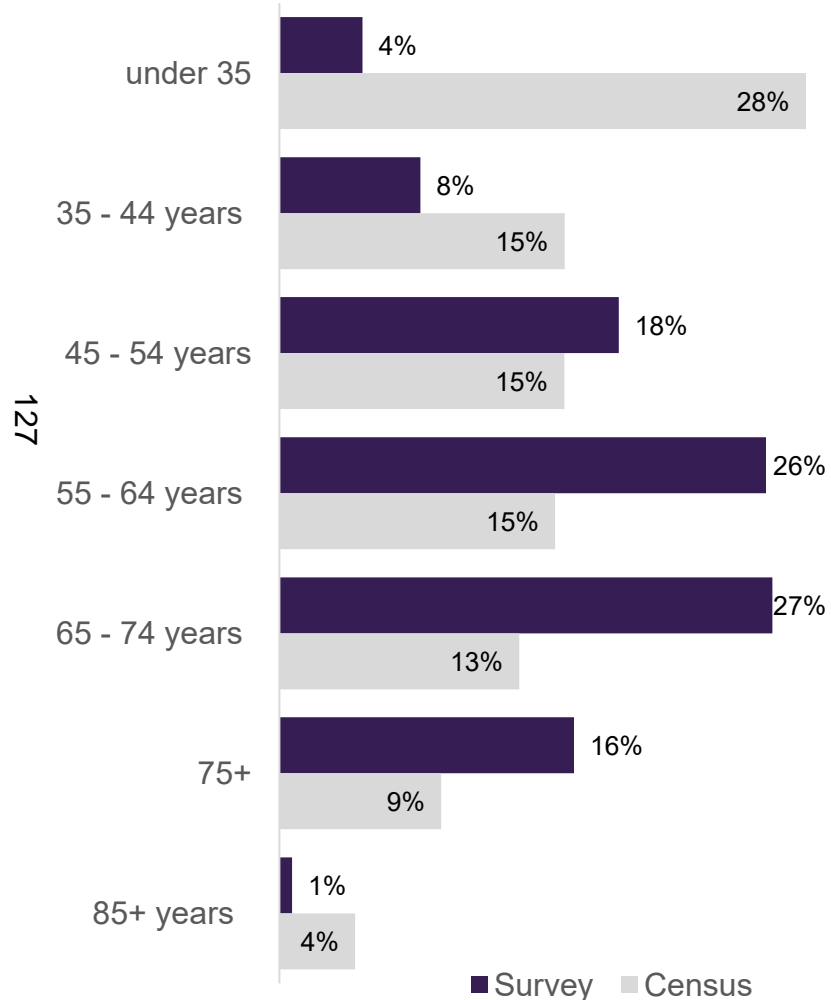
Response

Total number of surveys completed	Number completed on-line	Number of paper surveys completed
312	303	9

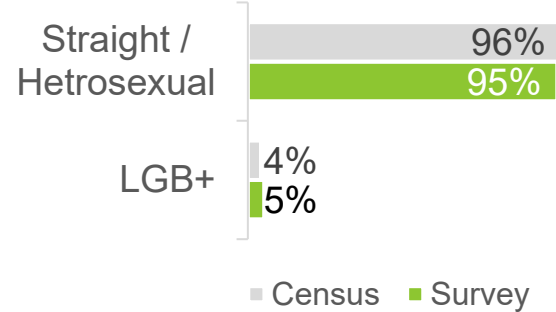
- 303 respondents said they were responding as an individual
- 2 respondents said they were responding as a business and an individual
- 7 did not answer

Respondent profile

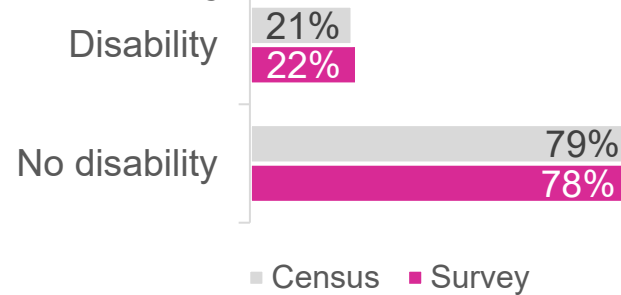
Age group



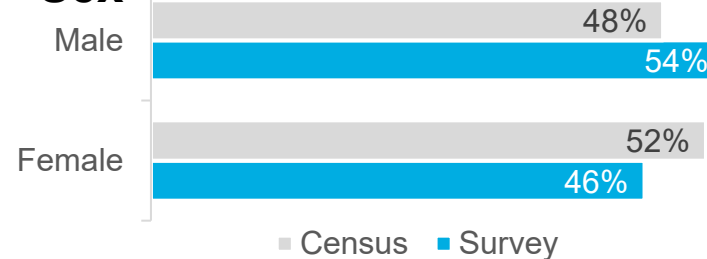
Sexual orientation



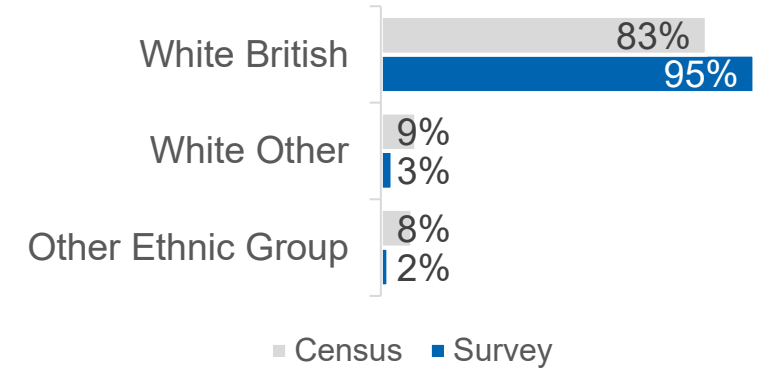
Disability



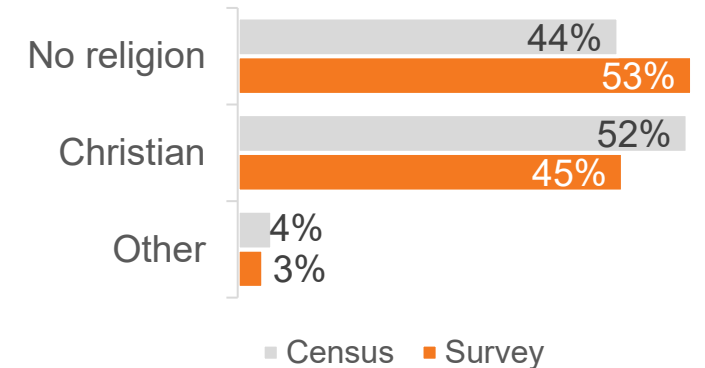
Sex



Ethnicity



Religion



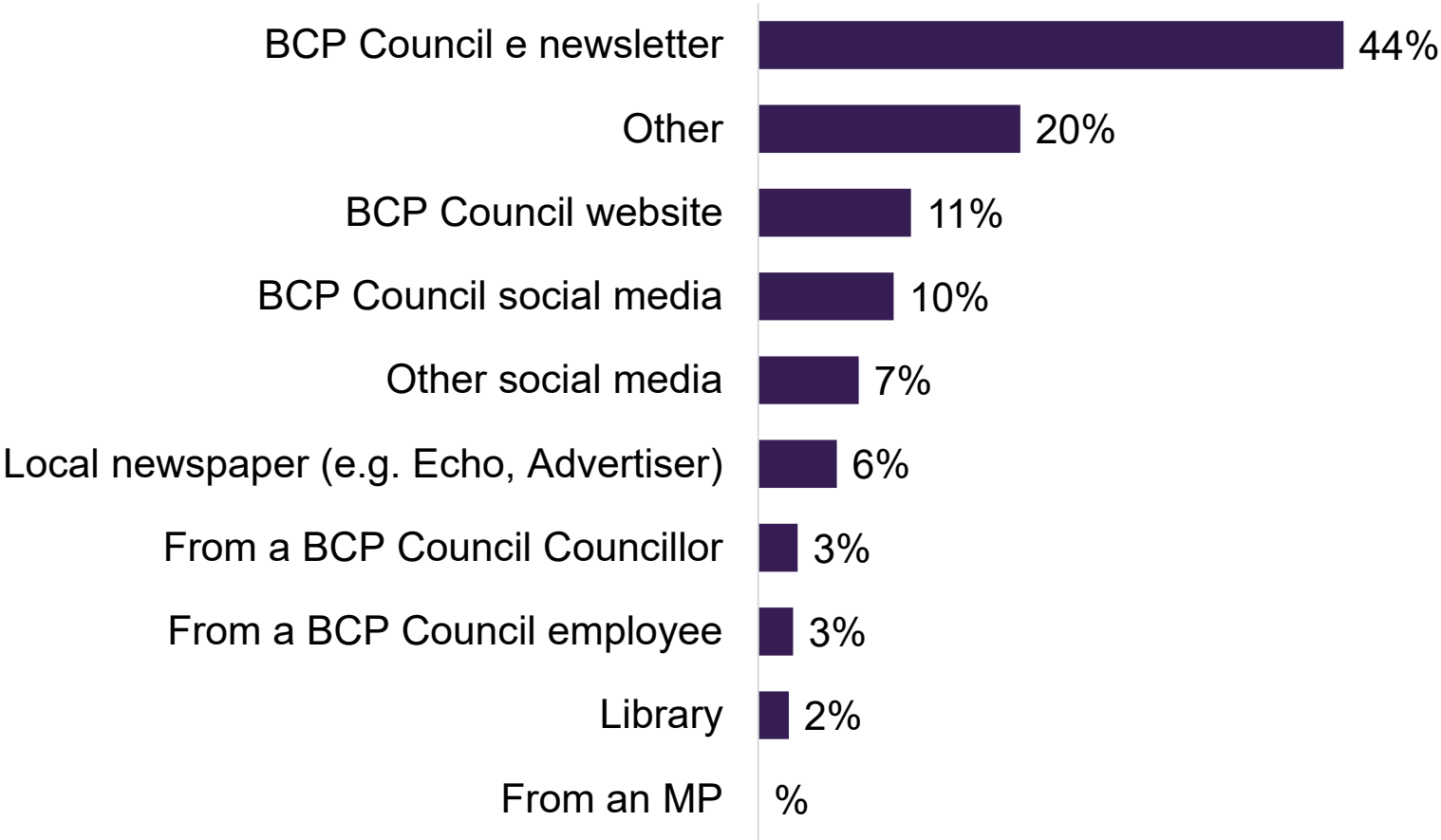
How did you find out about the consultation?



By BCP Council e newsletter was the most popular way of finding out about the consultation at 44%

Other responses included:

- Residents Association
- Facebook
- A friend
- Neighbour
- Someone from household
- Residents' magazine
- Repair Café
- BCP Staff intranet
- Have your say home page



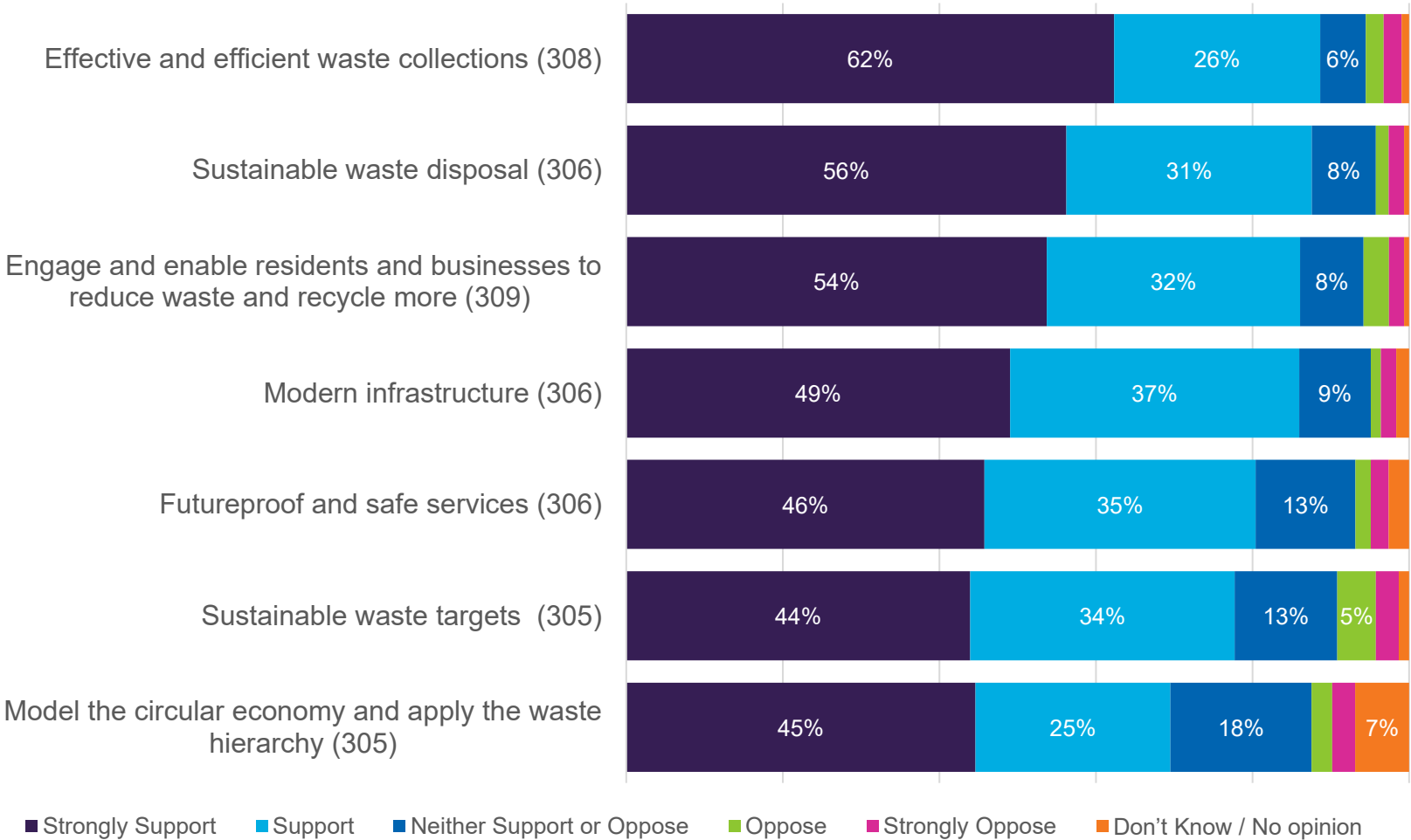
Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?



Effective and efficient waste collections had **the most support** (273)

Sustainable waste targets has **the most opposed** responses (24)

Model the circular economy and apply the waste hierarchy had the **most don't knows** (21)

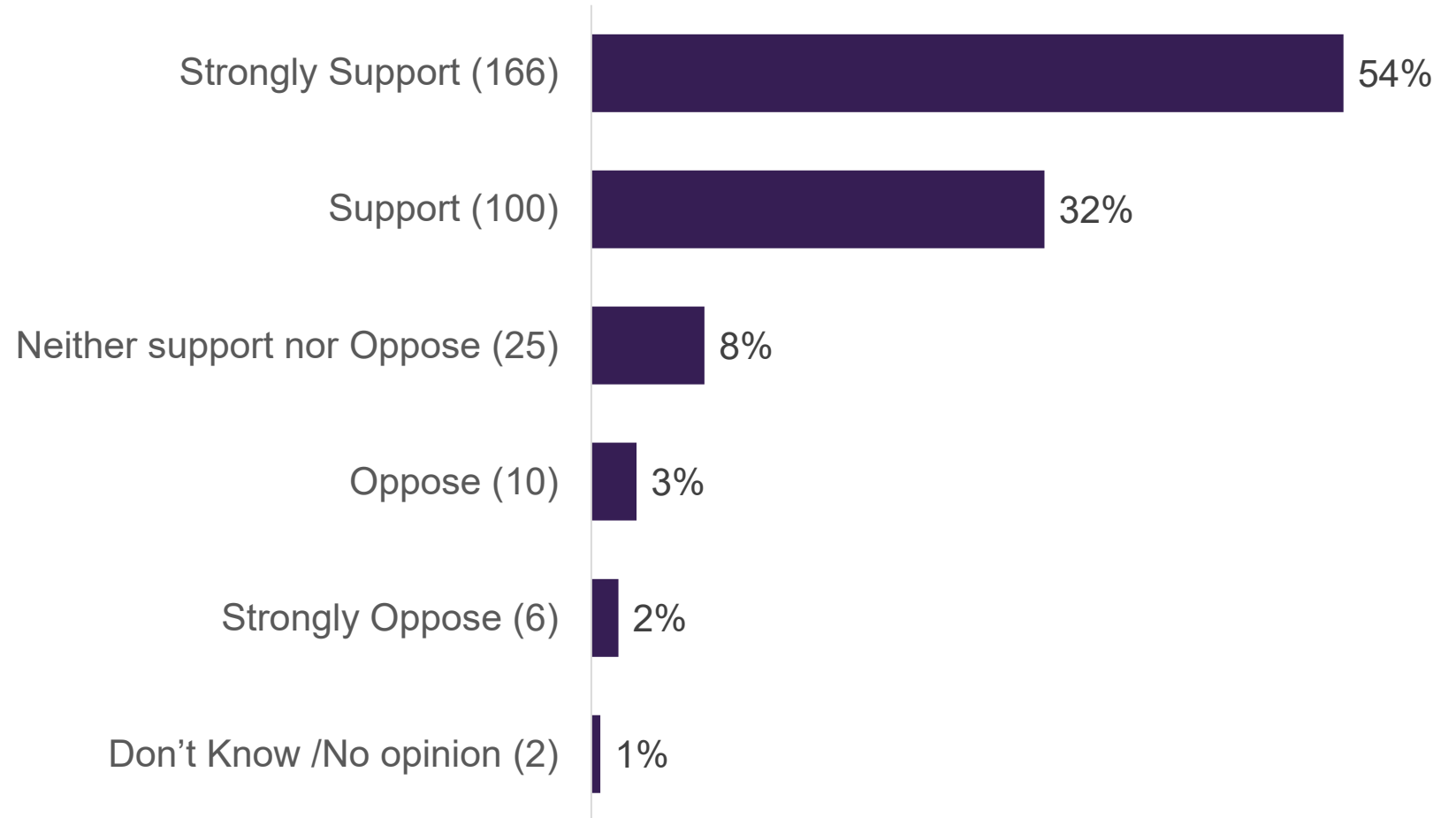


Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Engage and enable residents and businesses to reduce waste and recycle more

130

86% of those who responded supported the ambition



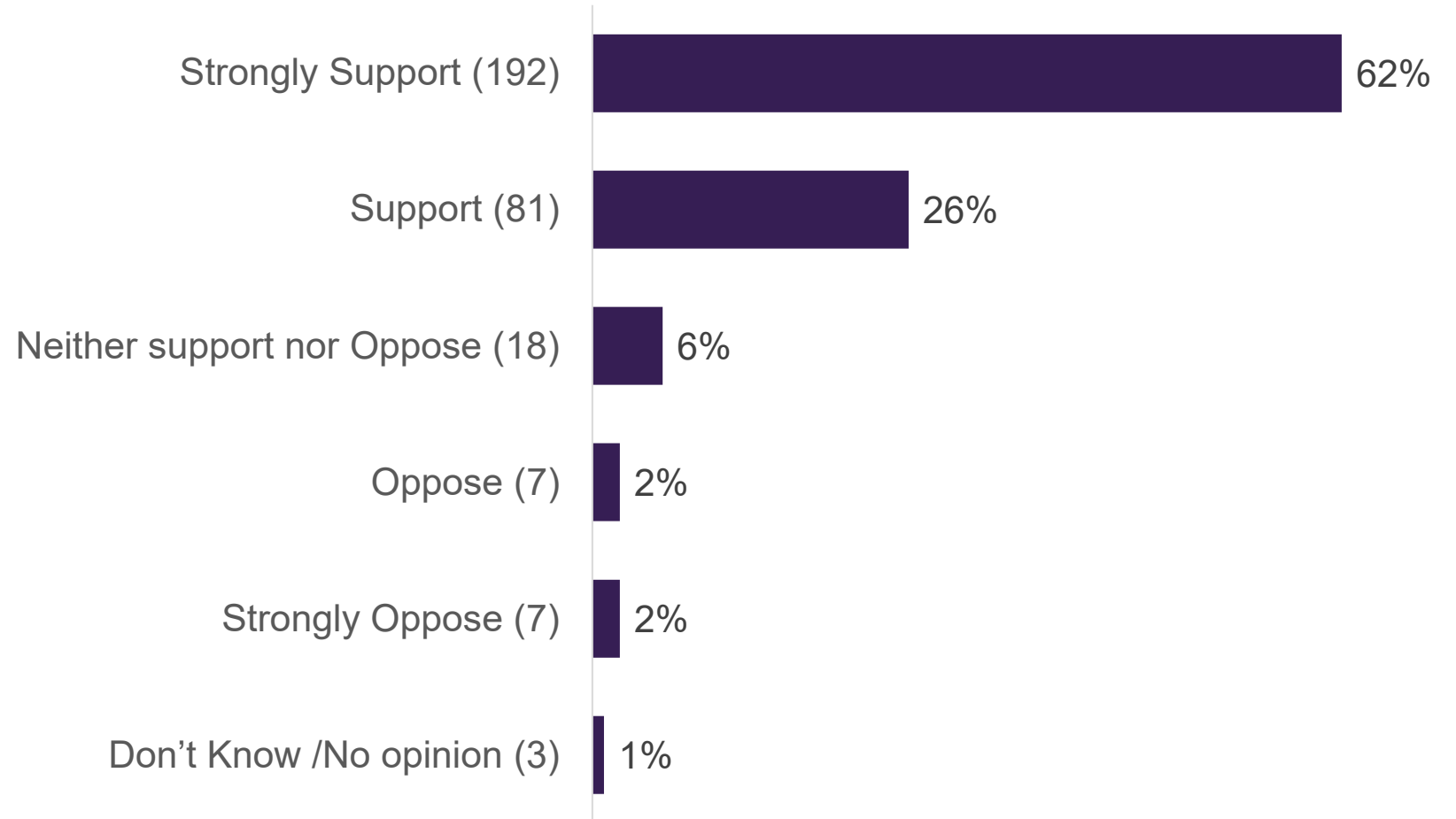
Base 309

Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Effective and efficient waste collections

131

88% of those who responded supported the ambition



Base 308

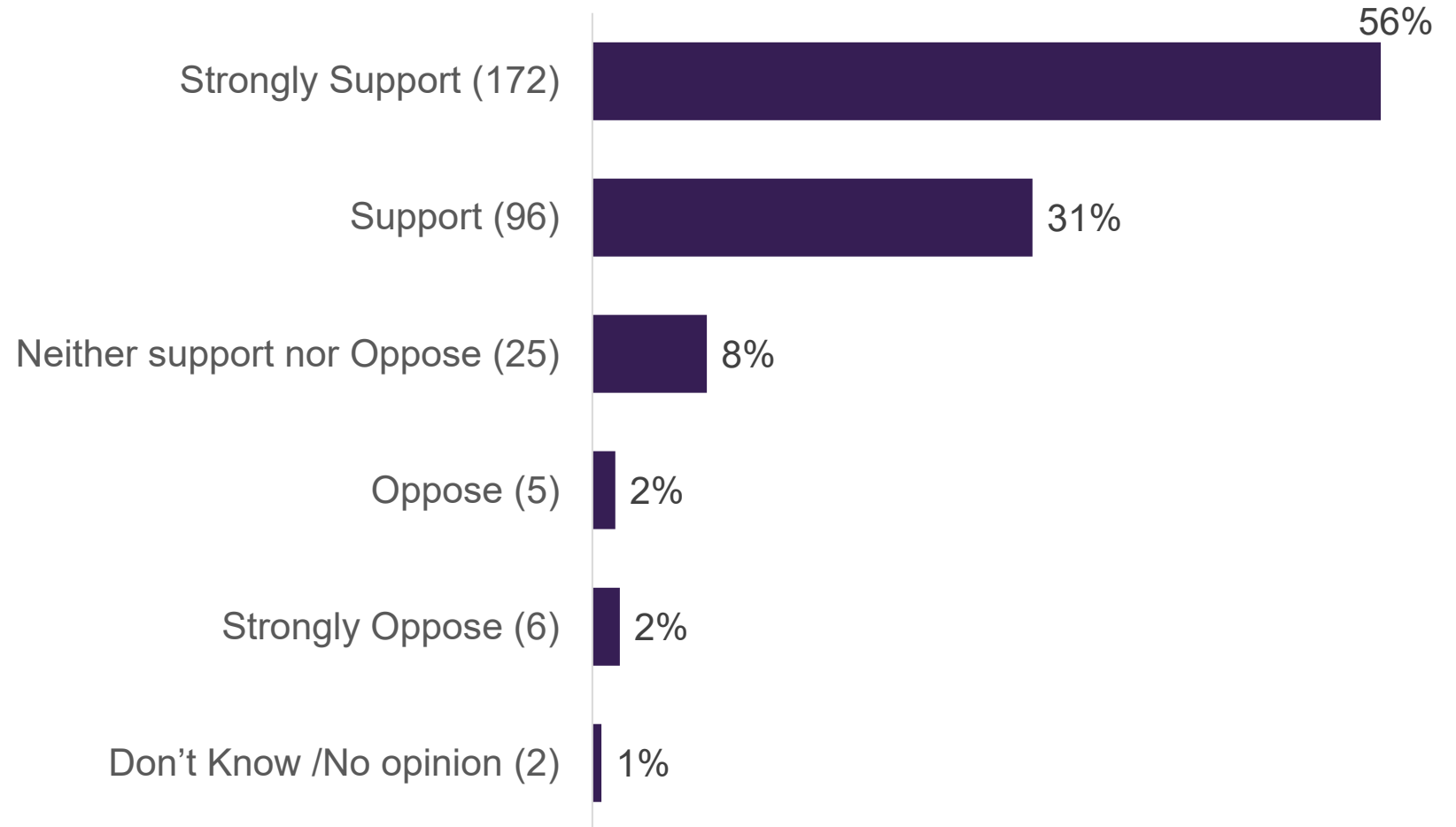
Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?



Sustainable waste disposal

132

87% of those who responded supported the ambition



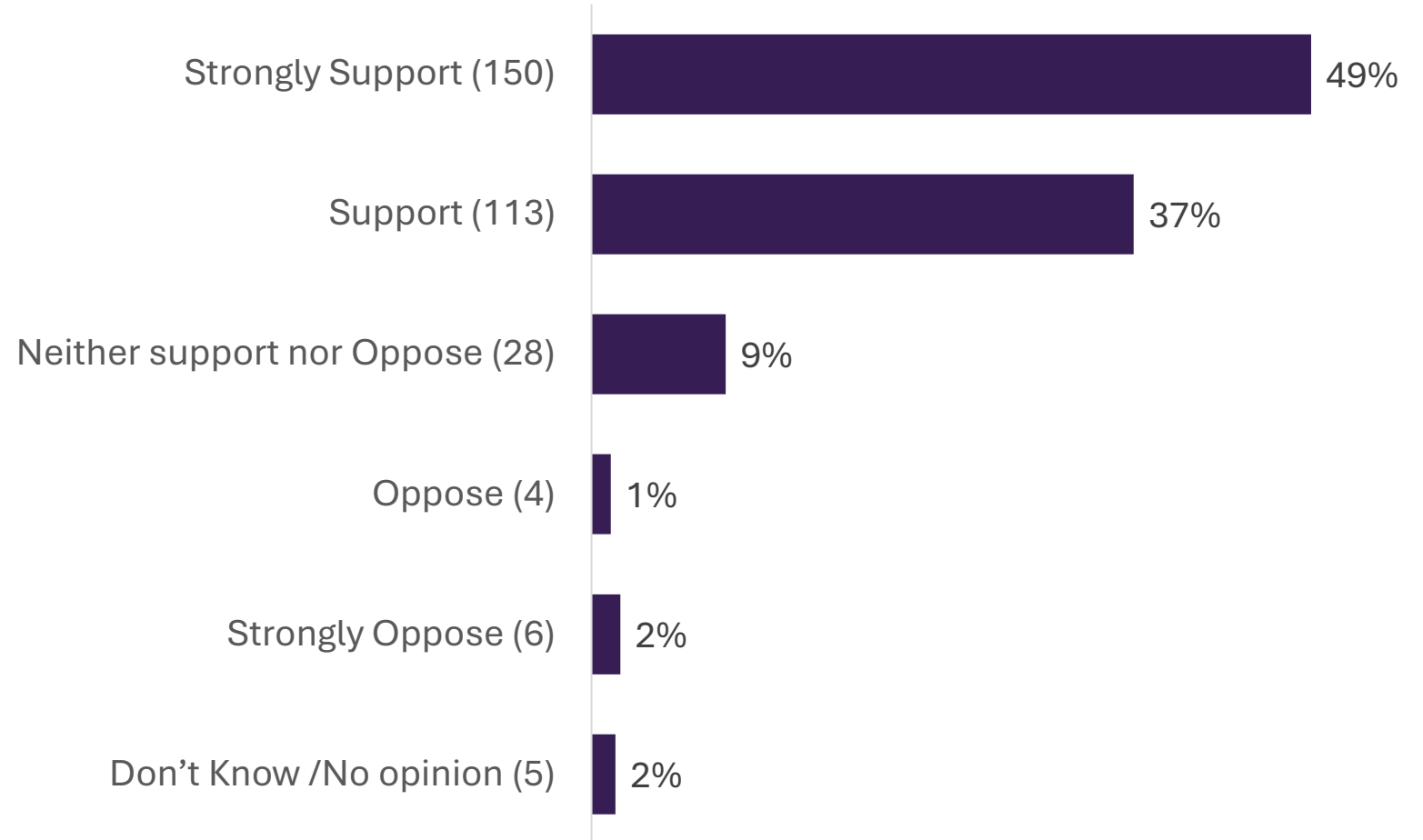
Base 306

Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Modern infrastructure

133

86% of those who responded supported the ambition



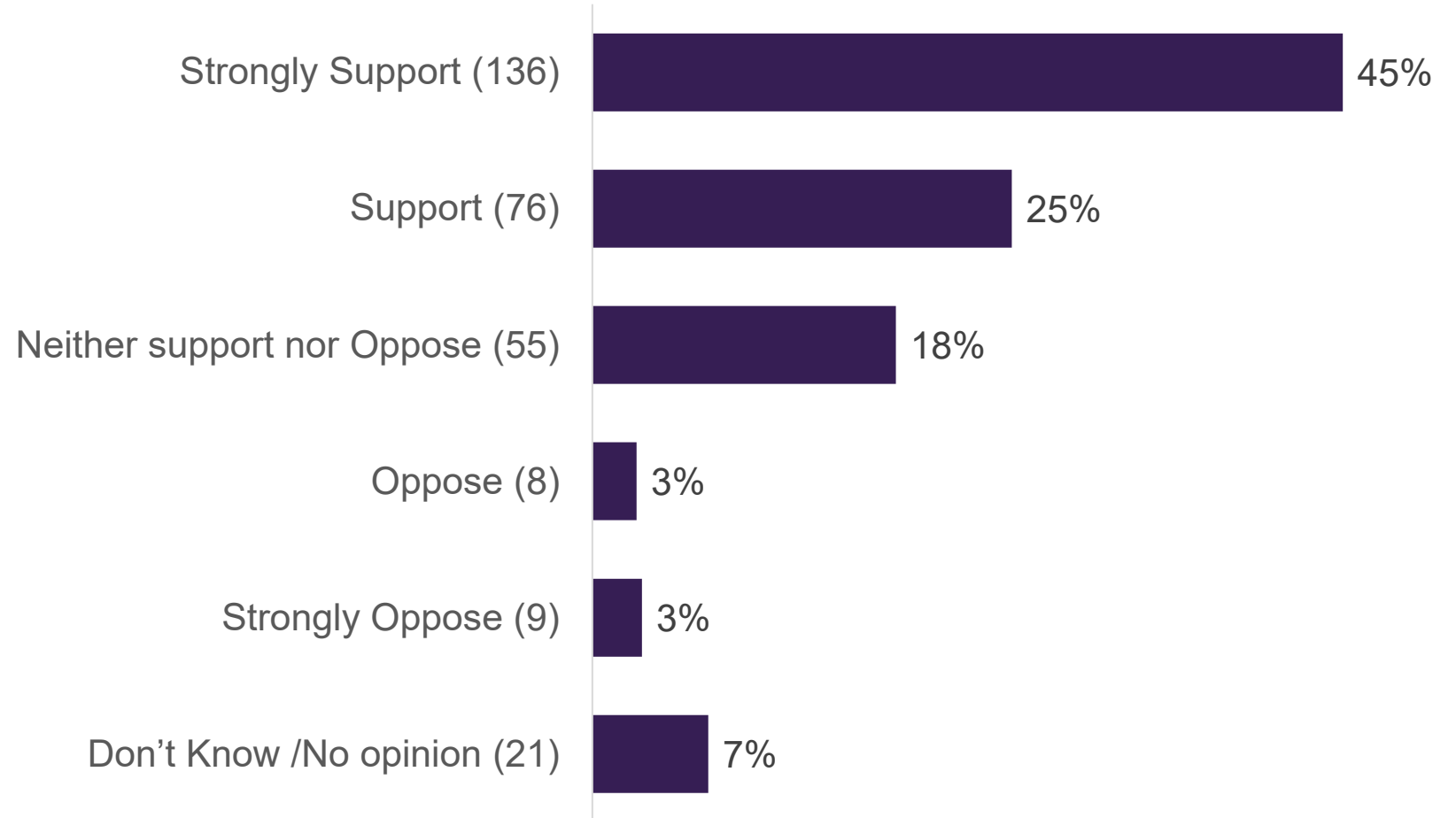
Base 306

Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Model the circular economy and apply the waste hierarchy

134

70% of those who responded supported the ambition



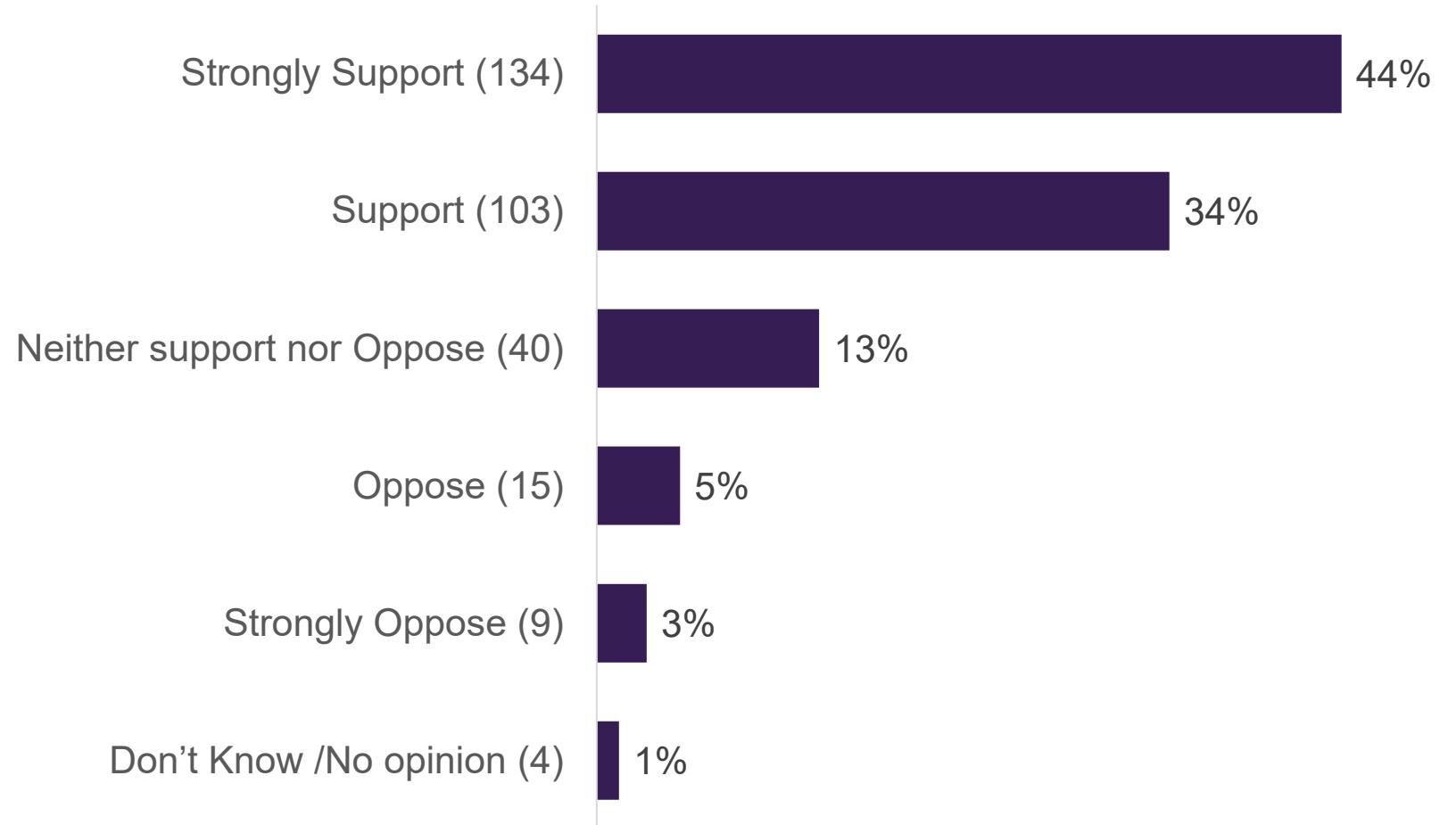
Base 305

Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Sustainable waste targets

135

77% of those who responded supported the ambition

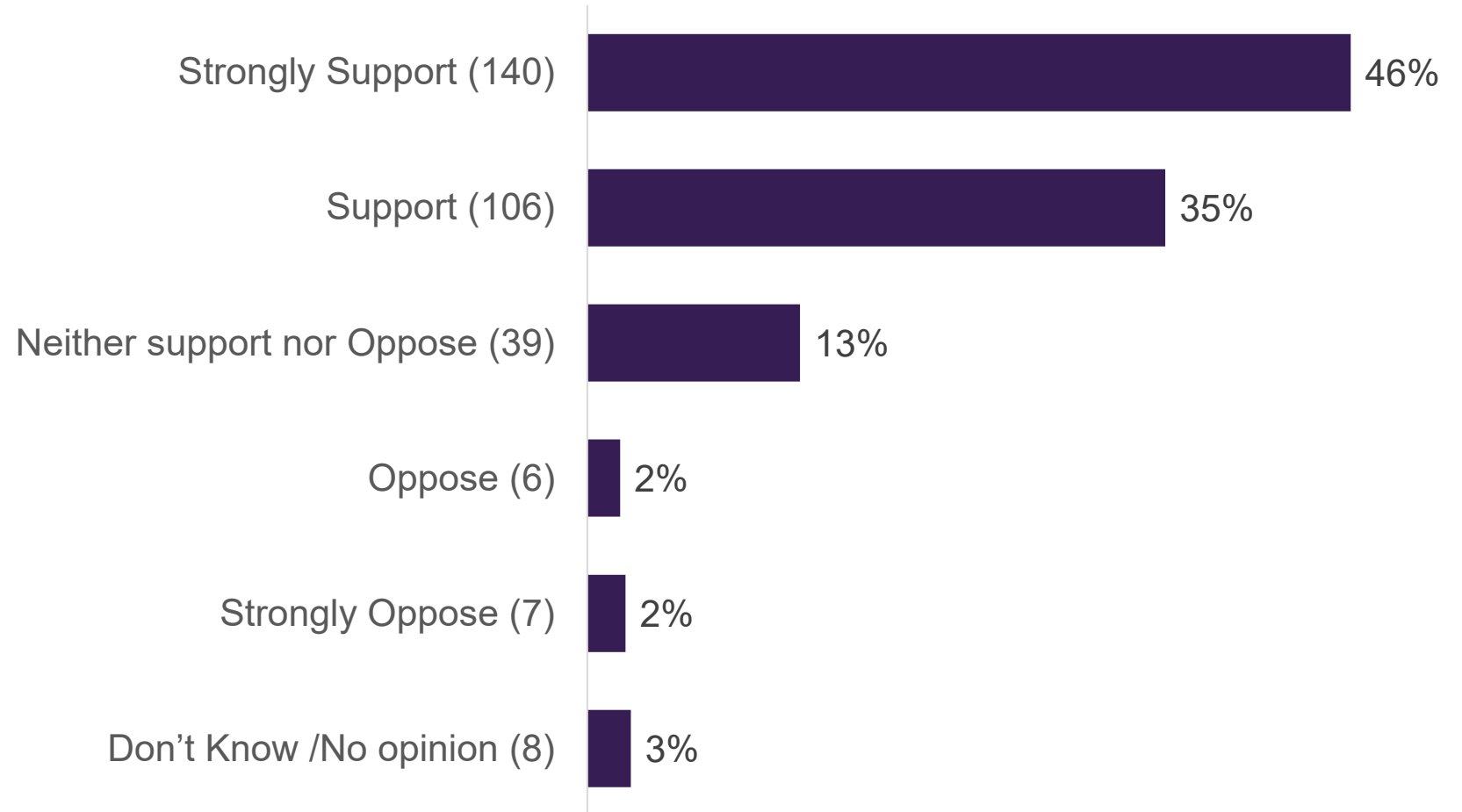


Do you support the proposed waste strategy ambitions?

Futureproof and safe services

136

81% of those who responded supported the ambition



Base 306

Ambitions – Comment themes

Theme	Comment
General Support for ambitions	Respondents broadly agreed with the ambitions - such as improving recycling, reducing waste, and promoting sustainability. However, this support was often conditional.
Simple and accessible recycling	Respondents want recycling to be straightforward and accessible , with clear systems that minimize confusion. There are concerns that the proposed ambitions might complicate processes or reduce services - especially bin collections - making recycling harder, particularly for vulnerable groups.
Desire to rehome, repair and repurpose	There is frustration over the removal of local reuse facilities , as respondents wanted better support to repair, rehome, and repurpose items.
Education and communication	There's strong support for better education and communication to help residents and businesses understand what can be recycled and how to do it properly.
Business accountability	Some respondents felt businesses must be held more accountable for waste reduction, with better enforcement and clearer expectations.
Opposition	There is opposition to the use of incineration for disposing of waste.
Calls for Stronger Action	Some felt the ambitions were not ambitious enough , particularly around recycling and reuse.
Equity and Fairness	There were concerns about inconsistency of the food waste service across the BCP area.
Trust and Communication	Some respondents questioned the consultation's authenticity and clarity, expressing a need for more information and concern over how the objectives would be delivered .

155 comments received

Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

138

“The availability of items taken to the tip that could be resold is not acceptable. There needs to be local points where items can be found. For example a shop in Poole is not helpful for someone in Christchurch who doesn't/ can't drive. This would allow more items to be reused.”

“Effective and efficient waste collections - difficult to know what you mean by this, the devil is in the detail with these sorts of statements. If that means a reduction in black bin waste collection I would not support. Similarly modern infrastructure - if that means huge lorries and resulting development dominated by bins I would not support. More details on the implications are needed to fully understand the ambitions.”

“I support all the above as statements, but I am very wary/suspicious of these statements/desires being used as an excuse to cut services down to unrealistic levels.”

“Whilst I support the council waste ‘ambitions’ in theory, I would like to know what strategies will be put in place, extra costs for residents, etc. to achieve these goals/ambitions. Or a realistic and achievable action plan with costs. Also, how you would go about changing people’s mindsets into being more responsible to follow more sustainable habits?. I appreciate you have to write these strategies to satisfy a number of parties, but let them be more than just words”

“Ensure the future of Christchurch recycling centre with improved opening hours. To bring back the for sale items as this allows discarded items to be reused instead of just dumped into a skip.”

“Can try to achieve this without increasing council tax further, please.”

“These are all meaningful words - but I see no costs. Hopefully this means you will achieve all these splendid targets from your own existing resources.”

“The system should be simple to use and follow the waste hierarchy”

“Keep it simple and as cost effective as possible. Maintain existing waste collection cycles.”

Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

139

“Co-mingled bins recycling is best... Keep recycling for residents simple and straight forward. No point making it complicated to squeeze another 1% residents can’t understand what is/isn’t recyclable even now. Don’t clutter the streets with more bins and don’t have bags or open boxes that attract vermin and gulls.

Do more checks to see businesses are using approved waste handlers and more checks businesses are using commercial and not residential or street litter bins”

“I would like focus on recycling, rat control and stronger focus on landlords and their responsibilities”

“Need to encourage recycling among our businesses, and in communal blocks of flats.”

“I believe statistically, businesses cause more landfill and do not recycle anywhere near as much as residents. Focus should be on those.”

“If a council tax payer takes a item to the waste centre i.e. say a two buckets of soil, or a toilet pan please scrap the charges for small amounts if you scrapped charges on some items people would less inclined to fly tip, You need to charge it one takes a van load with items. so just make it easier to get ride of items without large charges”

“Encouragement to reduce and reuse is important factor that all should consider and ‘chucking it in bin’ should be last option rather than some peoples first. So education/information needs to improve”

“Anything to make recycling/ waste easier for today’s modern world. “

“Better education in how we can better recycle. Have better and more options on recycling plastic bags and packaging”.

“Incineration is NOT the way to go forward, even as an interim measure.”

“To clarify I am against burning of waste materials. The focus should be on recycling more. BCP has a lot of houses that have recycling bins, make the most of them.”

“Waste incinerators are not a sustainable way to dispose of non-recyclable rubbish.”

Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

“Sustainable waste targets should be more challenging than they are.”

“The need for an overhaul of the current waste system is desperately needed, so I strongly support these ambitions. Need to set challenging ambitions to drive change.”

“A bit woolly does not say how this will be done. Suspect it will not actually help residents”

“I have marked 'Support' on infrastructure as not certain what 'Improving our waste sites' comprises - the environment should be considered at all times. My concerns are to NOT install new incinerators at huge cost to nature and our green belt. Sustainable waste targets - 2045 is a long way off, is this ambitious enough? Doesn't sound it, but without knowing the details its hard to comment. Also wording 'We also need to meet the Government's waste targets to recycle 65% of our waste and send less than 10% to landfill by 2035' doesn't state that you WILL meet it. You're stating a need rather than an intention to meet this.”

“I think this is really important. However an immediate thing that could be changed is to start food waste collections in Poole. I find it extremely unfair that you collect in Bournemouth and Christchurch but not Poole when it is the same council. I have lived here for nearly 6 years and have asked about this multiple times & have never had a clear explanation as to why you can't just apply the same scheme here.”

“It all looks like waffle. What does it actually mean in practice?”

“There isn't much information here. I don't really know what I'm voting on.”

“In principle, I support the above aims but I cannot give a categoric response without sight of the methods and costs proposed to achieve these aims.”

“No, but getting good waste bins out to Poole Residents should be on the list”.

“I suspect you have already decided what your policy will be and this is purely a tick box exercise.”

Are there any other ambitions you think should be considered?

Theme	Comment
Expand and Simplify Recycling	Respondents want easier accessible recycling options that include hard-to-recycle items, They would like clearer guidance on what can be recycled, where it goes, and how much is reused
Equal Access to Services	There's demand for consistent waste services across all areas , especially Poole.
Reduce Plastic and Packaging Waste	Respondents want action to reduce packaging at the source, eliminating unnecessary plastics and to promote reusable alternatives to businesses.
Improve Waste Infrastructure	Suggestions focus on more frequent collections , better bin placement , and reliable services .
Tackle Fly-Tipping and Litter	Respondents want tougher enforcement and easier legal disposal to prevent illegal dumping.
Promote Repair and Reuse	There's support for community-based reuse and repair initiatives to reduce waste.
Education and Awareness	Respondents want better public education on recycling , especially for younger generations.
Oppose Incineration	Many respondents are firmly against incineration and want sustainable alternatives.
Make Recycling Centres More Accessible	People want easier access to tips without booking systems or restrictive policies.
Incentivise Sustainable Behaviour	Ideas include financial rewards and policy changes to encourage greener habits.

Ideas for other Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

"I would like to see more information made publicly available about how to manage items that can not be put in current recycling - e.g. pringle cans, aerosols, deodorants etc"

"Local council tips should be easily accessible near to local residents and free to use. The Christchurch tip provides an example of an excellent facility which is tides well run and easily accessed. This service should be replicated across the area. Better waste management and ease of use would meet most criteria. Don't make it difficult for residents."

"Please please please do not bring in any crazy booking schemes for our community waste sites. All you need to do is change the contract so they are open longer!

"As a Bransgore resident we have been excluded from using our local recycling centre at Somerford. We now have to drive 10 miles to use the Lymington or Somerley sites. We shop in Somerford and have always used our local site at Somerford. An additional employee is now required to reject those that do not reside in the BCP area and similar measures have been taken to exclude Verwood residents from Somerley. This is incredibly petty and requires many extra miles to be driven. Is a bit of give and take too much to ask?"

"When will we be able to recycle food waste in Poole and hard plastics again?"

"Food waste should be introduced to households as soon as possible."

"Feedback data back regularly to residents on how much is recycled, improve clarity on what can be recycled and where, increase the number of items that can be recycled...make it more transparent...what happens to the things that can't be recycled. Where do they go? Recycling here is very important but the bigger picture too and I think people will engage more if they know."

"I urge the council to advocate local businesses as well as global businesses who operate in this area to look at packaging. As well as raising consumers awareness about what packaging is used on the goods they buy."

"... lobby retailers to use packaging materials, both for food and goods, that is easier to recycle."

Ideas for other Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

“...central government should insist that all packaging is recyclable and that all authorities should recycle the same materials. This would have standardised the packing and made recycling so much easier.”

“...reduce the amounts of packaging at source. Then there will be less waste to deal with.”

“An idea would be to make supermarkets more responsible for recycling their packaging. So, when you go shopping you take your plastic cartons/trays and deposit them in a place designated by the supermarket.”

“Ensure that any residential waste collection is efficient and done regularly to encourage proper recycling and waste management”

“I have heard we may be going to 3 weekly bin collections as opposed to 2 weekly and I strongly oppose this”

“Not reducing the number of bin collections as it makes fly tipping worse”

“Don't overcomplicate matters, keep waste selection simple so residents understand it. To most people, waste is just waste, they won't devote time to worrying about in which bin they should place rubbish. Also avoid the law of unintended consequences: fly tipping will increase if residents feel collection is too infrequent, or too expensive.”

“... pursue fly-tippers who are spoiling the countryside”

“Seriously punish fly tippers.”

“Think about how we collect waste around the area and how bins overflow quickly. In Spain they have bins where there is a significantly larger collection area beneath the bin to stop it overflowing. This would significantly help reduce rubbish and recyclable items being discarded next to an overflowing bin.”

“... bins can come with signage to say what can be recycled...”

“Cleaner streets need to be implemented through fines. More cameras set up to catch fly tipping in common areas.”

“Ensure waste recycling sites are available to residents without the need for booked appointments. Enforce rigorously only tipping - more cameras more prosecutions. Can we charge fly-tippers full cleanup costs?”

Ideas for other Ambitions – Example quotes from respondents

“Create legislation that outlaws built in obsolescence and ensures that every attempt is made to make products repairable.”

“Educating people and children via schools the imperativeness of this for the future. I believe a lot of recycling is “spoilt””

“Repair Shop type council run. To allow items to be brought in and repaired.”

“More awareness [among] young people. More encouragement to reuse and repair. Discourage people from throwing away items away and buying new ones. Stop littering”

“...do all of this without the use of incinerators.”

“Rewards systems; can we find a way to make people financially better off if they recycle more? Reductions on council tax, credits to use on the buses. I've seen similar systems in Europe where returning bottles and cans to drop off points can earn a little extra cash.”

“Reminders re litter, keep areas clean & tidy, encourage and promote”

“More recycling collections, less waste collections would mean people would need to think about recycling more.”

“Actively encourage use of reusable items through surcharges or bans on disposable items or e.g. reduced rates on premises for businesses who are making genuine efforts in this area.”

“Ambition for more information and educational opportunities, particularly at our recycling centres.”

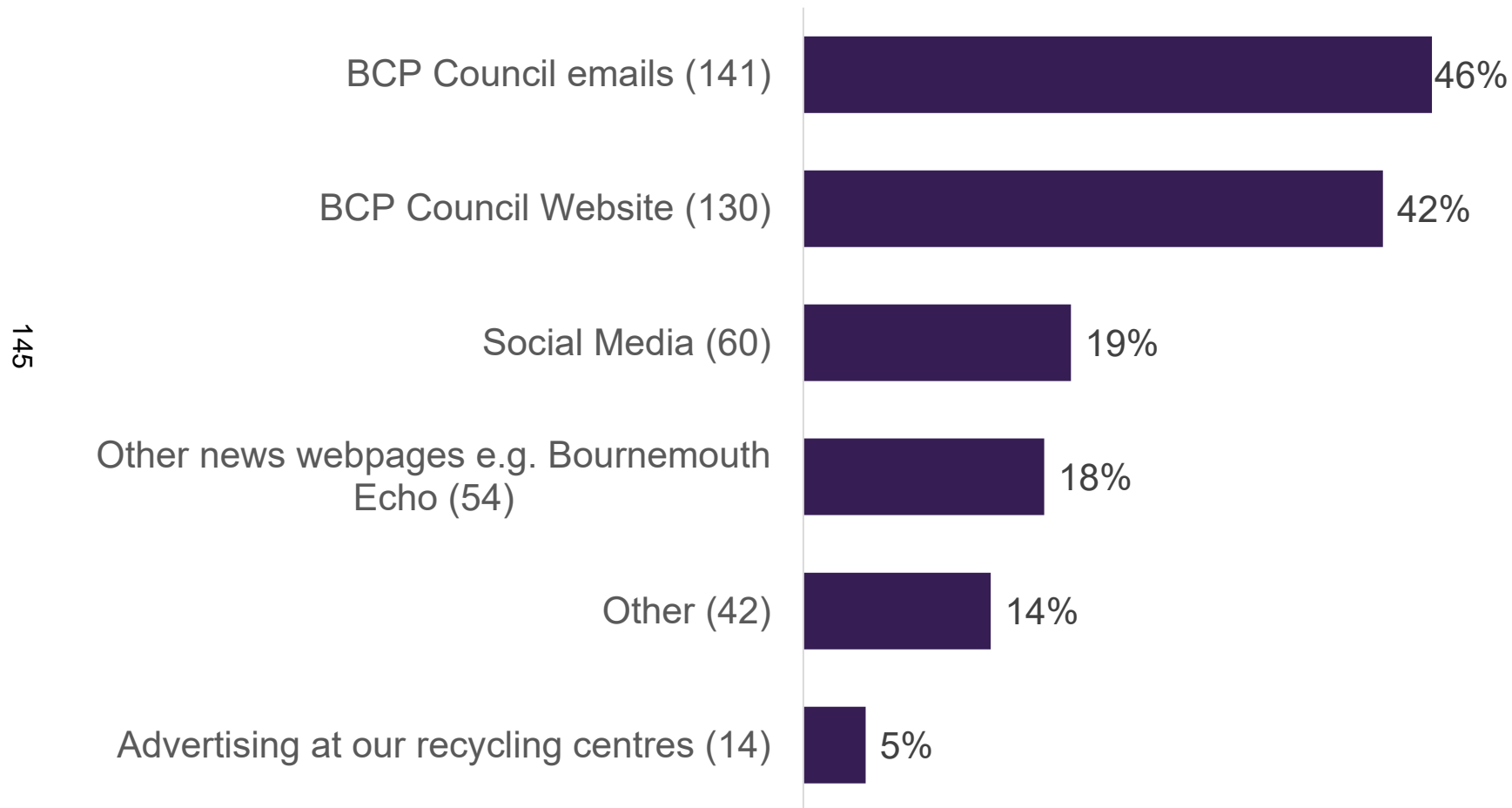
“More rehoming & repurposing. Free sites for people to deliver & collect items with use left.”

“Encouraging home composting with provision of discounted compost bins? Encouraging rainwater retention with discounted water butts and fitting kits where suitable?”

“Ease of access; to achieve a target you need to ensure whatever people need to do is feasible and accessible.”

“Increased recycling opportunities. le great range of material collected from households”

How do you hear about your council recycling and waste services?



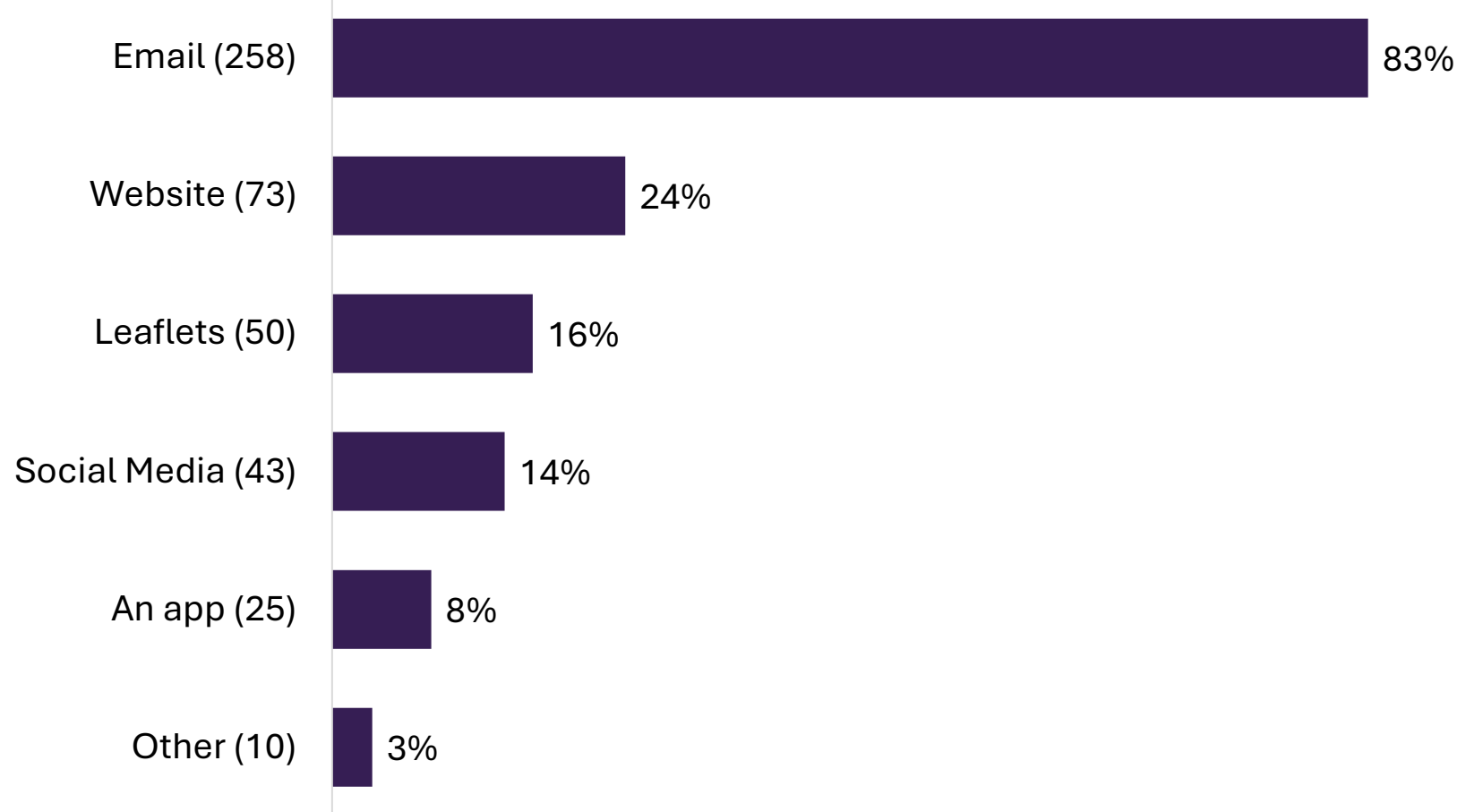
Other sources include:

- Residents Associations
- Email
- BCP Council / Official Channels
- Flyers / Mail / Posters
- Word of Mouth / Personal Contacts
- Library / Public Spaces
- Self-Initiated / No Clear Source
- Political / Leadership Mentions

Base 308

What are your preferred methods of communication when hearing from BCP Council about recycling and waste services?

146



Other methods included

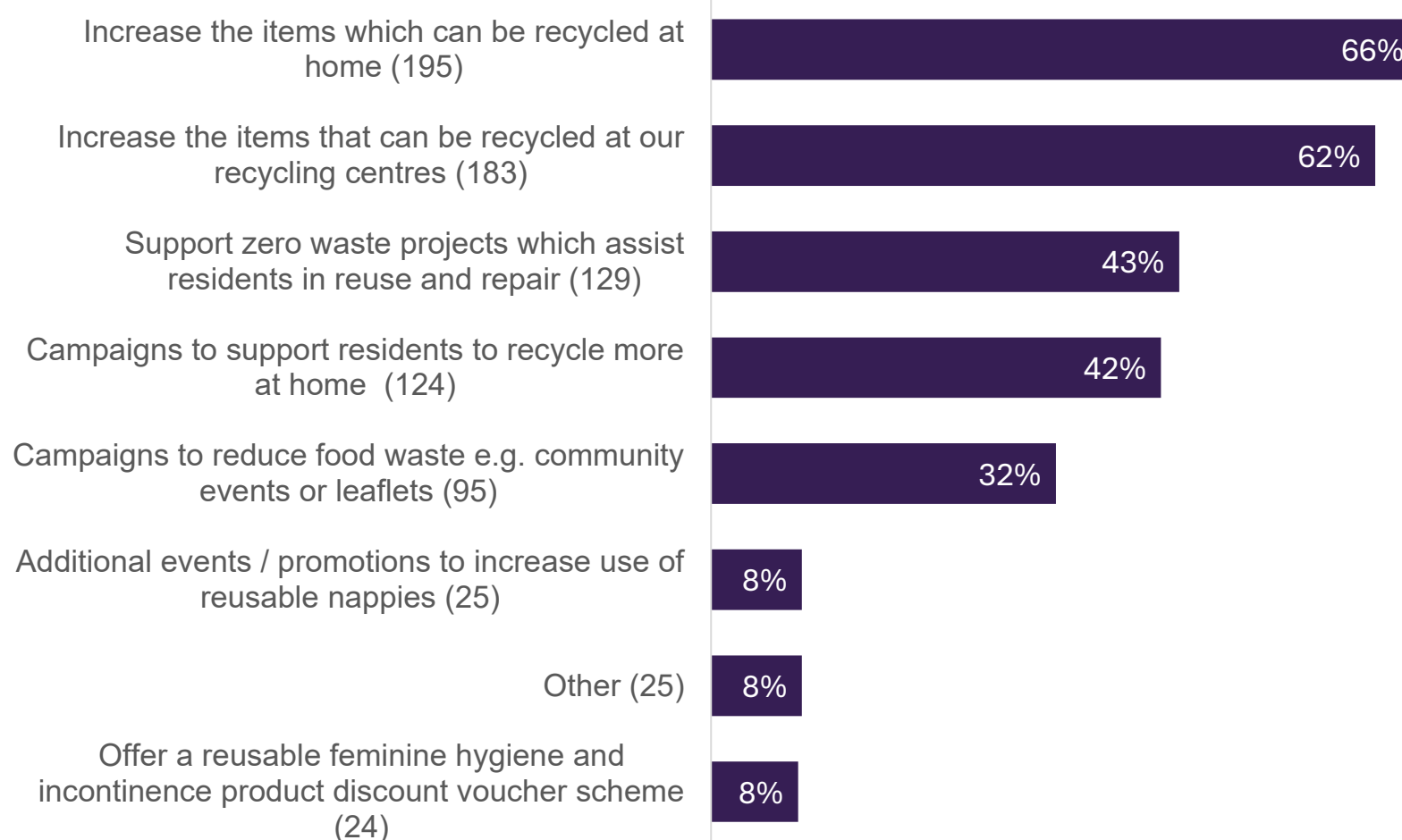
- Post
- Leaflets
- Posters
- Sticker on bin
- Local Councillors
- TV
- School newsletters
- Prefer no contact

Base 309

There are education campaigns and smaller service improvements we could consider

The top three selected by respondents

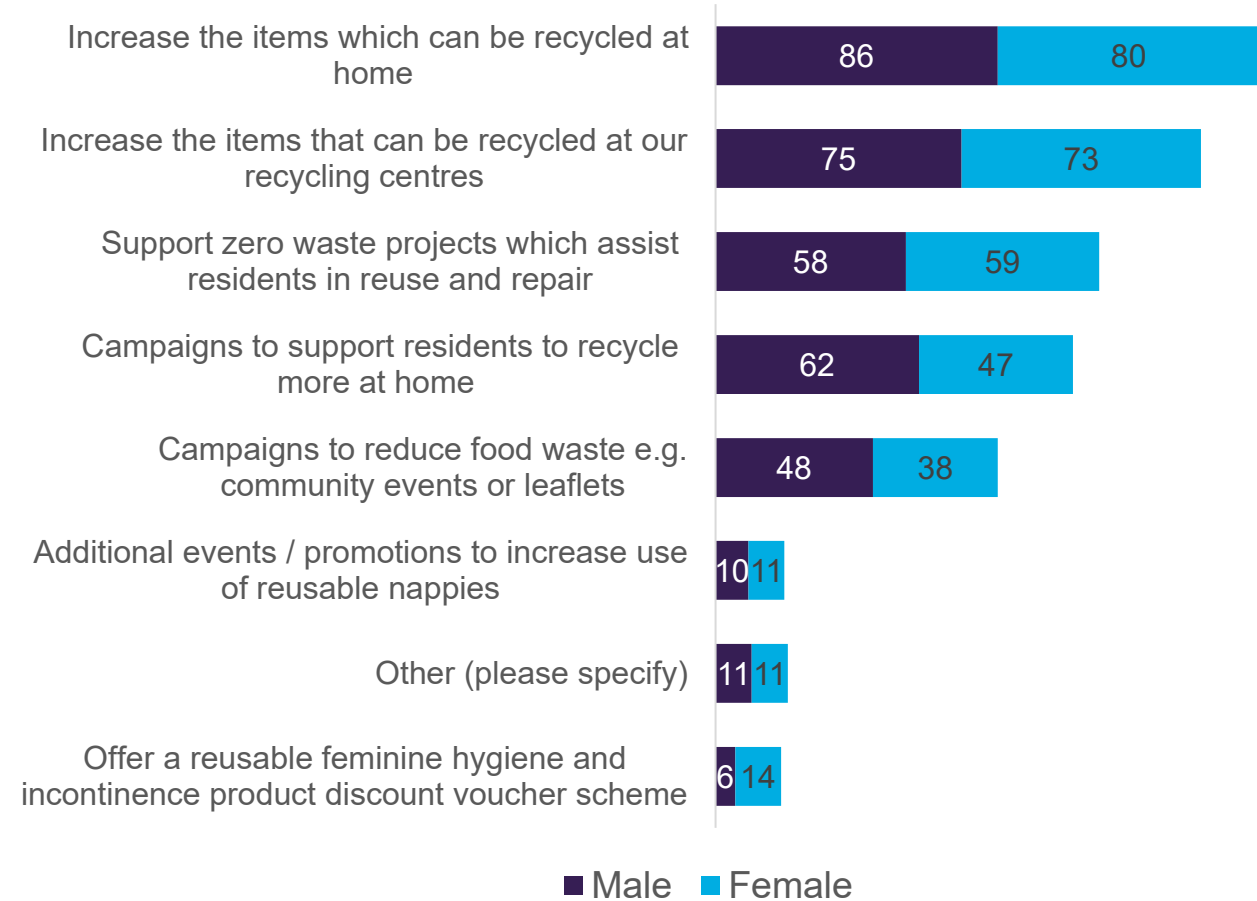
1. Increase the items which can be recycled at home
2. Increase the items that can be recycled at our recycling centres
3. Support zero waste projects which assist residents in reuse and repair



Base 297

There are education campaigns and smaller service improvements we could consider by sex

Male and female responses were largely similar, except for a few differences: **men were more likely to select** 'campaigns to support residents to recycle more at home' and 'campaigns to reduce food waste e.g. community events or leaflets', while **women were more likely to select** 'offer a reusable feminine hygiene and incontinence product discount voucher scheme'



Education campaigns and smaller service improvements.

Other

Theme	Comment
Make Recycling Easier and Broader	Respondents want simpler, clearer, more affordable recycling systems and more items accepted at kerbside and centres.
Improve Access for All Residents	There's concern that people without cars or in certain areas are excluded from services.
Promote Reuse and Circular Economy	There is support for rehoming, composting, and community-based reuse schemes/events.
Targeted Campaigns and Education	A few respondents want smarter, more focused campaigns – especially for landlords, businesses, and young people.
Hold Businesses Accountable	Some respondents feel businesses and hospitality venues should do more to reduce and manage waste.
Encourage Behaviour Change	Ideas include incentives like deposit return schemes and disincentives for littering.
Criticism of Council and Strategy	Some comments reflect frustration with council decisions and perceived inefficiencies .

25 comments received

Education campaigns – Example quotes from respondents

150

“...Something that always frustrates me is (as someone getting older and thinking about giving up a car) what do you do when you are older, with not a lot of money and you have no car to get to the recycling centre? (I would be prepared to get a bus and walk in, but we're not allowed to do that.) It's almost like poorer/people without transport are penalised. ...And no, I don't have relatives or friends with cars that could do it for me”

“Reduce cost to residents and reduce hassle disposing of waste”

“Recycle batteries and electricals at kerbside e.g. old kettles, keyboards, vape pods, old hoovers, irons, children's high chairs. Bring back Rag and Bone man open top vans but rename to reflect 21st century.”

“Simple clear signs on leaflets, bin lorries what can be recycled. Increase what can be recycled from home small electrical, hard plastics etc”

“Re-instate the kerbside collection of small electrical items that operated in Bournemouth before the creation of BCP.”

“Give and take days with PAT tester and H&S advisor on site”

“Much plastic waste comes from supermarkets. So I would like to see a campaign targeting supermarkets to reduce the amount of packaging.”

“Direct campaigns effectively targeted at landlords who can commonly hinder recycling and waste collection.”

“I feel you really should target restaurants/bars/hotels/sports venues, etc. because of the vast amount of waste they produce which isn't recycled but could be”

“Campaigns and vouchers are not cost effective. A smaller service improvement I would like to see is a system like in Germany. Return your bottle to the beach cafe stall you bought it from and get 20p back.”

“None of your suggestions get to the heart of the problem...”

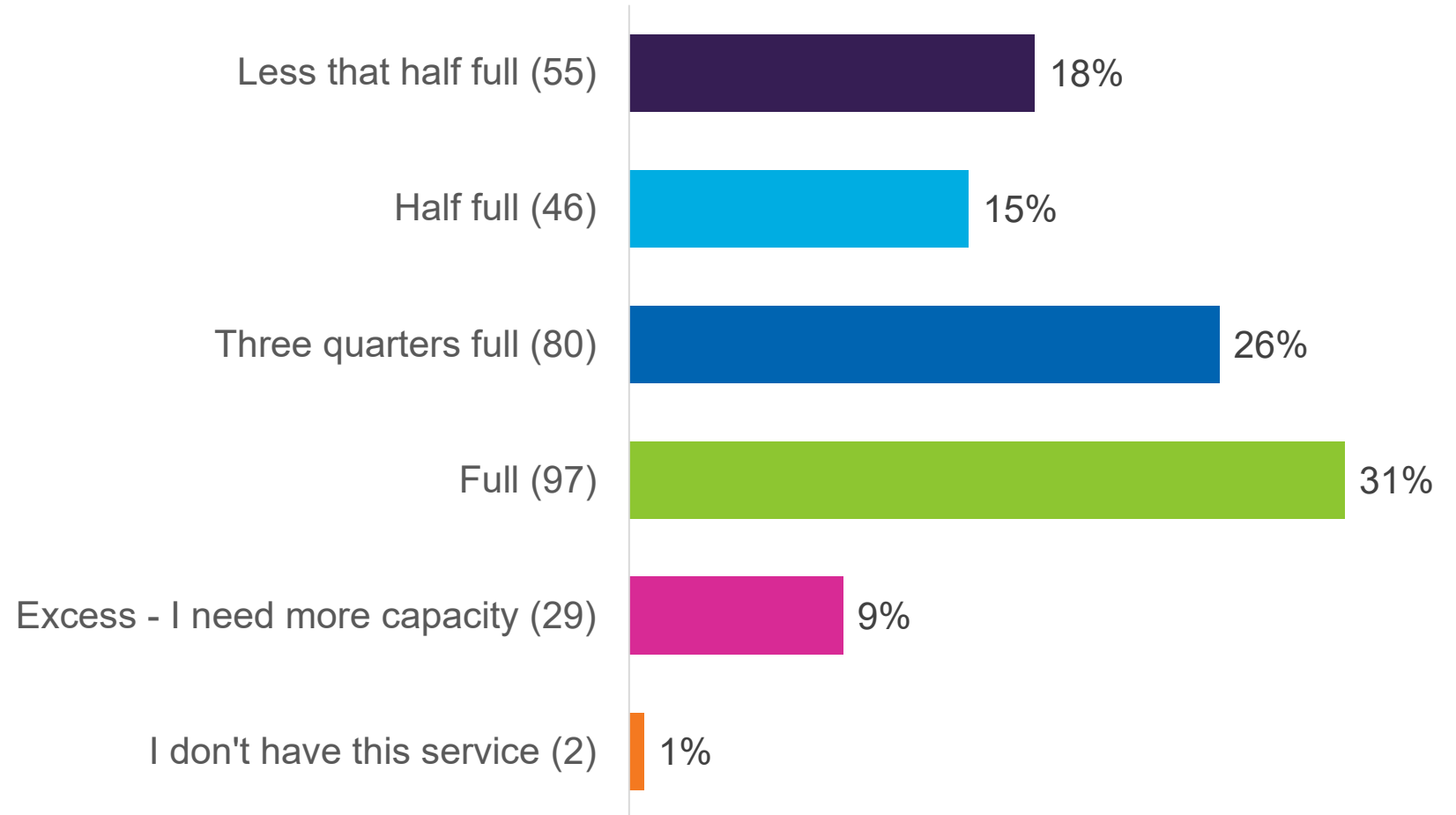
“We recycle everything we possibly can already - stop squeezing people to do more so that you can all do less!”

On average how full are your bins on collection day?

Rubbish

31% of those who responded said that their rubbish bin was full on the day of collection

151



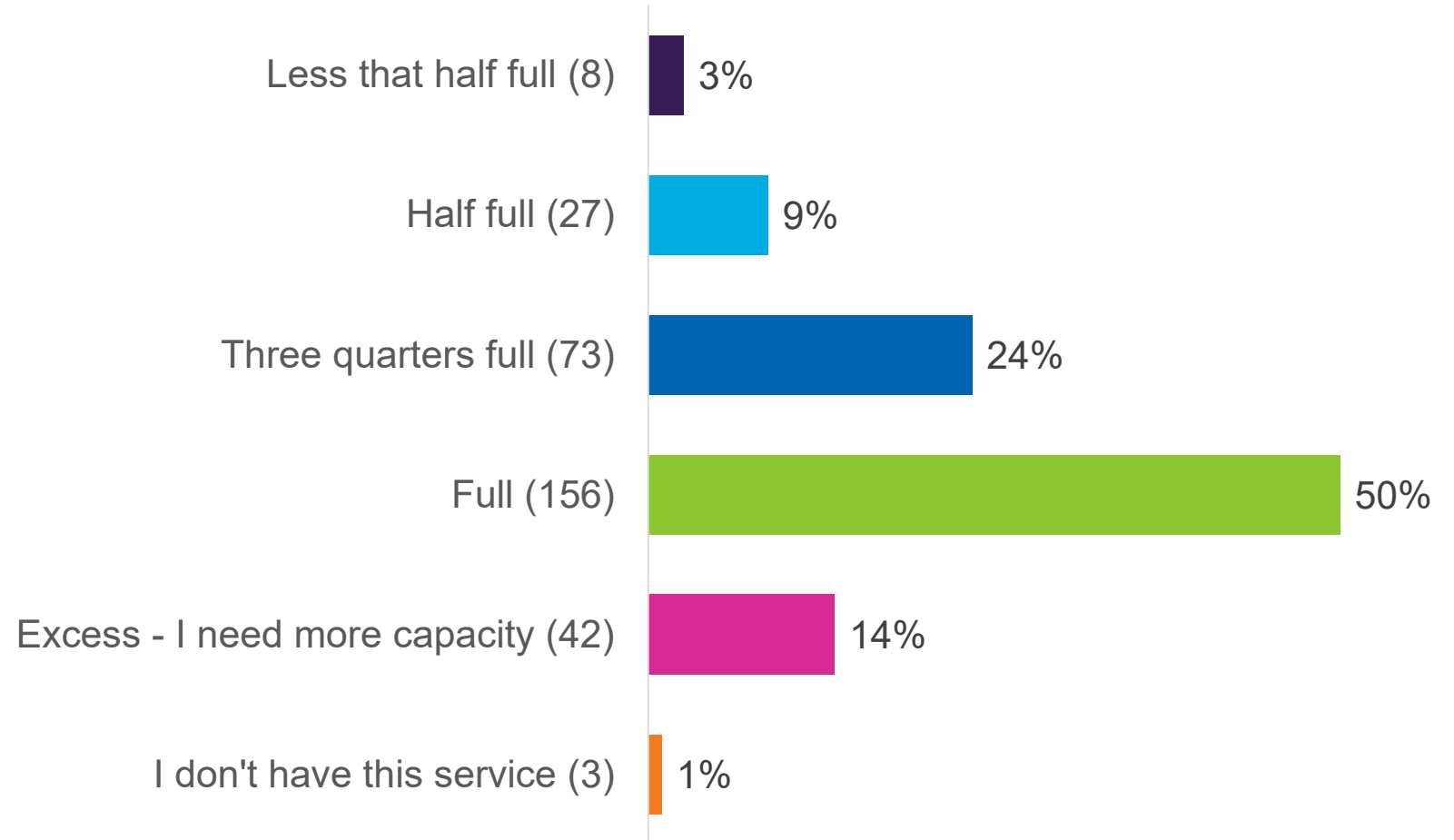
Base 309

On average how full are your bins on collection day?

Recycling

50% of those who responded said that their recycling bin was full on the day of collection

152

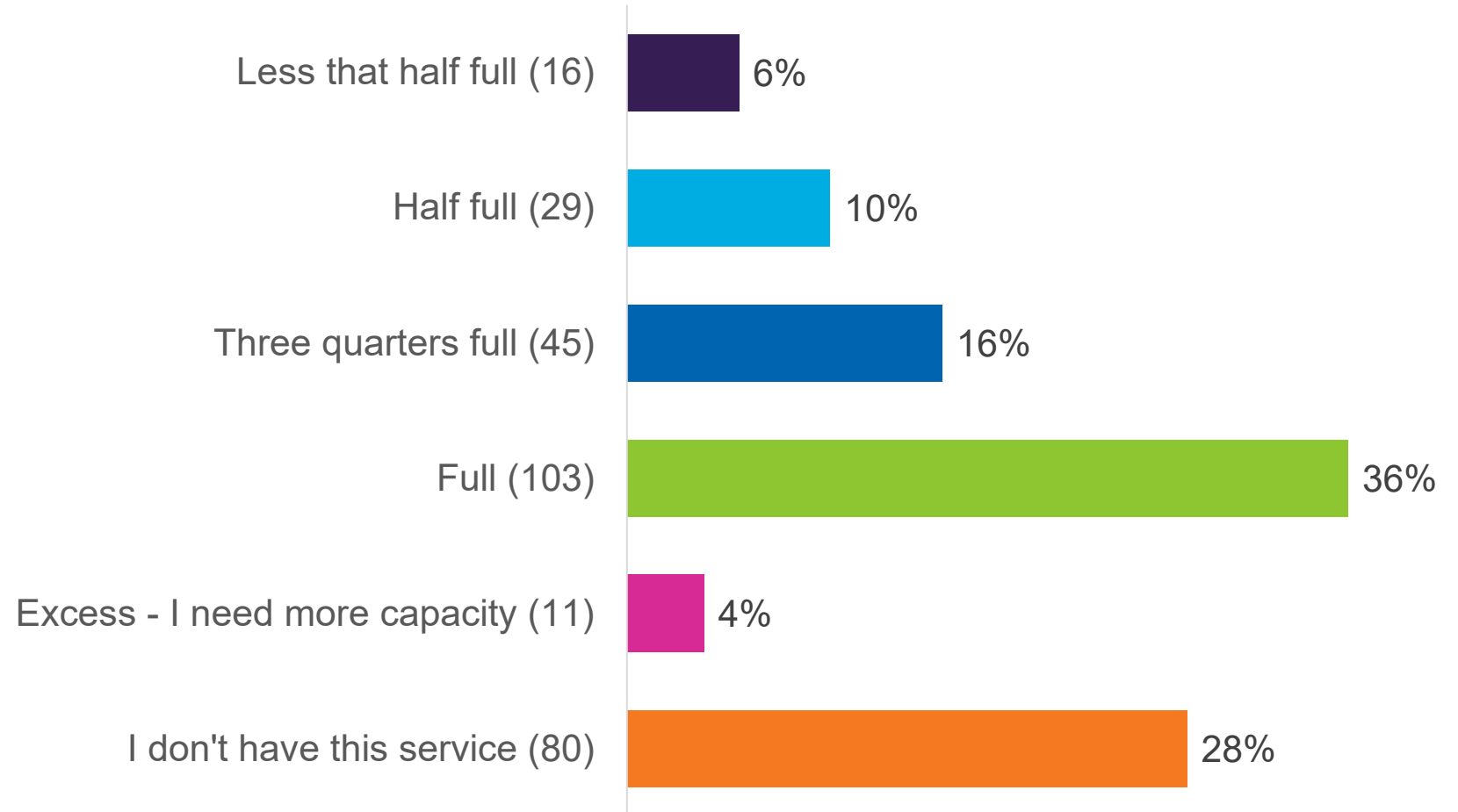


On average how full are your bins on collection day?

Garden Waste

36% of those who responded said that their garden waste bin was full on the day of collection

153

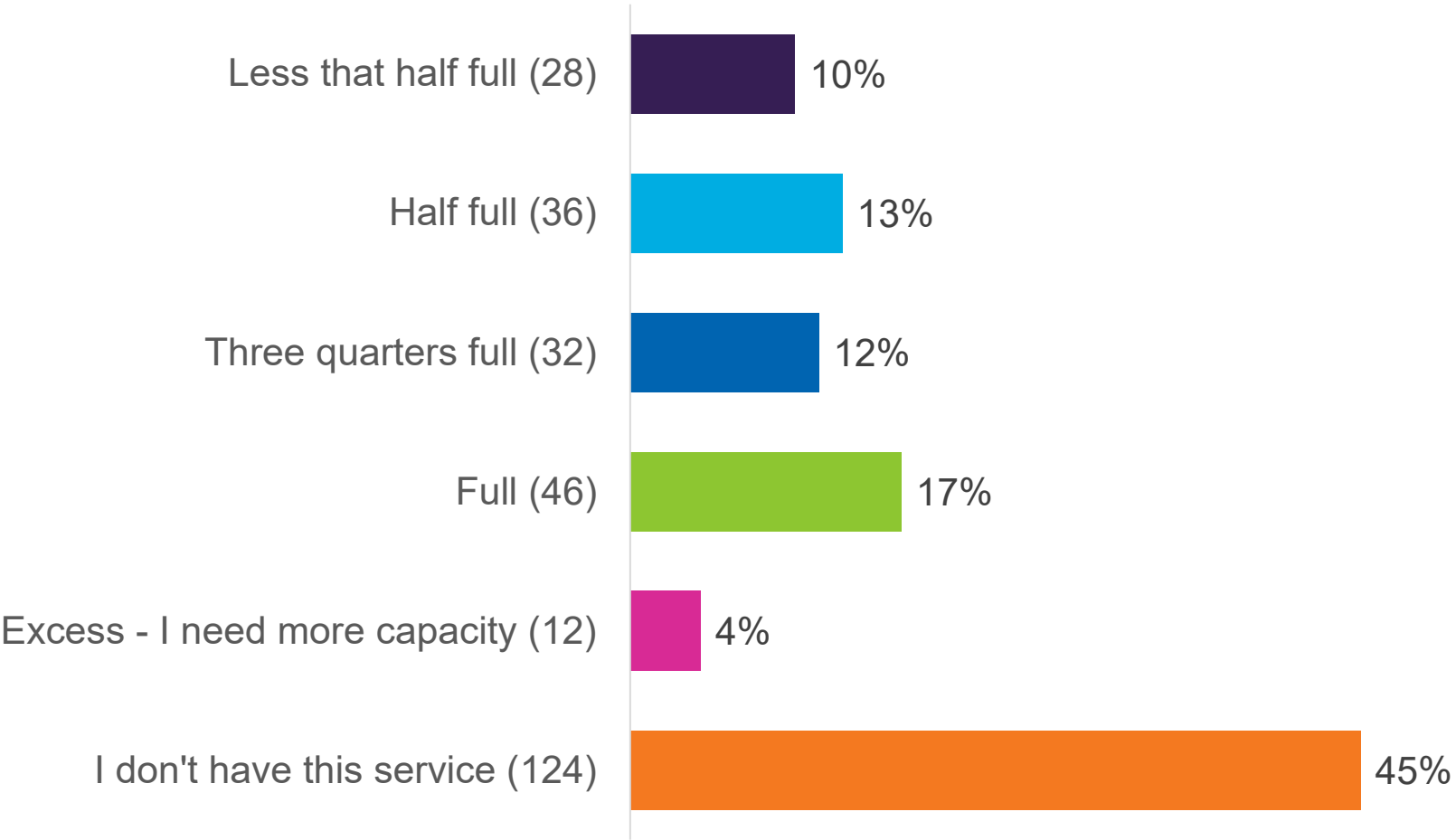


Base 284

On average how full are your bins on collection day?

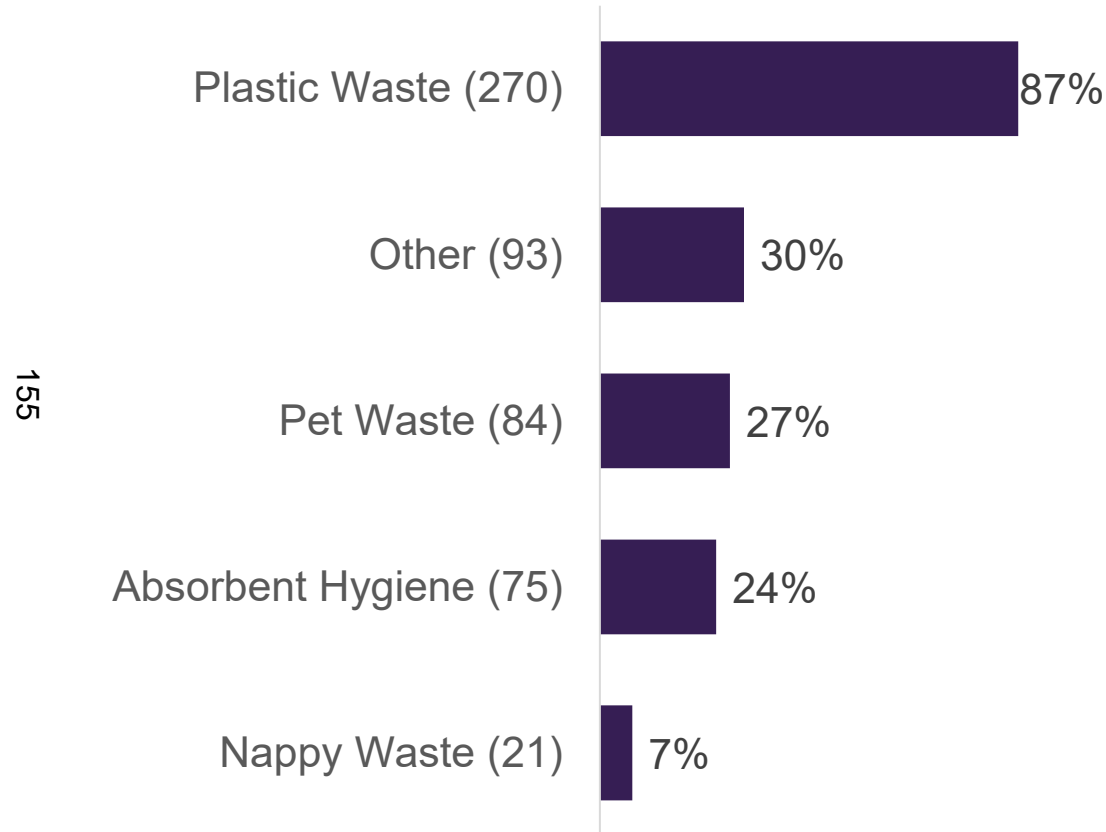
Food Waste

17% of those who responded said that their food waste bin was full on the day of collection



Base 278

What non-recyclable items are in your rubbish bin?



Plastic waste was the most selected option from the choices provided

Food waste was the most common answer given in the “other” category

What non-recyclable items are in your rubbish bin? Other

Food & Organic Waste

Food waste (general, cooked, uncooked, pet)
Meat (not compostable)
Egg shells
Orange peel
Coffee grounds
Tea bags
Food contaminated cardboard & waste
Spoiled food packaging
Food that could be collected in a food waste service

Metal, Glass & Other Materials

Rusty metal / Bits of metal
Metal food wrappers e.g. sweet wrappers
Tins
Tin foil
Small electrical items

Paper & Cardboard

Cardboard (too dirty/greasy to recycle)
Soiled / wet paper/cardboard
Paper tissues
Used paper towels / kitchen roll
Shredded paper
Biscuit wrappers
Wrappers from grocery/consumables

Cleaning & Hygiene Items

Antibacterial wipes
Bio-degradable wipes
Disposable dish cloths / sponges
Hoover dust
Floor sweeping debris
Toothpaste tubes
Dental floss
Nitrile gloves

Plastic & Packaging

Plastic wrapping/ film
Soft plastic
Polystyrene
Styrene
Bubble wrap
Plastic bags and packaging
Non-recyclable plastic bottles
Dirty plastic food containers
Multi-material packaging (e.g. foil/plastic with food)
Non-recyclable packaging
Block butter wrappers

Textiles & Clothing

Worn out clothes
Worn out shoes
Old clothes not suitable for charity
Worn out non-repairable household textile items

Hard-to-Recycle Household Items

Broken items (hard plastic)
Broken crockery / Pyrex dishes
Old Tupperware
Empty and partially filled paint tins
Items made of more than one material
Little things not worth taking to the dump
Black bag landfill stuff
Duvets
Pillows

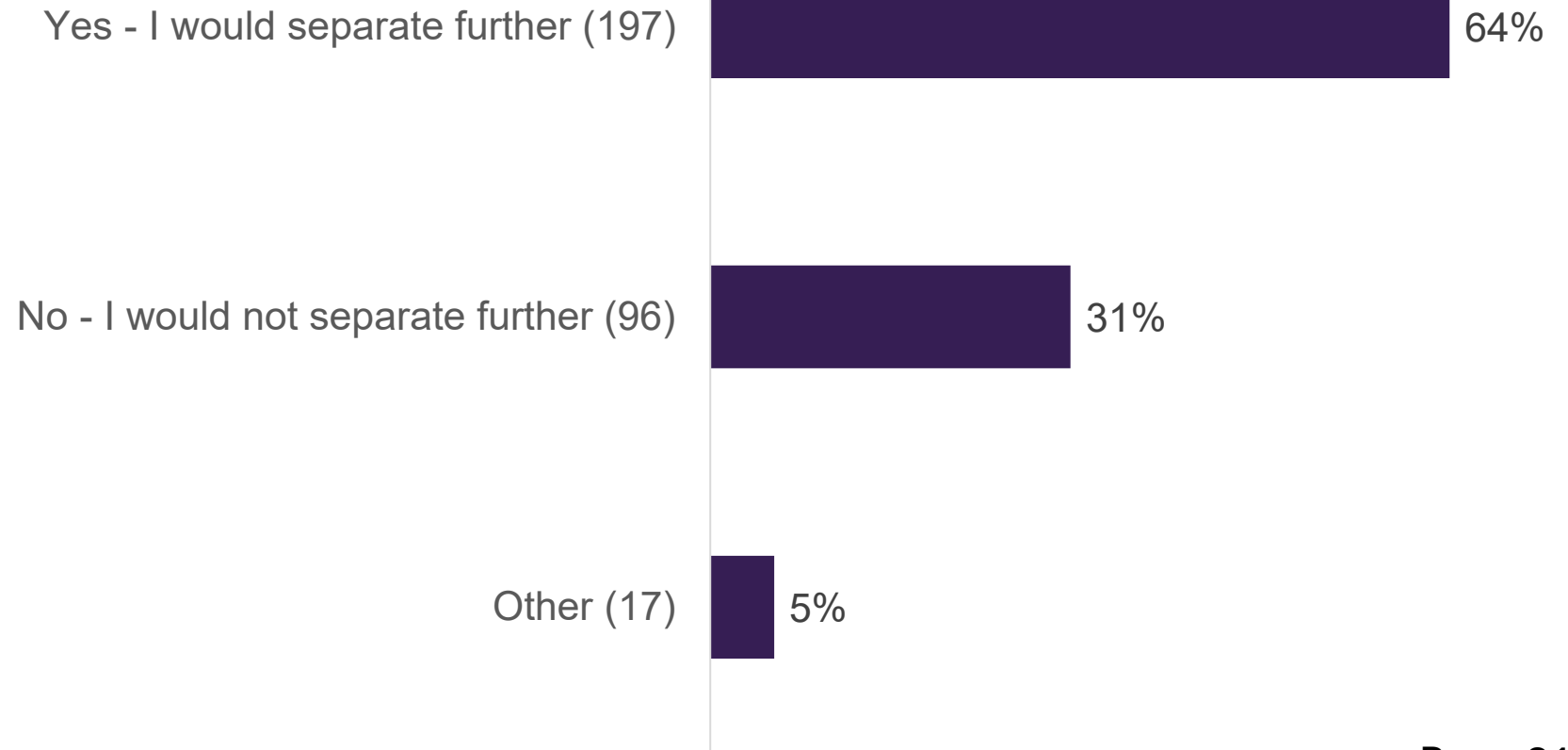
Garden & Outdoor Waste

Garden waste
Garden pots and trays (broken)
Ash from the fire
Door mats
Scooters

The government's preferred method of recycling is that we separate card and paper from other recycling. Would you separate your recycling further at home?

64% of those who responded said that they would separate their recycling further.

157



Base 310

The government's preferred method of recycling is that we separate card and paper from other recycling. Would you separate your recycling further at home? Other comment themes

Theme	Comment
Comments show mixed views on separating further	Some respondents are happy to separate more waste if they get the right bins and support, but others don't want to do it at all .
Sorting at recycling centres	Some think it's better for recycling centres to do the sorting instead of asking people to do more at home.
Shared bins make it harder	Some respondents living in flats with shared bins say it's difficult to recycle properly because not everyone follows the rules.
Space and capacity	Many say they don't have room for extra bins , especially in flats. Too many bins could block pavements and make collection days more difficult.

Further separation of recycling – Example quotes from respondents

“Yes but I would need another receptacle provided for the purpose”

“I would try but I don’t have a wheelie bin and have to buy purple bags. Separating would cause me to have more than two sacks (my allowance)”

“I already do. impossible to go further.”

“I live in a large apartment block, with multiple hoppers for both waste and recycling. Separating further would be a difficulty.”

“I’d prefer not to”

“To work this would need the co-operation and agreement of all 8 flats.”

“I would - but don't we have a selection machine that separates them? I'm in a flat with bulk bins. It's not impossible to address this but would require a fence coming down to access other bins.”

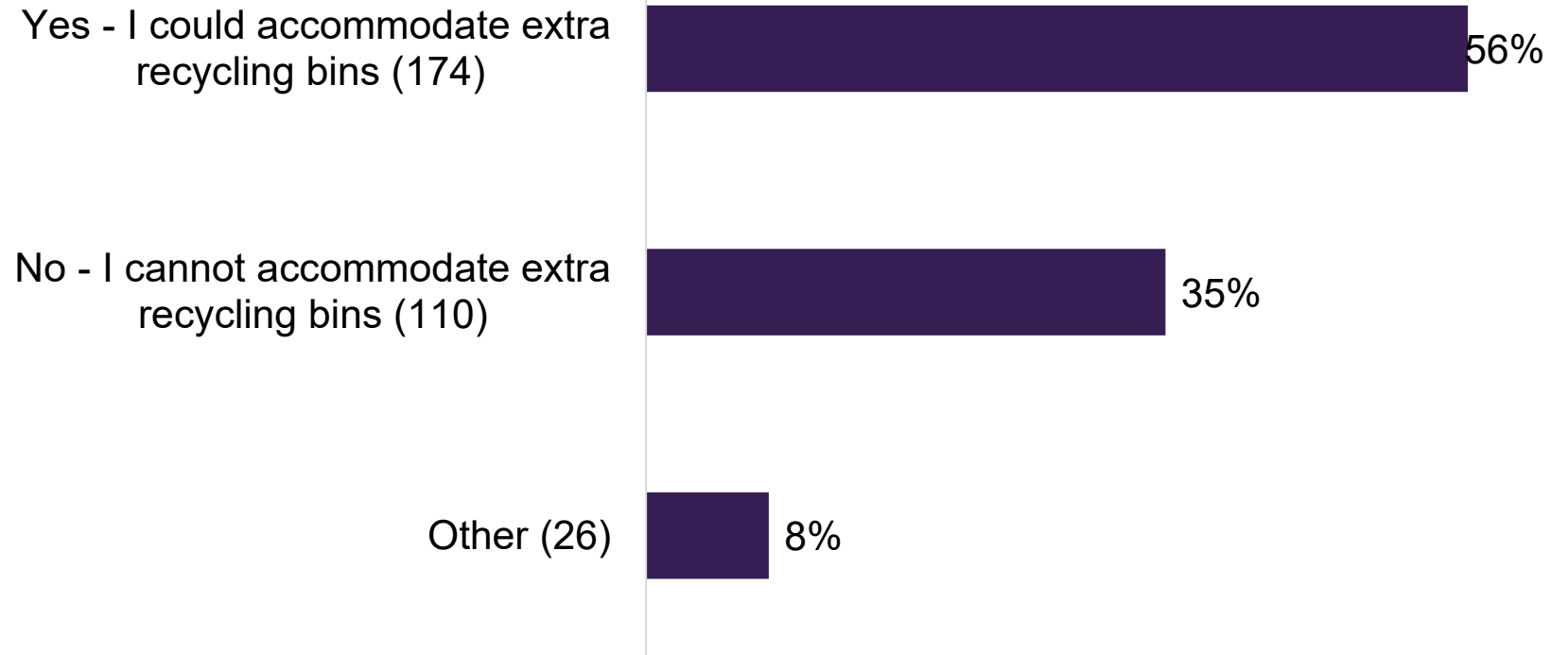
“If you want wastes separated, you'll need to provide a means of storage or collection, but then looking at emissions probably best separating at recycling centres”

“Yes, personally I would separate BUT I have noticed other councils provide open plastic boxes for different materials and these get wet and dirty and unpleasant. I would prefer wheelie bins which keep their contents clean and dry, or boxes with lids like the food waste boxes.”

Could you accommodate extra recycling bins at your home?

160

56% of those who responded said that they could accommodate extra recycling bins.



Could you accommodate extra recycling bins at your home? Other comments

161

Theme	Comment
Comments show mixed support over willingness to separate	Some respondents are open to separating waste further, but only if the right containers and support are provided . Others do not want to.
Concerns About Bin Proliferation	There's concern that more separation means more bins . Whilst there is a preference for this to be outside there are concerns about cluttering streets and pavements.
Barriers in Flats and Shared Housing	People living in flats or shared buildings face practical challenges with space, access, and cooperation.
Concerns about bin size and space to accommodate them	Some respondents lack indoor or communal space for more bins , and larger bins could be impractical or create safety and access issues.

Accommodate more bins– Example quotes from respondents

“Probably could, but it's bad enough getting my family to do two bins”.

“I could outside but not inside”

“Yes - but would be better if the bins were scaled accordingly (i.e. smaller where separating paper and card)”

“If it was a small container.”

“I would prefer not to”

“Great more bins and less collections to accommodate them.”

“...Eventually the bins themselves will become as much of an eyesore as the litter itself.”

“I am in a block of flats, so mass collection is very difficult beyond general and recycled waste without being a H&S issue for our caretaker who collects all our rubbish”

“We may need help to build additional communal facilities (block of flats)”

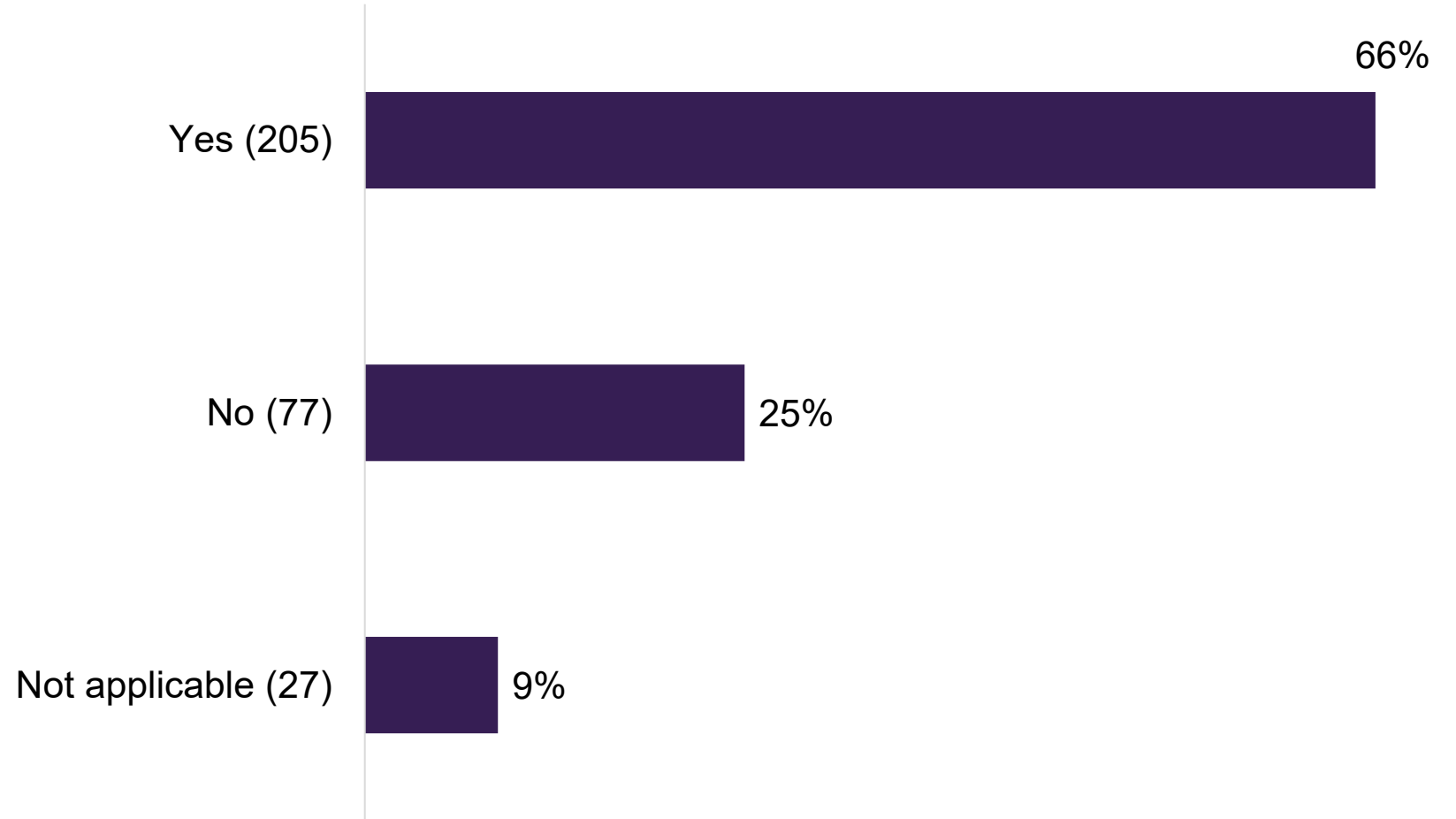
“Our current communal bin store could accommodate 1 more 240 litre bin. The bin store has brick sides, expanding it would take time and incur expense. We do not currently have a food waste collection service here in Poole. Don't know how big a bin that would require.”

“Communal bins..... with more accessible lids, too heavy to lift at the moment.”

Do you / would you use a food waste collection service?

163

66% of those who responded said that they do or would use a food waste collection service.

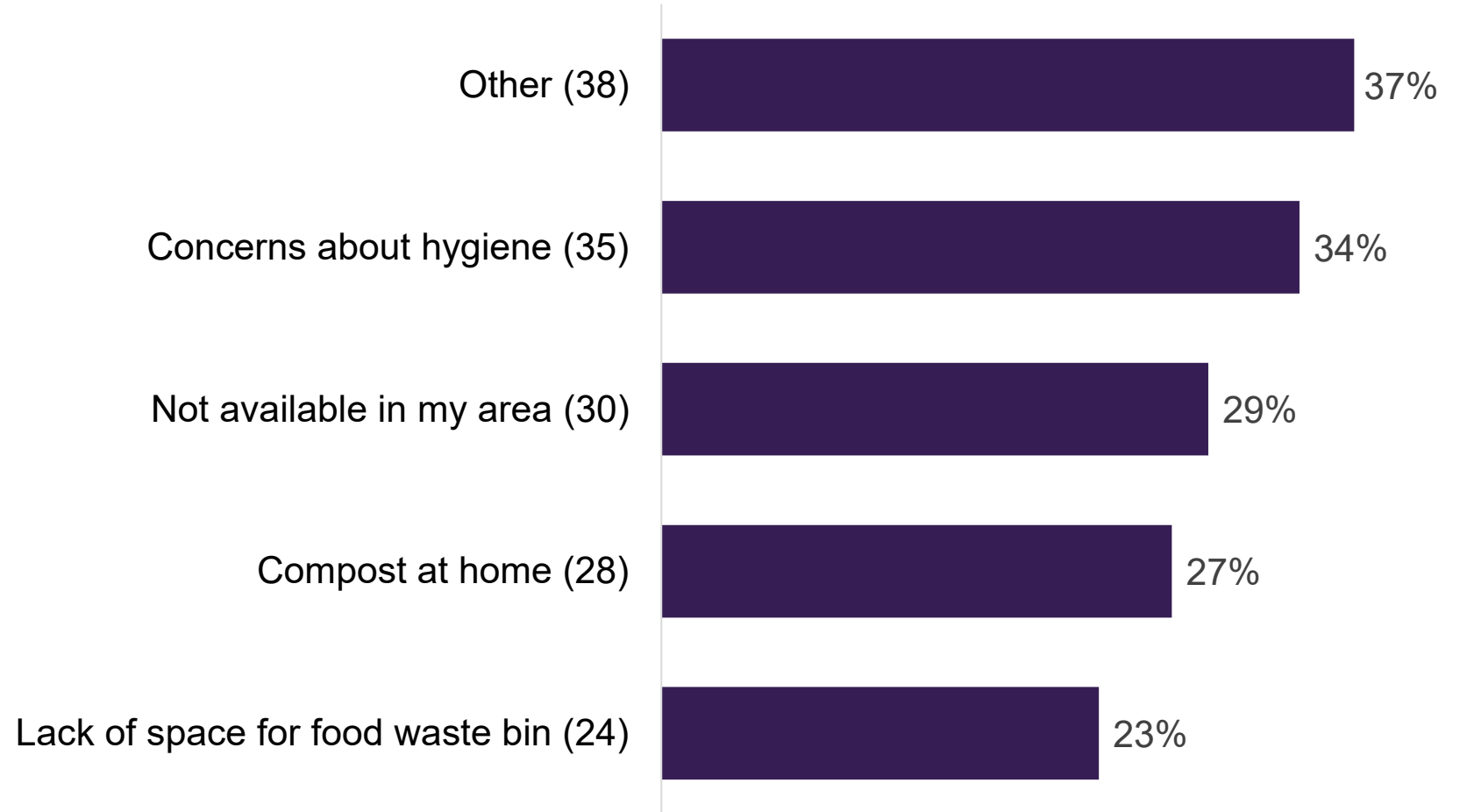


Base 309

If you do not or would not use the food waste service, please can you help us understand the reason for this?

37% of those who responded cited “other” reasons for not using the food waste service (detailed on the next slide).

164



Base 104

If you do not or would not use the food waste service, please can you help us understand the reason for this?

Other comments

Theme	Comment
Minimal or No Food Waste	A number of those who commented say they produce very little food waste or compost it themselves.
Concerns About Hygiene and Pests	There are strong concerns about smells, flies, maggots, and animals (foxes/rats) accessing bins.
Issues in Flats and Communal Living	Residents in flats cite lack of space , shared bins, and hygiene risks as major barriers.
Service Not Available or Unknown	Some respondents say food waste collection isn't offered in their area or they weren't aware of it.
Preference for Alternatives	Some prefer other methods like composting , wormeries, or sink disposal systems.

Food waste – Example quotes from respondents

“Have wormery for peelings and very rarely have other food waste”

“I live on my own. I have very little food waste. What I do have I put on my compost heap.”

“Domestic food waste is very, very minimal & does NOT justify a separate service”

“Access by vermin, foxes even, to closed containers left on the street”

“Had problems with foxes”

“Isn't this a costed service? I have very little food waste, occasional potato peelings. Certainly not enough to fill a bucket up each week, and monthly it would go mouldy or attract flies.”

“I live in a flat with communal bins. Bin stores already full. Bins would probably be disgusting very quickly.”

“I live in a large block of flats where waste is stored in a communal bin cupboard. Unless the food could be contained in non-decomposing bags, the smell would be unacceptable and would likely worsen our problem with rats.”

Insinkerator at home for food waste

We eat our food, it's just potato peel, onion skins etc which we compost.

I deliver my food waste to the natural environment at intervals.

As far as I know it is not available to private residences in my area

Are there any other materials you would like to be able to recycle at home?

167

87% of those who responded would like to be able to recycle plastic bags and wrappers at home.

Plastic Bags and Wrappers (239)

87%

Small Electricals (192)

70%

Textiles (149)

54%

Other (30)

11%

Base 276

Are there any other materials you would like to be able to recycle at home? Other comments

Food & Organic Waste

- Food waste
- Garden and food waste together

Batteries & Electricals

- Batteries (multiple mentions)
- Vapes / vape pod products (contain lithium batteries)
- Small electricals (e.g. microwaves)
- Inkjet cartridges
- Light bulbs
- Spray and pump bottles (if electrical or pressurized)

Plastics

- Hard plastics
- Plastic packaging including polystyrene
- Garden plastic pots, trays, compost bags
- Spray and pump bottles
- Toothbrushes
- Pens
- Pringles cans (mixed materials, often with plastic lining)
- Water filter cartridges

Household Chemicals & Hazardous Waste

- Oils
- Paint
- Chemicals (e.g. weedkillers, fertilisers, mortar plasticiser)

Bulky Waste & DIY Materials

- Rubble, soil, sand
- Wood
- Larger metal items
- Beds and furniture

Textiles & Reusables

- Shoes
- Textiles (via charity donations)

Metals & Mixed Materials

- Metals (general)
- Deodorants, aerosols
- Pringles cans (again, mixed materials)

Paper, Card & Packaging

- Cardboard
- Aluminium foil containers

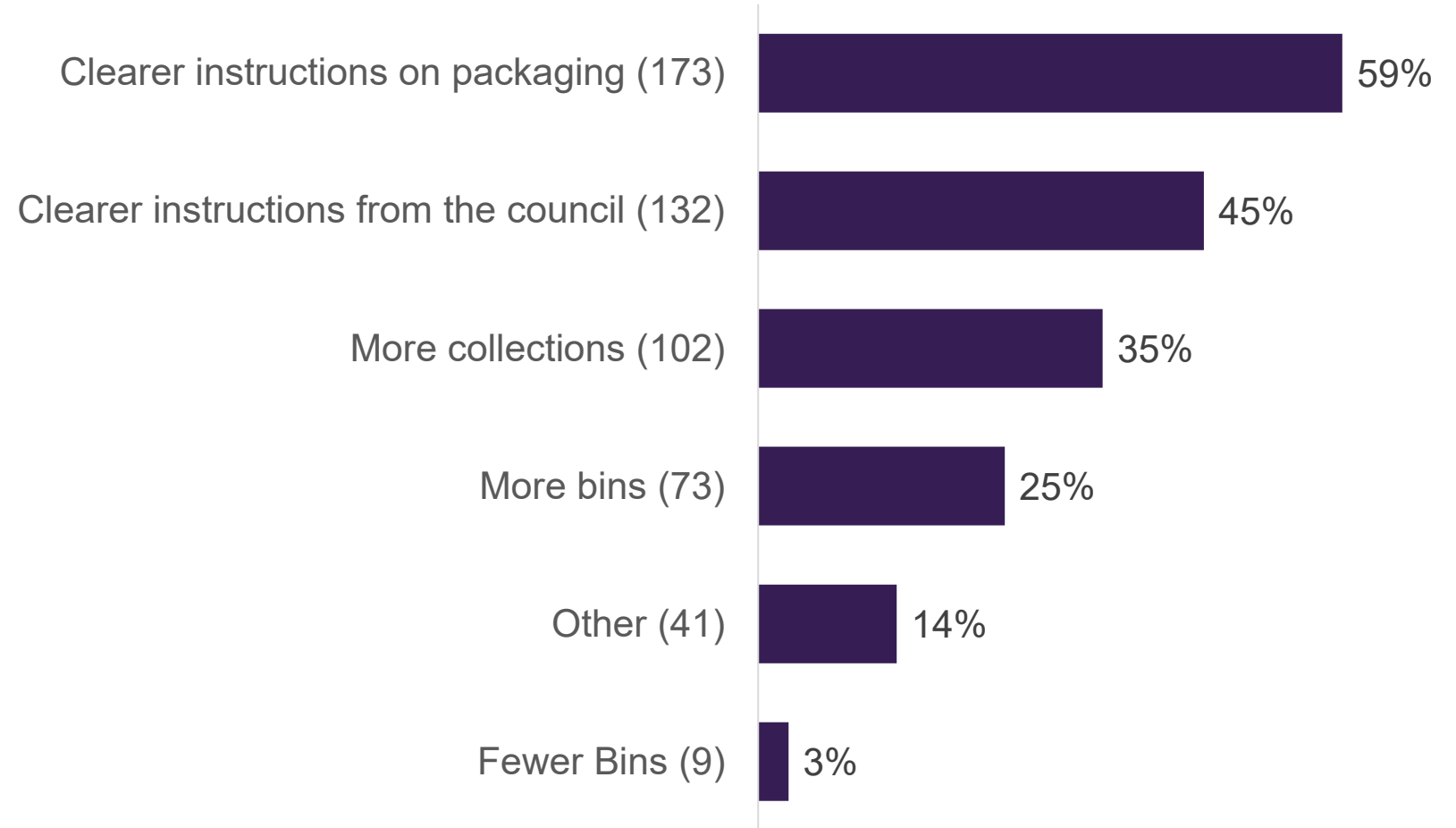
Other comment

- “What do you mean by recycle at home?”

What would make it easier for you to recycle more?

169

59% of those who responded would like clearer instructions on packaging.



Base 292

What would make it easier for you to recycle more? Other comments

Theme	Comment
Already Doing Enough	Several respondents feel they're already recycling as much as possible .
Broaden What Can Be Recycled	Many want to recycle more types of materials - especially plastics, textiles, and small electricals from home or kerbside. Suggestions include doorstep collection (e.g. Rag and Bone) for bulky or unusual items.
Improve Convenience and Access	Suggestions include more frequent collections , more local drop-off points, and fewer restrictions such as cost.
Clearer Guidance and Labelling	People want better/clearer instructions on what can be recycled from business and how to recycle from Council.
Better Public Facilities	There's a call for more public recycling bins .
Smarter Packaging and Retailer Responsibility	Respondents want laws and incentives for businesses to use recyclable or biodegradable packaging.
Education and Awareness	Some feel better public education and targeted campaigns would help.

Easier to recycle – Example quotes from respondents

171

“Nothing. I am already recycling as much as possible”

“nothing. I find it easy enough”

“Combine food and garden waste”

“To be able to put greater range of materials for recycling in the blue bin”

“More items collected at home; textiles that cannot be accepted by charity shops”

“Don't make it so restrictive”

“More items recycled at the kerb side”

“Definitely NOT more bins; wider range of items accommodated for recycling”

“More collection points as there were in the past”

“More recycling collected more locally so don't have to drive around the conurbation with different things e.g. to recycling centres/ supermarkets/ charity shops/ scrap metal all in different places”

“Ideally more public bins but I understand that they get abused so it's not an easy thing to provide”

“Public recycling containers (not just clothes) e.g. cardboard”

“Clear instructions on what can be included - ideally stickers which we can put on the bin”

“Businesses and chemists provide their bit to use recyclable items, chemists still use non-recyclable plastic bags for their medical prescriptions to their customers, and these will go to the landfill”

“Clearer recycling symbols on products and more effort on behalf of retailers to only sell items in recyclable packaging”

“All residents informed about proper recycling”

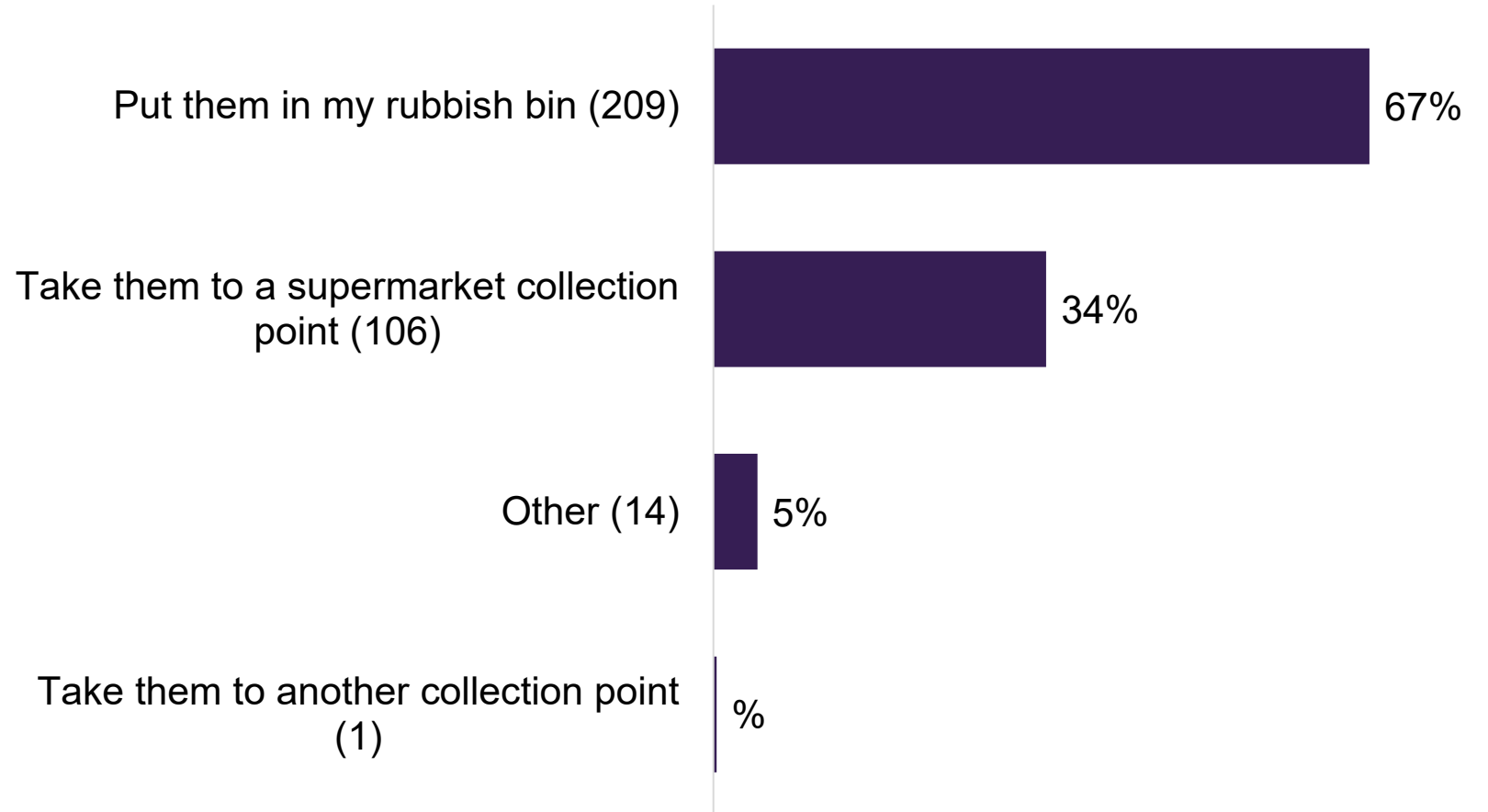
“Council depots take more items for free. Charging just leads to use of bins and fly tipping.

Obviously better fly tipping checks and huge fines for abuse. But target abusers not the ordinary person”

What do you currently do with plastic bags and wrappers that cannot be recycled in your recycling bin? e.g. bread bags

67% of those who responded put plastic bags and wrappers in their recycling bin

172



What do you currently do with plastic bags and wrappers that cannot be recycled in your recycling bin? e.g. bread bags – Other comments

Theme	Comment
Reuse Before Disposal	Many respondents reuse plastic bags and wrappers for household tasks before discarding them.
Attempt to Recycle	Some place plastic wrappers in recycling bins , even if they are unsure about their recyclability.
Use for Contaminated Waste	Plastic wrappers are often used to contain non-recyclable or dirty waste .
Supermarket Drop-Offs	A few respondents take plastic wrappers to specific supermarket recycling points .

Recycling plastic bags – Example quotes from respondents

“Use them”

“Some items I re-use around the garden. e.g. bottles for creating water feeder systems or various plastic items that can act like an 'incubator' for small plants. There is only *so* much stuff I can recycle until I really don't need any more, then sadly excess has to be disposed of”

“Reuse for waste”

“reuse once before going in big bin”

“I reuse them a number of times before putting them into the rubbish bin”

“Reuse the plastic bags”

“Reuse them to put rubbish in”

“Put them in the recycle bin”

“Recycle them ourselves, then if needs be, place remainder in blue bin”

“Possibly put them in recycling bin. Packaging that says "recycled in some areas" I'll take a punt and put it in recycling. If you get lots of stuff you could recycle and throw away at the recycling centre, that's YOUR problem. I've done my bit at that point”

“There is only one supermarket who takes recycling”

“Sometimes go to supermarket for recycling. Sometimes go in black bin”

“Use them for contaminated rubbish that goes in the rubbish bin”

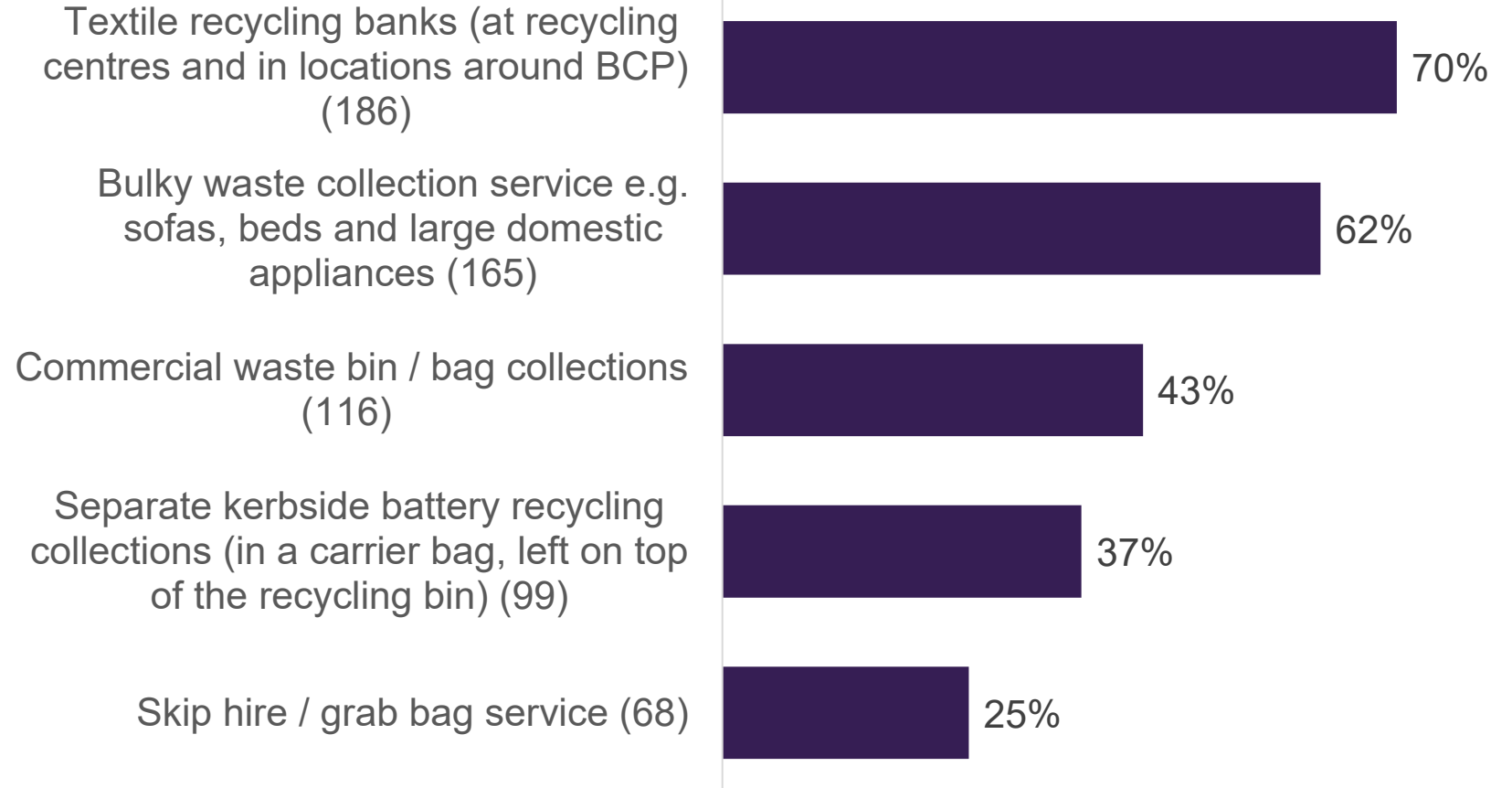
“Use my non recyclable black bin”

Which of the following Council Services are you aware of?



175

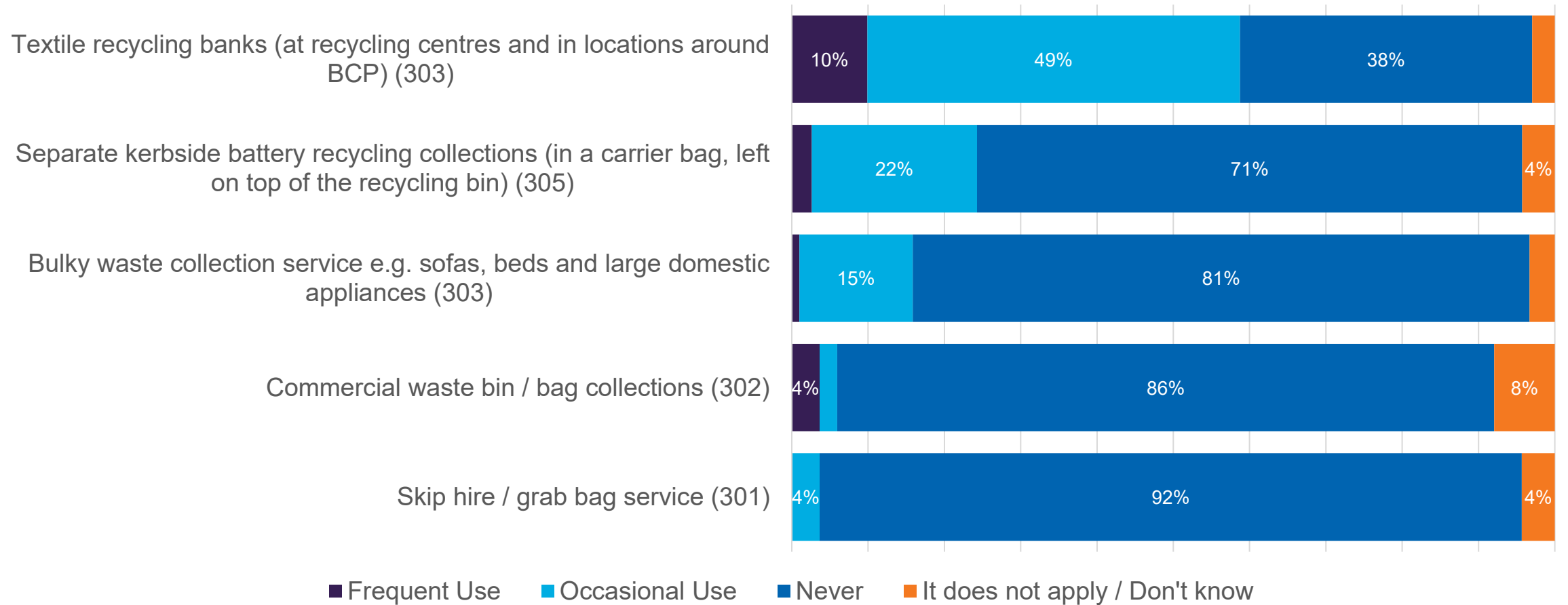
70% of those who responded were aware of textile recycling banks



Base 267

Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?

176



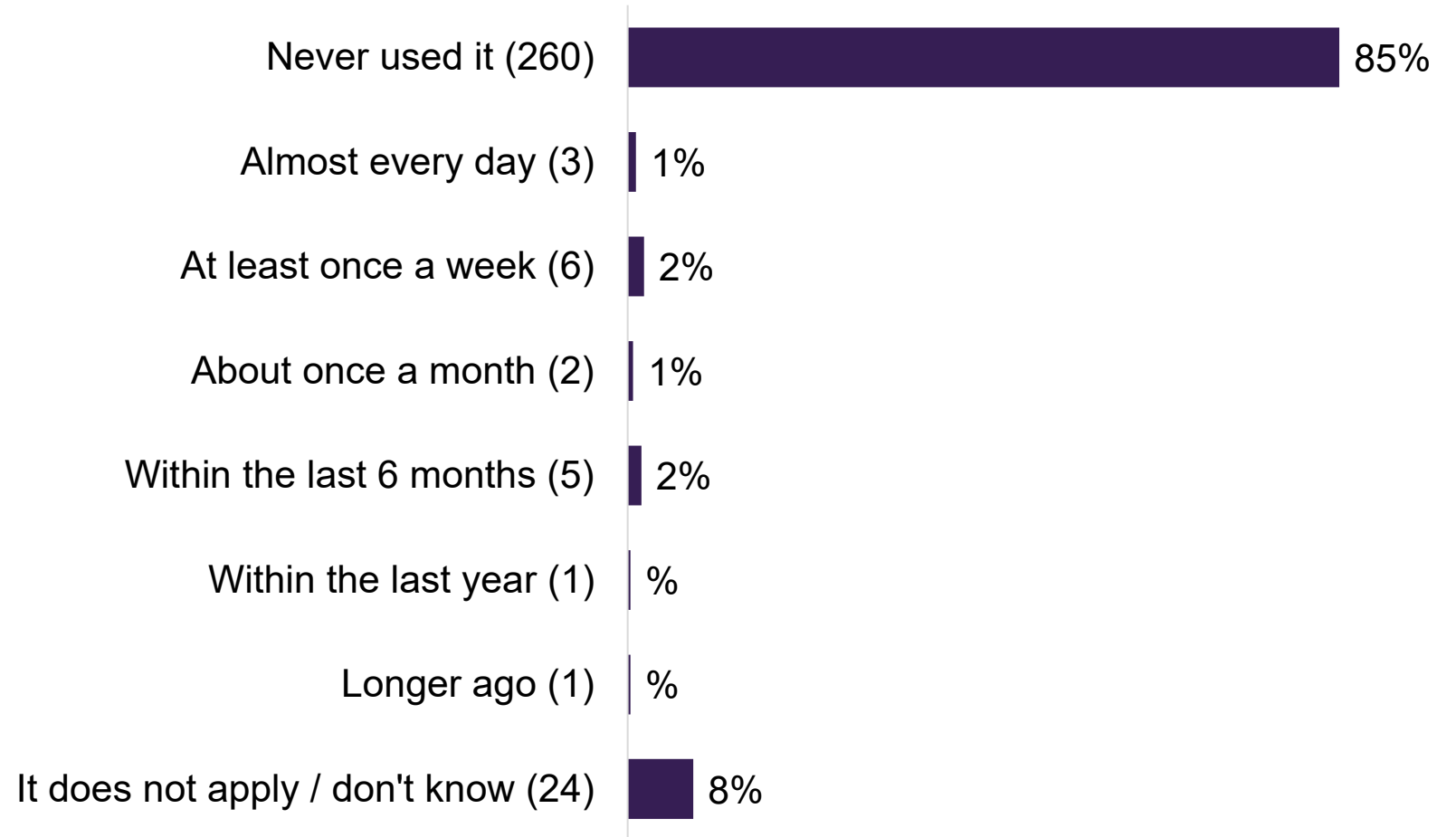
Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?



Commercial waste bin / bag collections

177

85% of those who responded have never used the commercial waste bin / bag service



Base 302

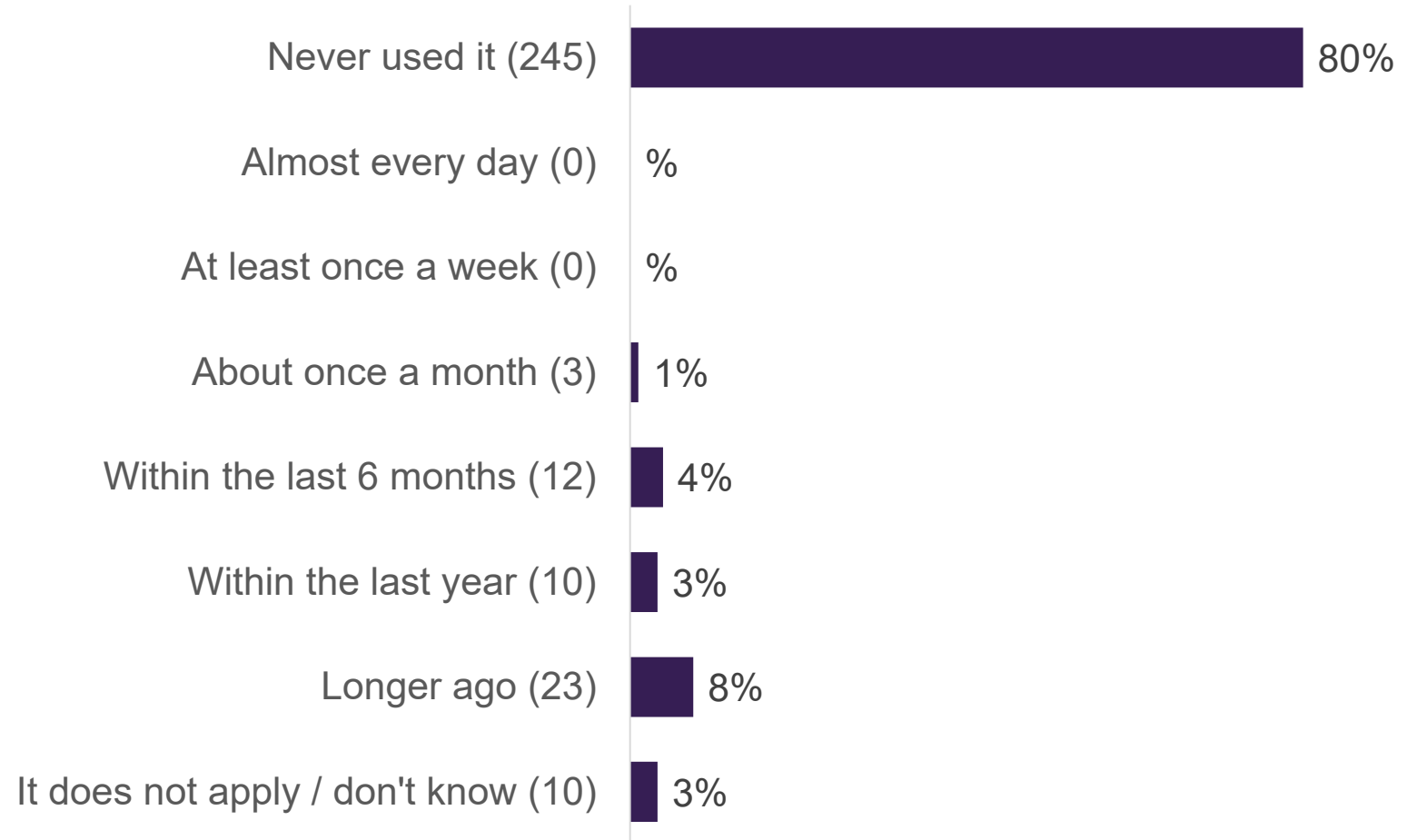
Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?



Bulky waste collection service e.g. sofas, beds and large domestic appliances

178

80% of those who responded have never used the bulky waste collection service



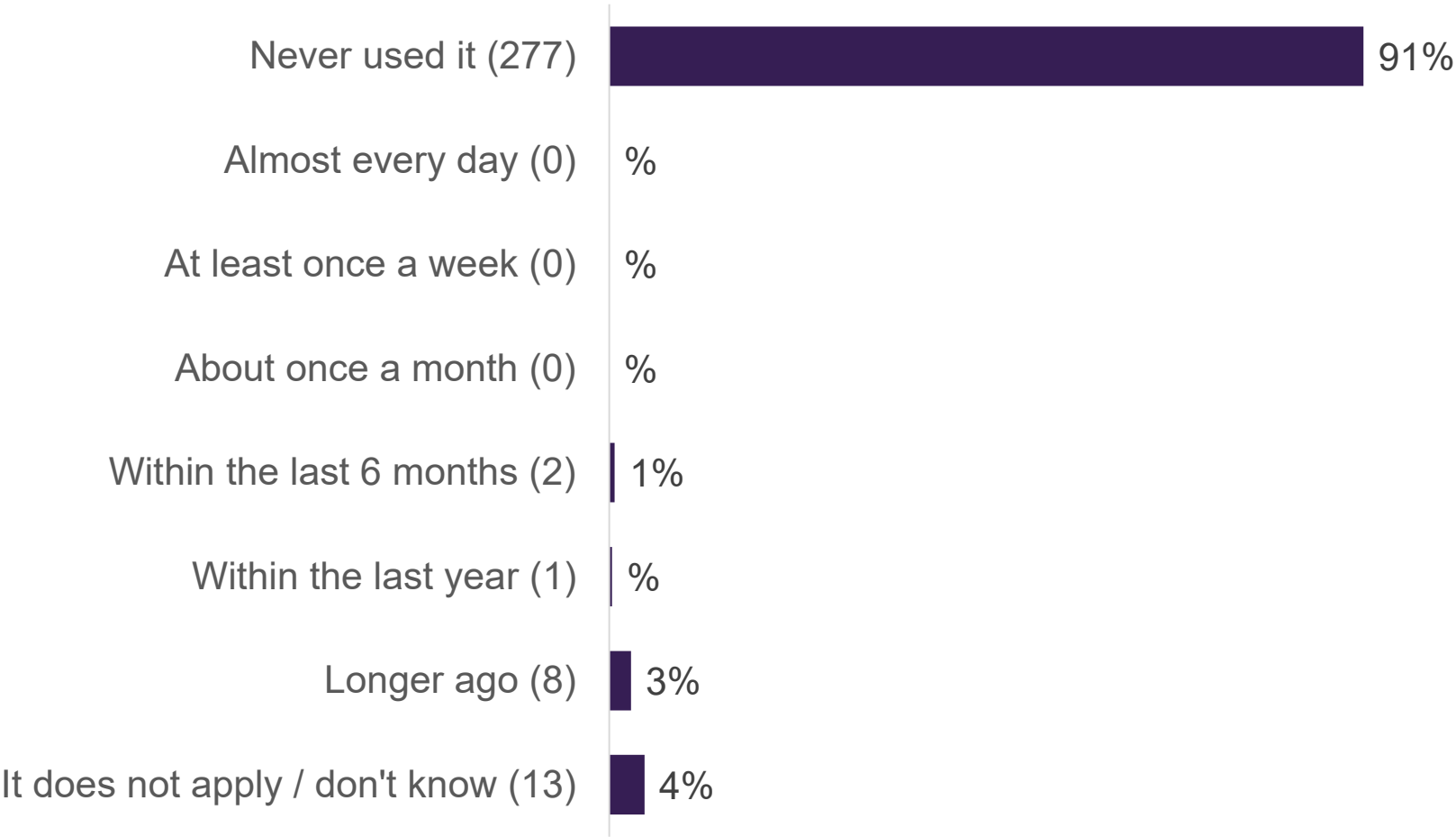
Base 303

Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?



Skip hire / grab bag service

179 91% of those who responded have never used the commercial waste bin / bag service

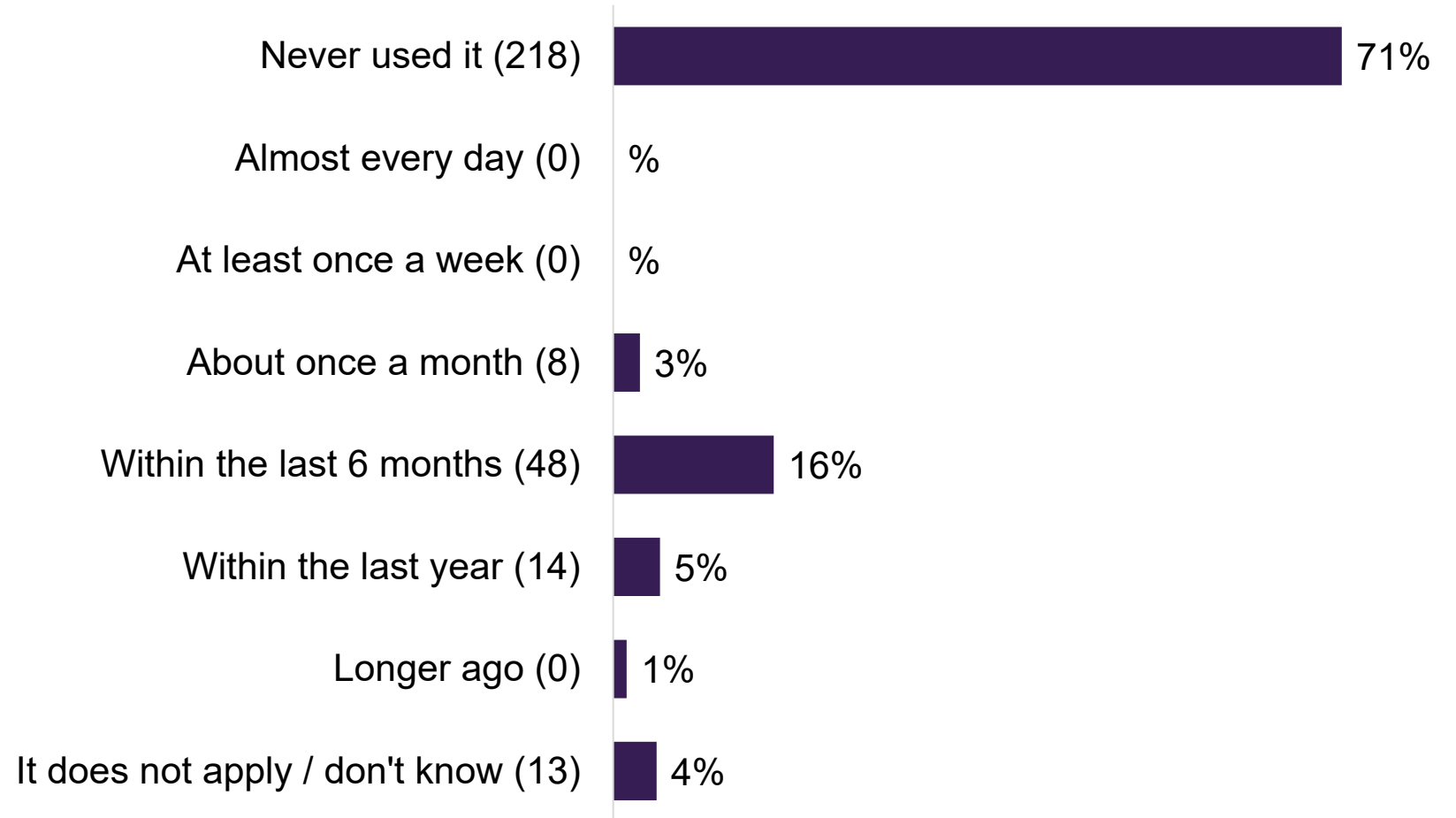


Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?



Separate kerbside battery recycling collections (in a carrier bag, left on top of the recycling bin)

180 71% of those who responded have never used the battery recycling collection service



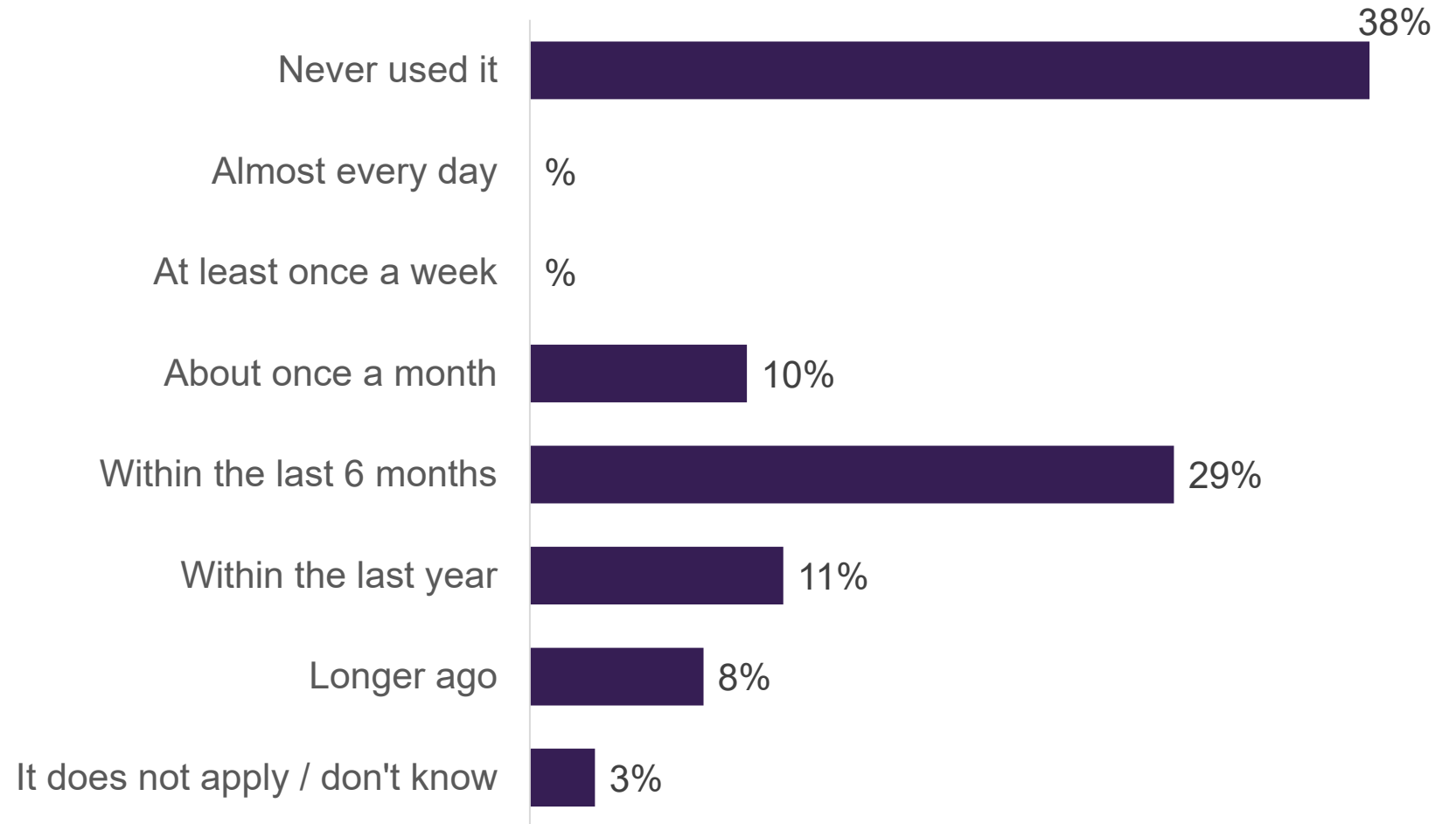
Base 305

Which of the following Council services do you use or have you used?



Textile recycling banks (at recycling centres and in locations around BCP)

181 38% of those who
responded have never the
textile recycling banks

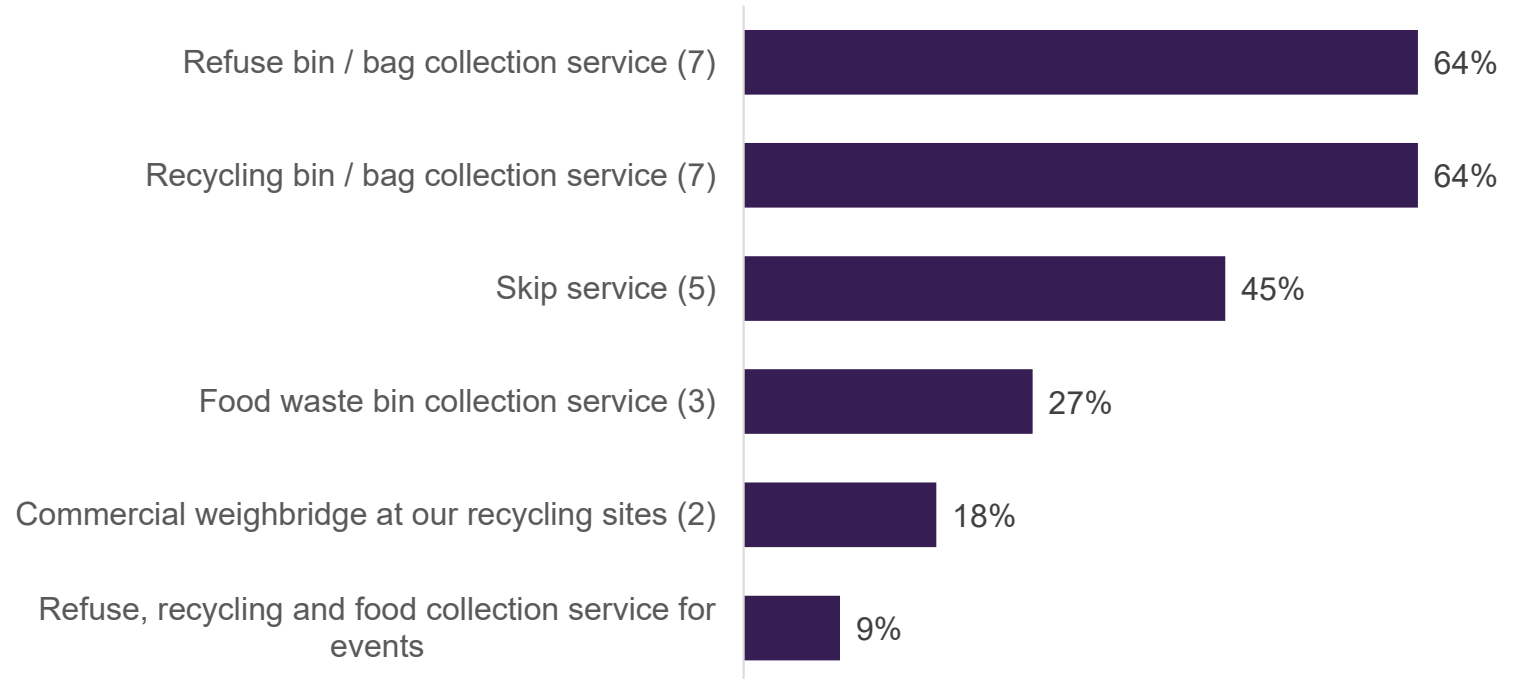


Base 303

If you run a business in the BCP area do you use our Commercial Waste services or another provider?

- 97% of those who responded don't use the service
- 2% responded that they use BCP for commercial waste
- 2% responded that they use another provider

182 Although only 2 respondents said they were replying on behalf of a business, 11 answered the question.

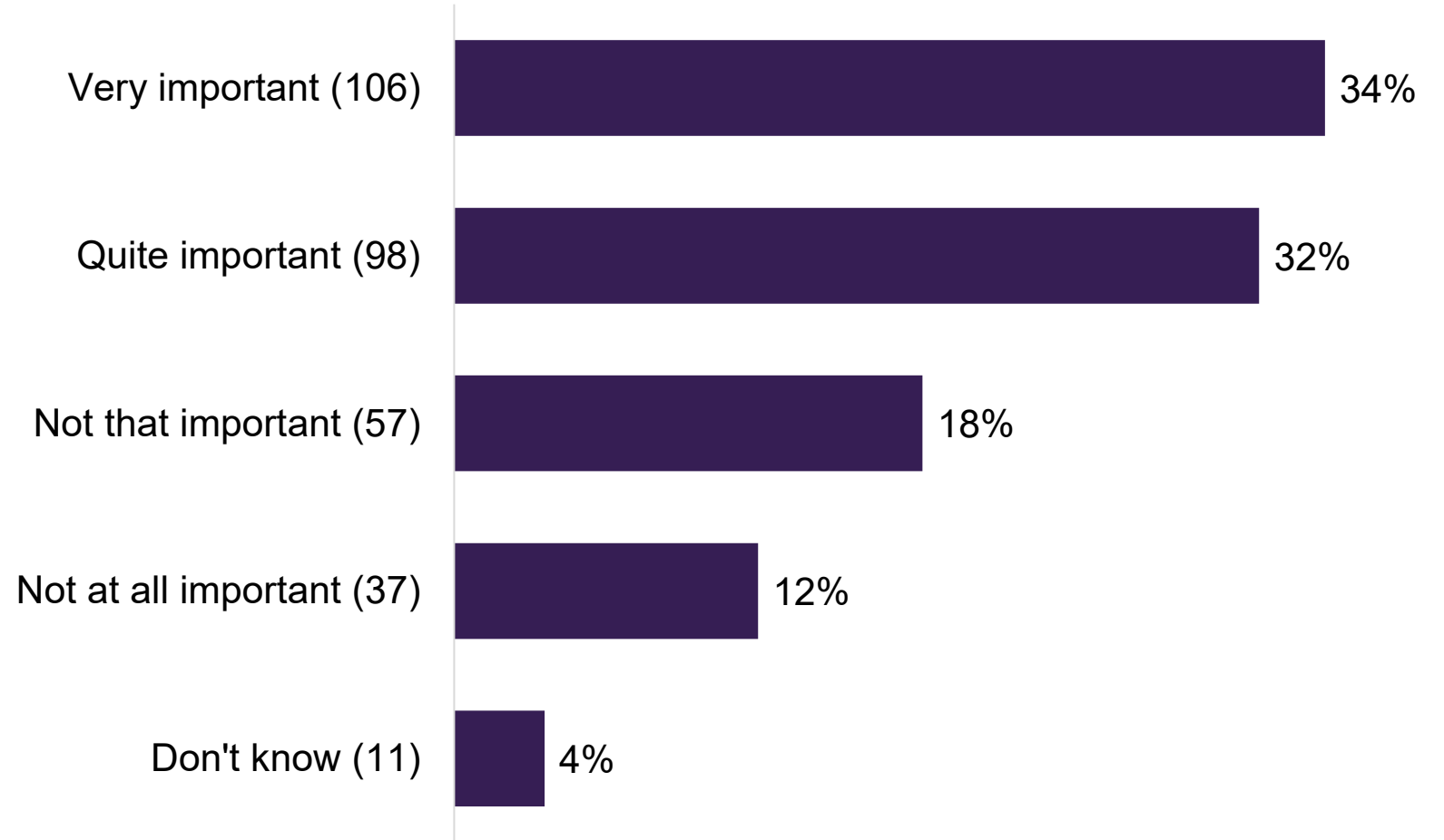


How important to you is it that your waste is treated within 100 miles of BCP?



66% of those who responded felt it was important and 30% felt it wasn't important

183



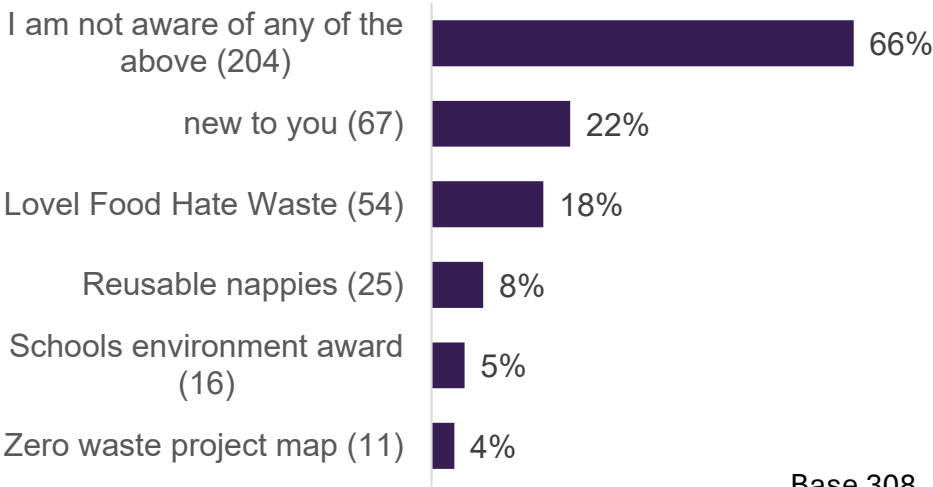
Base 309

BCP Council reuse initiatives



Which of the following BCP Council reuse initiatives are you aware of?

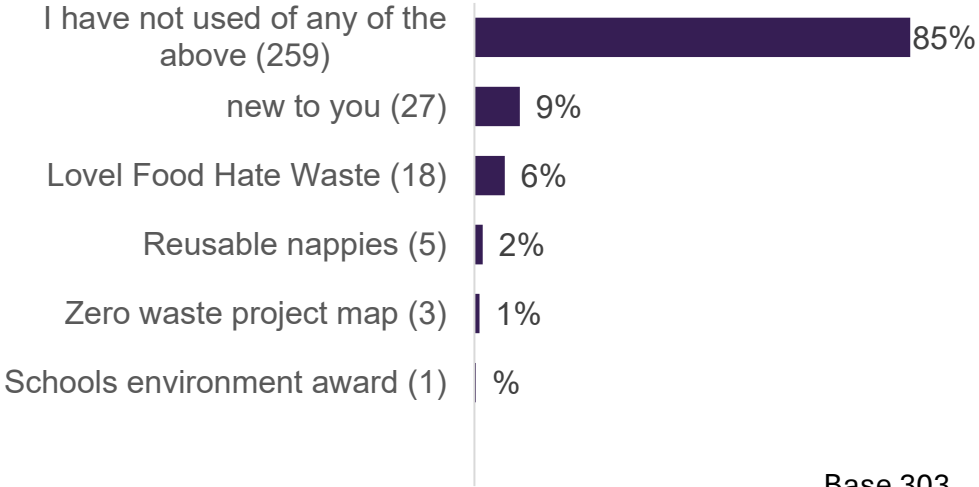
184



Base 308

22% of those who responded were most aware of new to you compared to other reuse initiatives

Which of the following BCP Council reuse initiatives have you used?



Base 303

9% of those who responded had used new to you the most compared to other reuse initiatives

Are you aware that reducing and recycling plastic, food waste and garden waste is an important way to reduce the emissions causing climate change?

- 95% of those who responded **were aware** that reducing and recycling plastic, food waste and garden waste is an important way to reduce the emission causing climate change.

Comments included:

Theme	Comment
Business Waste Responsibility	Some respondents believe businesses should lead on waste management , noting their greater contribution to climate change compared to households.
Plastic recycling challenges	Respondents want better home recycling options , especially for soft plastics, and call for reduced packaging and clearer council-led waste systems.
Awareness / Personal Action	Many respondents are aware and already taking steps to reduce and recycle waste .
Service Gaps	Poole respondents expressed frustration over the lack of food waste collection, feeling disadvantaged compared to other areas
Climate Change Scepticism	Some respondents questioned the link between waste and climate change , viewing recycling as practical or ethical rather than environmental.
Storage and affordability	Issues raised include confusion over bin rules, infrequent collections, cost barriers, and lack of space for multiple bins .

Recycling plastic bags – Example quotes from respondents

186

“Could we have recycling targets for our businesses as well as for household waste”

“It’s laughable to even attempt to equate an individuals impact with the scale of commercial impact”

“There needs to be pressure on the supermarkets, particularly, to go back to paper bags for fruit and veg and not smother everything in clingfilm and plastic wrapping”

“Focus on suppliers to reduce packaging. Especially supermarkets with the amount of plastic packaging they use”

“You don’t recycle a lot of plastics”

“I take all my non recyclable plastic bags etc. to the local supermarket collection points. However, I am not at all confident that these are reused. I recently read that the majority of these are sent for incineration as no contracts are available for reuse and recycle. It must be a priority to have these contracts in place and assure encourage the public that if they use these collection points that their efforts and belief in the system is justified”

“I’d like to be able to recycle plastic waste at home as this is the majority of my waste. I try to take it to the collection points but I don’t really have anywhere to store it. If plastic wrap was able to be recycled too, my main waste bin would have barely anything in it”

“Poole residents should have had the service implemented by now”

“What we do in Britain is irrelevant to any effects on global warming”

“Make it easy to recycle fewer bins more regular collections”

“Please, as I said earlier - no additional bins and no additional cost”

“Recycling plastic needs to be much better, allowing full reuse/recycling rather than finding ways to just “use it up”

“I compost 90pc of my food waste, Often use card and paper as ground cover and mulch. Plastic bottles as plant covers and seed starters. so, I think at my age I do my share of waste management”

Are there any other items you would like to be able to recycle at the household waste recycling centres?

79% of those who responded would like to be able to recycle hard plastics at waste recycling centres

187



Base 257

Are there any other items you would like to be able to recycle at the household waste recycling centres? Other

188

Items for recycling

- Duvets, pillows, cushions
- Textiles (including those not suitable for charity shops)
- Food waste
- Polystyrene
- Pringles cans, aerosols, deodorants
- Paint
- Large electricals (e.g. refrigerators)
- Small electricals and batteries
- Hard plastics (e.g. washing-up bowls)
- Plastic bags and food wrappers
- DIY waste (e.g. rubble, tiles, plasterboard)
- Gas canisters
- Car-related waste (tyres, fluids, upholstery, batteries, bodywork)
- Obsolete sports equipment (e.g. windsurfer board)
- Furniture for reuse
- Terracycle items (e.g. crisp packets, dental products)

Theme
There should be a way to recycle or dispose of all items responsibly and locally.
Charges at recycling centres may discourage proper disposal and may lead to fly-tipping.
Access to recycling centres is difficult for those without cars or with limited mobility.
Kerbside collection is preferred over travelling to recycling points.
The council should accept more types of waste and remove barriers to responsible disposal .
There's confusion about what is accepted at recycling centres.
People want to recycle more but feel unsupported by current infrastructure .
Better communication and signage are needed.
There's a desire for free or subsidised disposal of bulky or unusual items .
Some believe all recyclable items should be accepted without charge or restriction .

To reduce waiting times would you use a booking system to book a slot on the day and up to a week in advance to visit your recycling centre?

- 17% said they would use a booking system to book on the day
- 23% said they would use a booking system to book up to a week in advance
- 65% said they did not want to do either

Comments included:

Theme	Comment	Base 307
Strong Opposition to Booking	Many respondents feel booking systems are inconvenient , and likely to discourage recycling and encourage fly-tipping.	
Concerns About Accessibility and Inclusion	Respondents worry that booking systems exclude older people , those without internet access, or with disabilities.	
Preference for Flexibility	Many users value the ability to visit recycling centres spontaneously	
Support for Booking in Limited Circumstances	Some respondents support booking systems for peak times (weekends and bank holidays) or specific vehicle types.	
Suggestions for Alternatives	Proposals included better signage, live queue/video cam updates , or apps to manage traffic without booking.	
Satisfaction with Current System	Some respondents feel the current system works well , doesn't need changing and a booking system is unnecessary	

Booking systems – Example quotes from respondents

190

“Creation of recycled rubbish is not governed by time, as it can occur at any time, ... prebooking will make dumping a bigger problem. Good access to the recycling plant without long queues is one way to ensure an efficient system, when you consider the amount of fuel used and exhaust gases created waiting for access to the recycling point”

“This is a deterrent to use it - why are you making it harder to recycle??? This will just encourage fly tipping”

“Booking system = more fly tipping”

“It would put me off using the tip. The traffic is often bad on my journey there so it would be stressful to try and get there at a specific time”

“Quite happy with just going to the tip on the spur of the moment do not want the hassle of booking a slot. Also, I think older people would struggle who do not have technology”

“My Dad has a booking system where he is. He struggles a bit online ... but has the ability to phone to book a slot. This should be an important consideration to include the older council tax payers”

“I said no because it would automatically exclude many groups of people who do not have access to a computer”

“Most people do not plan far enough ahead for a booking system and it is just a waste of money and unnecessary administration”

“A visit is not always pre-planned”

“The service should be provided at the customers convenience, not the providers”

“I've not had any issues with the first come/first served process at the recycling centre. However, maybe a booking system is needed for weekends only?”

“Being able to check how busy a centre is can be useful”

“I used to use the app advising how busy the centre was”

“Current system at my local site works well no need to change”

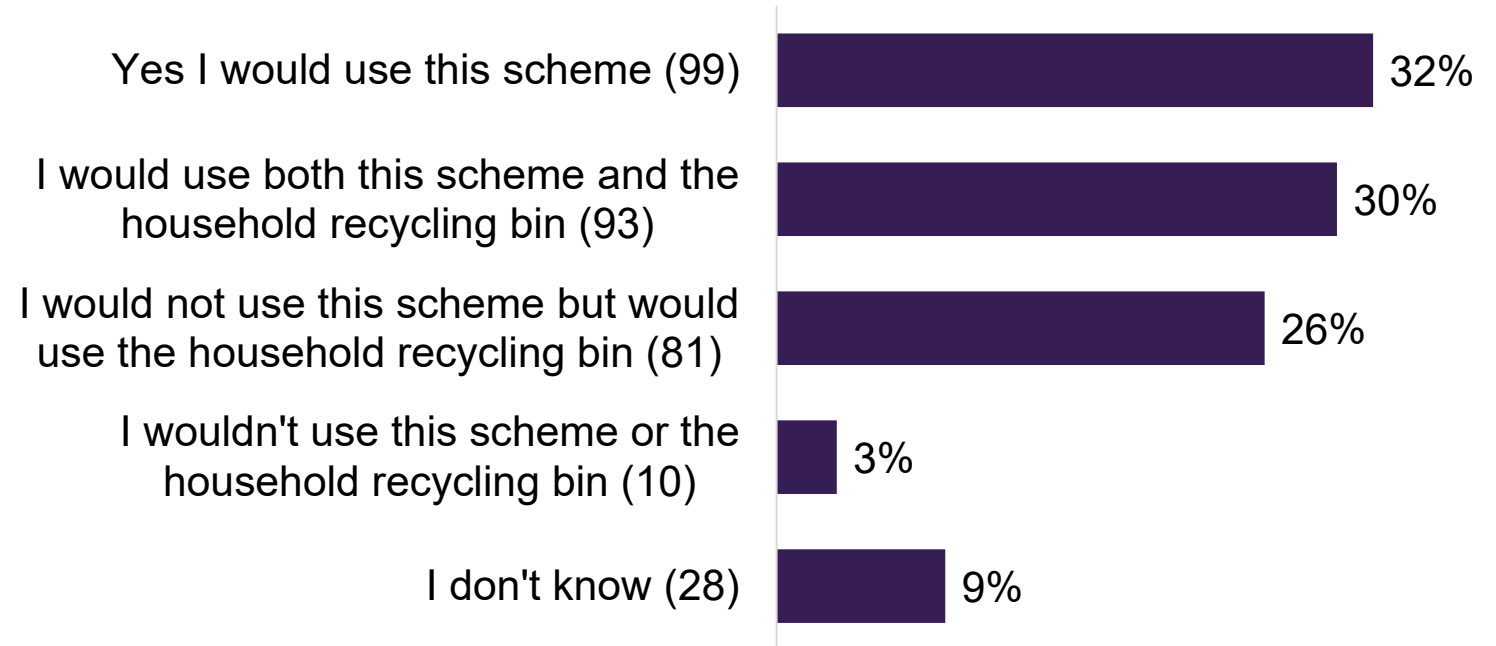
“Happy with current service - which is excellent”

Deposit return scheme

The Government is proposing to introduce a deposit return scheme where a small deposit will be charged on single use drinks containers (plastic bottles and cans) and this deposit would be returned when the containers are deposited at a collection point, would you use this scheme or continue to use your household recycling bin for these items?

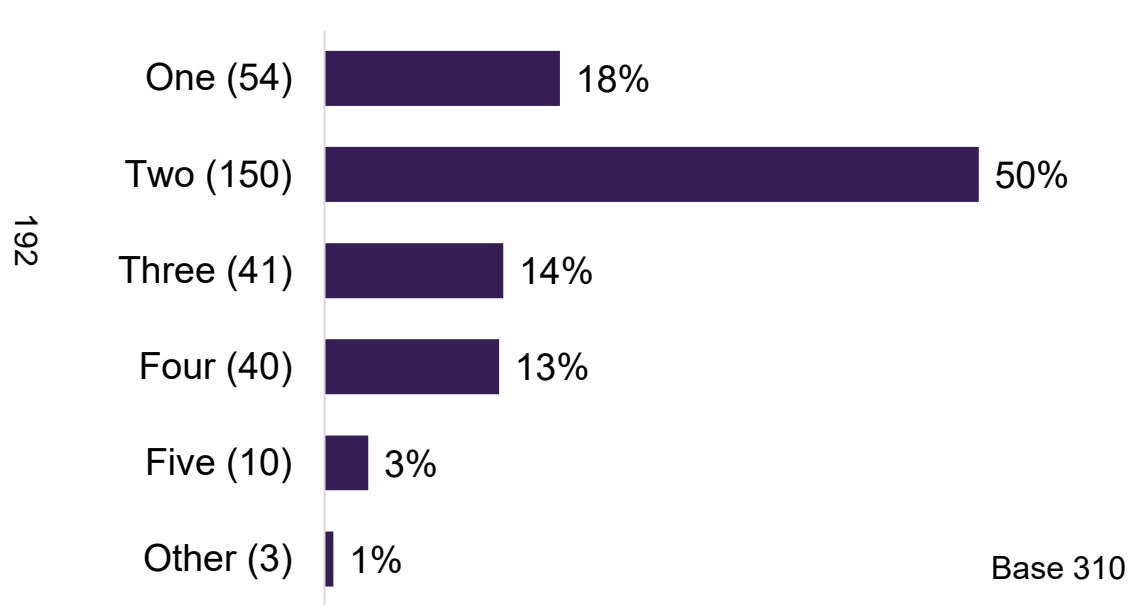
101

29% of those who responded wouldn't use the government scheme

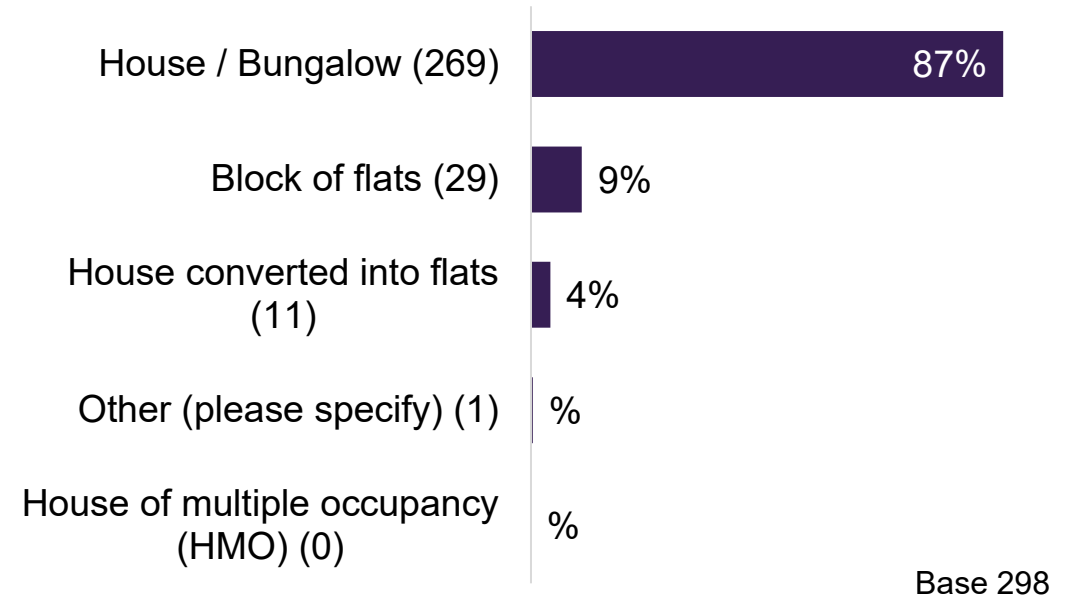


Living Arrangements

- 94% of respondents have access to a car (308 Responses)












50% of respondents live in households with 2 people



87% of respondents live in a house or a bungalow

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Impact Summary

Climate Change & Energy	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Communities & Culture	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Waste & Resource Use	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Economy	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Health & Wellbeing	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Learning & Skills	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Natural Environment	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Sustainable Procurement	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Transport & Accessibility	No positive or negative impacts identified	

Answers provided indicate that the score for the carbon footprint of the proposal is: **0**

Answers provided indicate that the carbon footprint of the proposal is:	Low	
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Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Proposal ID: **706**

Proposal Title: **BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy**

Type of Proposal: **Strategy**

Brief description:

The waste strategy will set out how household and commercial waste services will be managed. The strategy will be aligned with government waste reforms and the council's corporate strategy. It will set out a baseline of current performance along with focus areas, ambitions and plans covering kerbside collections, transfer stations, recycling centres and bring banks alongside commercial services and communications to residents, businesses and the community.

Proposer's Name: **Mary de Fonseca**

Proposer's Directorate: **Environment & Community**

Proposer's Service Unit: **Environment**

Estimated cost (£):

If known, the cost amount (£):

Ward(s) Affected (if applicable):

All Wards

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) supported by the proposal:

3. Good Health and Well Being 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities 12. Responsible Consumption and Production 13. Climate Action

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Climate Change & Energy

Is the proposal likely to have any impacts (positive or negative) on addressing the causes and effects of climate change? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (in this case there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Has the proposal accounted for the potential impacts of climate change, e.g. flooding, storms or heatwaves? **Yes**
- 2) Does it assist reducing CO2 and other Green House Gas (GHG) emissions? E.g. reduction in energy or transport use, or waste produced. **Yes**
- 3) Will it increase energy efficiency (e.g. increased efficiency standards / better design / improved construction technologies / choice of materials) and/or reduce energy consumption? **Yes**
- 4) Will it increase the amount of energy obtained from renewable and low carbon sources? **Yes**

How was the overall impact of the proposal on its ability to positively address the cause and effects of climate change rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

Sustainable waste disposal and sustainable waste targets are key ambitions of the waste strategy - meeting government waste targets which come into force during the lifetime of this ten-year strategy: to recycle 65% of waste and send less than 10% to landfill by 2035. The proposal has accounted for potential impacts of climate change, for example, odour nuisance from waste, particularly during heatwaves may be reduced by collecting recyclable food waste weekly instead of fortnightly alongside non-recyclable waste. The strategy aims to reduce CO2 and greenhouse gases by prioritising waste site proximity where possible, so waste travels only as far as is necessary, reducing the carbon impact of transporting waste. The introduction of expanded food waste collections means vehicle emissions would slightly increase due to expanded collections but overall environmental impact would be improved through the reduction of carbon emissions through waste recycling, (rather than disposal) e.g. through diverting food waste out of non-recyclables and instead using it to create compost, landscape products or biogas. Energy consumption and waste reduction will be reduced by preserving items for longer through the reuse and repair declaration - supporting reuse and repair networks where funding allows. Waste reduction will also be supported by a potential re-location of the community reuse

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

store "new to you" to a more central location. The strategy has a focus on education and behaviour change - informing residents and businesses how to prevent waste and recycle more materials more frequently.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring
(inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Communities & Culture

Is the proposal likely to impact (positively or negatively) on the development of safe, vibrant, inclusive and engaged communities? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will it help maintain and expand vibrant voluntary and community organisations? **Yes**
- 2) Will it promote a safe community environment? **Yes**
- 3) Will it promote and develop cultural activities? **Not Relevant**

How would the overall impact of the proposal on the development of safe, vibrant, inclusive and engaged communities be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



Reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

Collection of waste contributes to a safe and healthy community environment. Waste collection is important to residents and contributes to residents' engagement with the council - 81% of respondents are happy with waste services (BCP Council Residents Survey). A public consultation has taken place, (June 2025) with almost two-thirds of respondents happy to further separate their waste. A councillors' informal working group has been formed to capture any additional community feedback. Local communities will be supported to prevent, reduce and recycle waste through education, engagement and services. The community reuse store, "new to you" offers affordable items to support disadvantaged local people who are in need of essential items required to set up a home and for day to day living. It also ensures reusable items are diverted from disposal thus improving environmental performance.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Waste & Resource Use

Is the proposal likely to have any impacts (positive or negative) on waste resource use or production and consumption? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will it prevent waste or promote the reduction, re-use, recycling or recovery of materials? **Yes**
- 2) Will it use sustainable production methods or reduce the need for resources? **Yes**
- 3) Will it manage the extraction and use of raw materials in ways that minimise depletion and cause no serious environmental damage? **Yes**
- 4) Will it help to reduce the amount of water abstracted and / or used? **Yes**

How would the overall impact of the proposal on the sustainable production and consumption of natural resources be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

The waste strategy views waste as a valuable resource with the strategy setting out waste treatment, in legal accordance with the waste hierarchy: prevent, reduce, re-use, recycle, recover and finally dispose. Applying the waste hierarchy will reduce the demand for virgin raw materials for production, thus contributing to sustainable production and reducing consumption of natural resources. It supports the movement away from a linear economy where waste is thrown "away" to a circular economy where resources are used for as long as possible. During the lifetime of the strategy, the council will become responsible for new services including food waste, plastic film and separate paper and card collections increasing recycling rates. Food waste will be converted into compost material and biogas and separating paper and card will improve the quality of recyclate for use in new products, reducing depletion of natural resources. The risk of batteries causing fires when mixed with dry recycling will also be addressed by the strategy. By removing the service collecting batteries, vapes and small electricals at the kerbside, fires will be prevented and this will also protect dry recycling at the transfer stations prior to onward processing.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring
(inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):



Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Economy

Is the proposal likely to impact (positively or negatively) on the area's ability to support, maintain and grow a sustainable, diverse and thriving economy? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will the proposal encourage local business creation and / or growth?

Yes

- 2) Will the proposal enable local jobs to be created or retained?

Yes

- 3) Will the proposal promote sustainable business practices?

Yes

=How would the overall impact of the proposal on it's potential to support and maintain a sustainable, diverse and thriving economy be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

Positive impacts are expected through use of modern waste infrastructure and a review of recycling centre policies and the van permit scheme to manage commercial waste abuse more effectively. This in turn supports business by reducing the likelihood of reputable businesses being undercut by those not paying to dispose of waste correctly. The strategy supports the local economy and the creation and retention of local environment jobs. The strategy provides employment opportunities with businesses engaged in waste services. The proposal specifically aims to support a more sustainable economy and the transition to a circular economy. Government initiatives such as Deposit Return Scheme and Extender Producer Responsibility will impact upon the funding of waste services, however the level of funding is yet to be determined.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Health & Wellbeing

Is the proposal likely to impact (positively or negatively) on the creation of a inclusive and healthy social and physical environmental for all? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will the proposal contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of residents or staff?
Yes
- 2) Will the proposal contribute to reducing inequalities?
Yes
- 3) Will the proposal contribute to a healthier and more sustainable physical environment for residents or staff?
Yes

How would the overall impact of the proposal on the creation of a fair and healthy social and physical environmental for all be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

This proposal will reduce inequalities as it will bring parity of strategy and service to residents regardless of which town they live in. Good management of waste contributes to a healthy physical environment for everyone and the strategy contributes to BCP Council's carbon reduction targets, lowering pollution by reducing vehicle and disposal emissions associated with waste and recycling. The strategy specifically considers how services will be delivered in a safe manner under the ambition to deliver "Futureproof and safe services". There will also be exploration of incentives for the use of reusable hygiene products. The extension of the food waste kerbside collection service may also support good health by highlighting to households how much edible food is thrown away and encouraging other behaviours such as freezing left-overs.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Learning & Skills

Is the proposal likely to impact (positively or negatively) on a culture of ongoing engagement and excellence in learning and skills? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will it provide and/or improve opportunities for formal learning?
Partially
- 2) Will it provide and/or improve community learning and development?
Yes
- 3) Will it provide and/or improve opportunities for apprenticeships and other skill based learning?
Yes

How would the overall impact of the proposal on the encouragement of learning and skills be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

The strategy will impact positively on learning and skills. Expected impacts include opportunities for community learning relating to prevention and recycling of waste, e.g. through information on-line or sorting tables at recycling centres to educate and enable residents to separate recyclables from non-recyclable items. The waste strategy also includes initiatives with schools through the School Environment Award which helps schools to raise awareness of local (and global) environmental issues and projects. Employees of BCP Council engaged in waste roles will receive training in line with the requirements of their role, therefore building their learning and skills.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Natural Environment

Is the proposal likely to impact (positively or negatively) on the protection or enhancement of local biodiversity or the access to and quality of natural environments?

Yes

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

- 1) Will it help protect and improve biodiversity i.e. habitats or species (including designated and non-designated)? **Yes**
- 2) Will it improve access to and connectivity of local green spaces whilst protecting and enhancing them? **Yes**
- 3) Will it help protect and enhance the landscape quality and character?
Yes
- 4) Will it help to protect and enhance the quality of the area's air, water and land?
Yes

How would the overall impact of your proposal on the protection and enhancement of natural environments be rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

The good management of waste, in particular the reduction of waste being sent to landfill disposal contributes to the quality of the natural environment. The waste strategy has an emphasis on reducing the need for raw materials, taken from the natural environment through its emphasis on keeping materials and items in use for as long as possible in line with the circular economy. The waste strategy covers commercial waste services which include a bulky waste collection service which may reduce the risk of fly-tipping therefore protecting the quality of landscape character.

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Sustainable Procurement

Does your proposal involve the procurement of goods, services or works? **Yes**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

Has or is it intended that the Strategic Procurement team be consulted?

Yes – planning to discuss

If the Strategic Procurement team was not consulted, then the explanation for this is:

- 1) Do the Government Buying Standards (GBS) apply to goods and/or services that are planned to be bought?

No

- 2) Has sustainable resource use (e.g. energy & water consumption, waste streams, minerals use) been considered for whole life-cycle of the product/service/work?

Yes

- 3) Has the issue of carbon reduction (e.g. energy sources, transport issues) and adaptation (e.g. resilience against extreme weather events) been considered in the supply chain?

Yes

- 4) Is the product/service fairly traded i.e. ensures good working conditions, social benefits e.g. Fairtrade or similar standards?

Yes

- 5) Has the lotting strategy been optimised to improve prospects for local suppliers and SMEs?

Yes

- 6) If aspects of the requirement are unsustainable then is continued improvement factored into your contract with KPIs, and will this be monitored?

Yes

How is the overall impact of your proposal on procurement which supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection and progressive labour standards been rated?

Green - Only positive impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

The strategy preparation will be completed in-house rather than using external consultants, once the waste strategy is in place, a tender process will commence for

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

waste disposal contracts and the Strategic Procurement Team will be consulted. Several of the contracts have lotted individual waste streams to help smaller or specialist contracts bid for contracts. Successful bidders will be expected to demonstrate evidence of sustainable environmental and social outcomes and at present, a number of local businesses hold existing contracts for waste services e.g. waste haulage (D&L) and waste processing (Eco Sustainable Solutions).

Details of proposed mitigation/remedial action and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

Proposal Title: BCP Council ten-year Waste Strategy

Transport & Accessibility

Is the proposal likely to have any impacts (positive or negative) on the provision of sustainable, accessible, affordable and safe transport services - improving links to jobs, schools, health and other services? **No**

If the answer was No, then the explanation is below (there are no answers to subsequent questions in this section):

There are not expected to be any impacts on affordable and safe transport services nor accessibility to schools, health or other services.

- 1) Will it support and encourage the provision of sustainable and accessible modes of transport (including walking, cycling, bus, trains and low emission vehicles)?
- 2) Will it reduce the distances needed to travel to access work, leisure and other services?
- 3) Will it encourage affordable and safe transport options?

How would the overall impact of your proposal on the provision of sustainable, accessible, affordable and safe transport services be rated?

No positive or negative impacts identified



The reasoning for the answer (details of impacts including evidence and knowledge gaps):

Details of proposed mitigation and monitoring (inc. timescales, responsible officers, related business plans etc):

CABINET



Report subject	Statutory Duty to Biodiversity
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Access to nature is of vital importance for the health and well-being of residents and visitors, supporting mental and physical health.</p> <p>BCP is an area of high nature value but access to green spaces is unequal, and biodiversity is generally declining across the UK and within BCP.</p> <p>This report outlines the actions taken by BCP Council to comply with the Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021. It summarises our Green Infrastructure strategy framework, a report on Biodiversity net gain, our mitigation policies and delivery, green space capital improvements and countryside management.</p> <p>It presents BCP's first report on biodiversity and a summary of monitoring, reporting and our actions for delivery for nature recovery. These plans will ensure nature is considered fully, declines are reversed and that access to nature is provided. It will support the greening of our urban environment and are part of the work as foundation level Nature Towns.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The first BCP Biodiversity report is approved, meeting BCP's Statutory duty under the Environment Act, including the first report on Biodiversity Net Gain b) A high-level Green Infrastructure action plan is approved, including a BCP Urban Nature Forum and the formation of the Nature Recovery Dorset delivery group
Reason for recommendations	To meet statutory duty to biodiversity as set out in the 2021 Environment Act.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Andy Hadley, Portfolio holder for Climate Mitigation, Energy and Environment
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer.
Report Authors	Martin Whitchurch, Strategic Lead for Green space
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. Biodiversity is at the centre of the BCP Council Corporate strategy vision and priorities, with strong reference to nature flourishing and having a thriving and healthy natural environment. There are ambitions for people to have pride in our streets and public spaces; flourishing green spaces that support the well-being of people and nature; active and healthy quality of life.
2. The Environment Act 2021 strengthens the biodiversity duty originally set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requiring public authorities to:
 - Consider what actions they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
 - Agree policies and specific objectives based on that consideration.
 - Act to deliver those policies and achieve the objectives.
 - Report on their actions and future plans.
3. This applies to all public authorities, including local authorities and local planning authorities, but excludes parish councils from mandatory reporting.
4. The strengthened Duty means as a public authority, BCP must:
 - Consider what you can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
 - Agree policies and specific objectives based on your consideration
 - Act to deliver your policies and achieve your objectives
5. The first biodiversity report publication to be made by 26 March 2026 covering period ending no later than 1 Jan 2026. Subsequent reports are to be every 5 years from the end of the previous reporting period
6. The Council's biodiversity actions contribute to national biodiversity goals and targets, which are:

By 2030: Halt the decline in species abundance and protect 30% of UK land for nature.

By 2042: Increase species abundance by at least 10% from 2030; reduce the risk of species extinction; and restore 75% of our (UK's) one million hectares of terrestrial

and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term¹

Biodiversity Net Gain report

7. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a planning policy requirement under the Environment Act 2021, mandating that developments in England must deliver at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This is achieved by enhancing or creating habitats either on-site or off-site, measured using the Defra Biodiversity Metric
8. The enhanced biodiversity duty requires the Council to publish a report that includes a summary of actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty, how the Council intends to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period, actions carried out to meet biodiversity net gain obligations and how the biodiversity net gain obligations will be met in the next reporting period.
9. A new Habitat banking mechanism, proposed through the Financing Nature cabinet paper December 2025, explains and provides greater detail on the future provision of off-site units within BCP, creating opportunities to improve habitats within BCP as mitigation for off-site habitat loss.
10. BNG is now embedded in the validation and determination of planning applications, developers must submit:
 - A biodiversity metric calculation showing pre-development habitat value.
 - A biodiversity gain plan detailing how the 10% uplift will be achieved.
 - A site plan and habitat condition assessment.
11. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must refuse to validate applications missing required BNG documentation and LPAs are encouraged to go beyond statutory duties by:
 - Developing local BNG policies in Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents.
 - Aligning BNG delivery with Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS).
 - Establishing a biodiversity evidence base to inform planning decisions.
 - Using triage approaches to focus resources on high-impact applications.
12. As detailed in Appendix 1, since adoption, in BCP there has been:
 - 16 Biodiversity Gain Plans approved, of these, 2 have achieved 10% net gain on site; the other 14 off-site through purchasing units.
 - These off-site units mean that 2.44 area habitat units have been bought, and 0.22 hedgerow units.

Biodiversity report

13. The first BCP Biodiversity report (Appendix 2) provides a summary of various work across different teams that support biodiversity within BCP, work in partnerships, key measures on specific species along with future actions and priorities.

¹ Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023: The Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023

14. Summary of high-level corporate actions:

- Governance review of the current Council **Decision Impact Assessment** tool for sustainability to improve accountability and decision making for climate and nature.
- Creation of a **nature dashboard** to complement the existing Climate and sustainability online tool to track and report on green house gas emissions and energy usage.
- The Planning Advisory Service have chosen BCP as one of its pilot areas for use of a **nature recovery toolkit** for local authorities. This will help to align green efforts across departments and services, look across other plans and strategies to help streamline benefits and provide a clearer understanding of how to deliver change, funding and cost-saving opportunities.
- Creation of a **habitat banking mechanism** and improvements at three BCP owned sites for nature.
- Develop partnerships for delivery and greater engagement with communities on nature recovery to lead to higher standard Nature Towns accreditation.

Consideration of Biodiversity in BCP

15. In 2019 BCP Council formally declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, acknowledging the serious risk climate change creates and the role that our natural environment plays. This cabinet report, the first biodiversity report and accompanying Green Infrastructure action plan are the first formal response to the ecological element of the emergency. However, considerable work takes place on a business-as-usual basis, across project and programme delivery and within partnerships to help restore nature and ensure BCP is a nature-rich place to live, work and visit.
16. The Council actively manages through its own strategic green space team 14 of BCP's 19 SSSI's, 45 SNCI's, 25 LNR's and overall c 2,500Ha of green space. We also support various other designated sites and work in partnership across the conurbation with many organisations with an interest in protecting and enhancing our natural environment.
17. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (commonly known as the Habitat Regulations) require Habitat Regulations Assessments (HRAs) for developments that may affect protected sites (e.g. Special Areas of conservations (SAC's) and Special Protection Areas (SPA's)). Mitigation policies and teams are in place that ensure our Habitats regulations requirements are met and our heathlands and harbours are well protected. This includes education programmes are in place and practical measures are taken to protect these precious habitats. Our work in partnership with the Dorset Heaths Partnership and Birds and Recreation Initiative are held in high regard as national best practice.

Green Infrastructure strategic framework, action plan and delivery

18. The Council has a range of strategies and policies in place that support nature recovery and the ecological emergency, these are summarised in the Green Infrastructure Strategic Framework (Appendix 3), and include:
- Green Infrastructure Strategy.
 - Urban Forest Strategy.
 - Local Nature Recovery Strategy
 - Habitats Regulations
19. The Green Infrastructure Strategic Framework draws together all of the above policies and strategies and then aligns them to various delivery mechanisms:
- Financing Nature and a vehicle for Biodiversity net gain.
 - Nature Towns and Cities is the accredited scheme that aims to get more people time in nature close to home, in greener, thriving towns and cities. Millions of people living in urban areas lack vital access to nature and green spaces close to home, yet evidence shows it makes us healthier, more connected and more resilient.
 - A new nature recovery delivery group is being formed for Dorset, with the creation of urban and rural nature forums.
20. The Action plan summarises key work and creates an investible pipeline of projects and deliver at a range of scales, from trees on a corner of a street to multi-partner programmes at landscape scale.

Benefits for people and communities

21. The BCP area is rich in high quality natural environment, and this has a significant role in supporting our resident's and visitors' health and well-being
22. There are over 45 groups actively working to help maintain green spaces and the public realm, from small groups working on roadside planters and litter picking to the constituted groups supporting parks and gardens. These volunteers play a crucial role and make an enormous difference to the management and maintenance of these spaces.
23. In addition, there are on average 700 volunteer hours per month directly facilitated through Council teams, supporting conservation efforts across our nature reserves and encouraging more wildlife into our urban parks.
24. Community food growing opportunities such as allotments, garden growing projects, grow zones linked to park cafés and other spaces are supported by charities such as Grounded Communities, Transition Towns and The Parks Foundations, alongside friends and other groups. These initiatives go hand in hand with supporting nature, for pollinators and wider biodiversity.
25. Through the University of Exeter, a PhD researcher is using Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as a case study to explore 'Disability and Social Inclusion in Urban Nature'. Considering how disabled people perceive and interact with varied forms of urban nature and how this impacts their lives, in potentially positive and negative ways; and examining how urban areas can be more nature-friendly without

disadvantaging disabled people, by talking to disabled people and hearing their lived experiences of living alongside urban nature. The findings will be brought in to future biodiversity reports.

Options Appraisal

26. This report meets our statutory duty to have a biodiversity report and meet our duties under the Environment Act. The report highlights the depth of work being undertaken from BCP Council and by its residents and in partnerships to deliver nature outcomes that support the aims of our corporate strategy.

Summary of financial implications

27. Revenue budgets for the Countryside team and within Parks grounds maintenance operations are the only specific budgets for managing nature conservation. Other provision is specific to projects, capital funding (including from Habitat Regulations) and working in partnership with external organisations to bring forward opportunities.
28. There are no specific financial implications from this report.

Summary of legal implications

29. The publication of a first BNG report and biodiversity report meets compliance within the Environment Act requirements.
30. The Council works with local groups and organisations to enable them to have an active role in managing and maintaining spaces. Loosening Council control to enable nature recovery projects is part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and pragmatic methods for enabling groups are in place, whether through formal lease of land, or softer pledges and agreements that set out an arrangement for specific activities or use.

Summary of human resources implications

31. There are no human resources implications from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

32. The biodiversity and BNG reports support work to make BCP a more sustainable place, seeking to create more, bigger, better and more joined up green spaces, for people and nature. The reports support access to nature, food growing opportunities, promotion and enhancement of our natural environment and ways to create a greener, healthier and more resilient place.
33. Recommendations to strengthen the current Decision Impact Assessment tool are made and will be taken forward to ensure nature has a greater weight in Council decision making processes. There are examples from other Councils such as Dorset and Cornwall of decision-making wheels that they have in use and could be replicated.

Summary of public health implications

34. Enhancing BCP's green infrastructure contributes to improving the quality of life for people through enhanced access to nature and potential investment in green spaces. This has known physical health benefits such as boosting the immune

system, improving heart health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases; supports mental health through reducing stress and anxiety, lowers depression rates and enhances emotional resilience.

35. Societal benefits include the promotion of social connection through outdoor activities that foster cooperation, kindness, and a sense of belonging. Time in nature also strengthens environmental awareness and regular exposure can encourage sustainable behaviours and positive attitudes to nature.
36. Summary comment from BCP Public Health and Communities: Biodiversity is a key determinant of health. Loss of natural habitats can increase air pollution, heat stress, and mental health burdens. Integrating biodiversity into planning such as green corridors, urban trees, and nature-based solutions aligns with the One Health approach, benefiting people, wildlife, and ecosystems (WHO, 2025). Creating and safeguarding biodiverse green spaces and protecting wetlands delivers co-benefits: climate resilience, reduced air pollution, and improved wellbeing (UK Health Alliance, 2025; WHO, 2025). See Appendix 5 for full content.

Summary of equality implications

37. The summary of the EIA covering this work states:

The two cabinet reports related to financing Nature and the Statutory reporting of biodiversity are promoting and committing BCP Council to clear Biodiversity outputs, delivery and governance, seeking ways to innovate, improve and support our residents and communities in accessing and supporting nature.

A forward plan of nature recovery delivery work will create more ways to engage with and seek support from local organisations and individuals through new forums and platforms.

Equality considerations show that while everyone in theory can have access to nature, we know there are barriers, and work is required to understand how to remove those and develop opportunities for more diverse groups to support this work, be more involved in decision making and realise the benefits from time in green spaces and nature.

Summary of risk assessment

38. No specific risks identified from this report.

Background papers

1. BCP Projects [Website](#):
 - a. [Nature Towns](#) page and information
 - b. The [Future Parks programme](#)
 - c. Green spaces [Strategies and plans](#)
 - d. [Let it Grow](#) pages, with maintenance maps for selected parks
 - e. Download and share the [Nature pledge](#)
2. The Parks Foundation [website](#):
 - a. [Guides to support the Nature Pledge](#)
 - b. The [Nature Neighbourhoods](#) project
3. The Dorset [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)
4. Dorset-wide [Habitat regulations mitigation](#)
5. [The Economics of Biodiversity The Dasgupta Review: Headline Messages](#)

Appendices

1. BCP Biodiversity Net Gain report 2025
2. BCP Biodiversity report 2022-2025
3. GI Strategic Framework, Action plan and delivery model
4. Biodiversity report case studies
5. Public health statement
6. EIA

BCP Council Biodiversity Net Gain Report: 2024 - 2025

Introduction

As part of the biodiversity duty requirements, the Environment Act requires local planning authorities to report on Biodiversity Net Gain.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has been a statutory part of the planning process since February 2024. The legislative framework requires applicants to provide information to support planning applications about the habitats that exist onsite prior to development, and those that will be present once the site is complete.

The habitats within the site are each given a value which is calculated within a biodiversity metric. The size, type, condition and importance of the habitat all contribute to its final value, which is recorded as biodiversity units. There are three types of biodiversity units: area habitat units, hedgerow units and watercourse units. Each of these are calculated in separate modules of the biodiversity metric.

Local Planning authorities are required by the Environment Act 2021 to ensure that all applications for proposed development (with the exception of specific exemptions) secure a 10% net gain in biodiversity units. This net gain can be achieved onsite through enhancing existing or creating new habitats; or offsite through the purchase of biodiversity units from a habitat bank or the purchase of statutory credits from the government; or a combination of both onsite and offsite.

When deciding how to achieve the 10% net gain in biodiversity, applicants must look to deliver biodiversity units onsite where possible, through the creation of new or enhancement of existing habitats; and make up any remaining deficit with offsite biodiversity units.

The Environment Act requires the local planning authority to report on:

- actions carried out to meet BNG obligations
- details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans approved
- how it plans to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period

Details of Biodiversity Gain Plans approved and BNG outcomes:

Biodiversity Gain Plans are not agreed until the developer submits an application to discharge the statutory biodiversity gain condition. To do this, the applicant must submit a Biodiversity Gain Plan supported by a completed metric, final habitat plans and details of offsite units or credits that have been purchased. The condition is required to be discharged before work can begin on site, and it is advisable for the Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted just before this happens.

In total 16 Biodiversity Gain Plans have been approved in the period from when BNG became mandatory (12th February 2024 for major applications and 2nd April 2024 for minor applications) until 31st October 2025.

None of the Biodiversity Gain Plans approved in that period have resulted in impacts on irreplaceable habitats.

A net gain has been achieved through a mix of onsite and offsite biodiversity units, but none of the approved Biodiversity Gain Plans have included the purchase of national statutory biodiversity credits.

How net gain has been achieved:

Of the 16 Biodiversity Gain Plans approved, the net gain has been achieved as set out below:

10% net achieved onsite	10% net gain through combination of onsite and offsite	10% net gain achieved offsite only
2	14	0

The total net change in biodiversity units for the 16 Gain Plans approved are:

Habitat unit type	Total net gain in habitat units	Percentage net gain
Area habitats	1.17	15.56%
Hedgerow habitats	0.17	55.80%

Onsite biodiversity units:

The overall change in onsite biodiversity units for the 16 Gain Plans

Habitat unit type	Total post development change in onsite habitat units	Overall percentage change in on site habitat
Area habitats	-1.27	-29.79%
Hedgerow habitats	-0.05	-17.19%

Offsite biodiversity units:

Number of offsite units purchased from habitat banks:

Habitat unit type	Number of units
Area habitat units purchased	2.44
Hedgerow habitat units purchased	0.22

Offsite unit Biodiversity Gain site locations:

The biodiversity metric includes a 'spatial risk multiplier' calculation which is applied where offsite units are purchased from outside the Local Planning Authority boundary and outside the National Character Area. These are areas that have been designated by Natural England and are defined as 'areas of distinct and recognisable character at the national scale'.

BCP is covered by two National Character Areas; Dorset Heathlands NCA and New Forest NCA.

The strategic risk multiplier acts as a penalty within the metric, which increases the number of units that are required to be purchased to achieve 10% dependent on where the Biodiversity Gain site is in relation to the application site.

For the approved Gain Plans, the offsite units required to achieve 10% net gain have been purchased from the following locations:

Units purchased within the local planning authority (LPA) boundary or within the National Character Area (NCA)	0.0%
Units purchased from a habitat bank outside LPA and NCA area but within a neighbouring LPA/NCA area	96.96%
Units purchased from a habitat bank outside LPA and NCA area and outside neighbouring LPA and NCA area	3.04%

Statutory Monitoring of onsite habitat:

At this stage, only 1 of the approved Gain Plans has included 'significant' habitat that require the local planning authority to monitor for 30 years. The legislation requires a detailed habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) to be submitted with the Gain Plan for any new habitats deemed to be 'significant' to explain how the habitat will be managed over 30 years and how it will reach the target condition stated in the metric. In this case, the applicant has entered into a Section 106 Agreement to cover the costs to the local planning authority of checking their monitoring reports throughout the 30 year period.

Actions BCP Council has carried out to meet BNG obligations

At BCP Council a BNG officer working group was set up comprising members of the Planning Policy Team and Green Spaces Team, to prepare for the implementation of BNG. Members of the group have been actively involved in the BNG Forum which has been set up by the Planning Advisory Service to support local planning authorities with the implementation of BNG, provide training sessions and regular forum meetings to share experiences.

Officers have used the knowledge gained to provide a number of detailed training sessions for staff within the planning teams, planning committee members, and other departments within the council.

A draft Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance document and Validation checklist for BNG have been prepared by members of the Planning Team which has recently been through consultation and will be taken to Cabinet with a recommendation to adopt in early 2026.

To help planning officers to understand how to assess biodiversity net gain information, the Planning Policy BNG lead officer and the Council's Ecologist run regular workshops with Development Management Officers to discuss specific application queries, as well as separate workshops with the Council's Tree Team to work through particular issues relating to trees and find suitable solutions that meet BNG requirements but also ensure the right trees are delivered in the right places within a site.

A specialist database known as 'Mycelia' is used to keep a record of biodiversity net gain information submitted. The software also has built in capabilities to check the supplied metric and identify any errors or areas of concern. It interprets the information on baseline (pre-development) and post development habitats and presents it in a user-friendly way, to help case officers to understand what changes in habitat are proposed.

Where the habitats to be created are considered to be 'significant', either in terms of the type of habitat, or in terms of the number of units delivered relative to the overall biodiversity value of a site, the applicant is required to enter into an agreement to monitor the habitats for a 30 year period and to provide regular reports on the progress of the habitat to its target condition and its continued maintenance.

Applicants are also required to pay monitoring fees to cover the costs to the local planning authority in carrying out its statutory duty of ensuring the habitats are delivered and the net gain is achieved through reviews of the submitted reports, site checks and enforcing the requirements. The local planning authority is required to keep a record of all of the sites where significant biodiversity habitats have been approved and to report to Government on their progress. Information about these habitats and the submitted information is stored within Mycelia which helps officers to keep track of progress and generates reminders when reports are due.

How BCP Council plans to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period

It is expected that for the next reporting period a significantly higher number of Biodiversity Gain Plans will have been approved, and there will be greater levels of data on trends in biodiversity outcomes as a result of development. This will enable BCP Council to identify gains or losses in specific habitats as well as identify where offsite gains are being achieved.

The enforcement of the statutory condition is going to be essential to enable the local planning authority to carry out its statutory duty in relation to biodiversity net gain.

Robust mechanisms for achieving this will need to be explored to ensure that developers are complying with the legislation, although it is recognised that there may be resourcing implications for this. Further consideration of how best this can be addressed will be required.

It is likely that by the time of the next reporting period, some of the applications with significant gains will have been implemented and the habitats created. The use of the Mycelia software package will enable officers to track progress of those habitats and ensure up to date information is maintained.

The BNG Taskforce Group will continue to take an active role in the Planning Advisory Service BNG Forum, sharing knowledge and best practice ideas to ensure better outcomes for biodiversity and development.

Further detailed training will be provided to officers and members on BNG, and the guidance document and validation process will be regularly updated to take account of any changes to BNG legislation and national guidance. The workshops with Development Management and Tree Officers will continue to provide support and encourage consistency in approach to determining applications. Consideration will also be given about opportunities to provide support and help to the consultants submitting biodiversity net gain information.

Through the development of the new BCP local plan, consideration will be given to how policies can best support the council's biodiversity objectives and help to secure increased and better local biodiversity net gains. Officers will continue to explore and recognise opportunities for habitat sites within the BCP area, both council owned and privately owned, to provide a local supply of biodiversity units to enable development whilst also helping to deliver the wider biodiversity objectives set out in the local nature recovery strategy.

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BCP Council

Biodiversity report

2022-2025

Version: 1 Live
December 2025

bcpcouncil.gov.uk



Bournemouth,
Christchurch and Poole:
Nature Towns



BCP Biodiversity report

Foreword

This report is BCP Council's first summary of action for biodiversity. The BCP Corporate Strategy promotes the importance of connecting people and nature and across our area we have access to diverse green spaces and abundant wildlife. The Climate and Ecological Emergency declared by BCP in 2019 demands action to protect our natural environment.

This report highlights how much nature we have on our doorsteps, in our green spaces and around us in the harbours, heaths, woods and fields.

It provides a baseline as we seek to capitalise on our accreditation as Nature Towns, build on the Dorset Nature Recovery Strategy with delivery, action and new ways for our communities and individuals to help make a difference for nature.

We all need to champion the importance of nature and take every opportunity to support nature recovery.



Councillor Andy Hadley

Portfolio Holder for Climate response, Environment and Energy

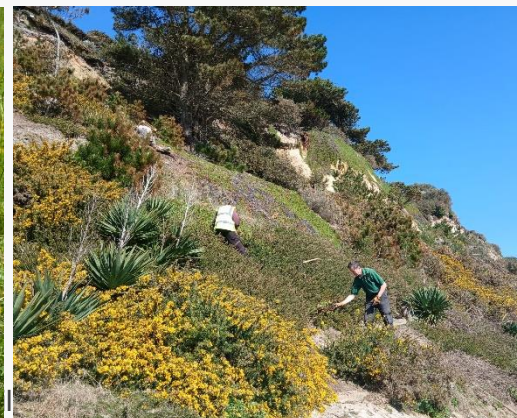
"It's surely our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth."

David Attenborough



Contents

1. Introduction	Introduction Scope	4
2. BCP a nature rich area		5
3. Designations and land management		6
4. Current nature restoration work across BCP teams and partners	Green space development team Green space maintenance team Working in partnership to deliver habitats regulations mitigation. Strength in partnerships BCP green space map Action taken	7 8 9 10
5. GI Strategy overview	Nature Towns Green Infrastructure strategy Urban forest Strategy Local nature recovery Strategy Urban Greening Nature pledge	11 12
6. State of Nature	Headline data Species monitoring Species lost	13 14 15
7. Future action and monitoring	Nature priorities	16
8. BCP's top 14 Species		17-23
Appendices		24-42



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BCP Biodiversity report 2025
3 | Page

1. Introduction

The Environment Act 2021 strengthens the biodiversity duty originally set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requiring public authorities to:

- Consider what actions they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on that consideration.
- Act to deliver those policies and achieve the objectives.

This report is the first to document actions, future plans and strategic platforms that are in place.

It provides a summary of delivery for nature recovery, key species to monitor to understand the health of biodiversity in BCP, new means of engagement with residents and action and plan.

Key elements to satisfy in the report for the Statutory Duty to Biodiversity are:

- a summary of actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty,
- how the Council intends to comply with the biodiversity duty in the next reporting period

A separate BNG report provides:

- actions carried out to meet biodiversity net gain obligations
- and how the biodiversity net gain obligations will be met in the next reporting period

Scope

As a first report, the scope is primarily on the delivery and monitoring of wildlife undertaken by BCP Council teams, and in partnership with stakeholders and partner organisations.

Future reports ambition to be bigger/wider from more sources with new ways for residents, organisations and partners to come together to work to deliver wildlife monitoring and nature recovery.

The reporting period covers the last 3 years 2022 to November 2025. The next report is required within 5 years of the date of issue.



2. BCP a nature rich area

Whilst being a dense urban conurbation home to over 400,000 people, the BCP area is an incredibly rich and diverse place for nature.

The amount of nature and some of the species and habitats present are nationally and internationally significant.

The largest harbour in the world, Sydney, is almost entirely surrounded by the city; Poole Harbour – Europe's largest natural harbour – is extensively natural with exceptional habitat for over-wintering birds and providing opportunities for people to engage with nature on their doorsteps, such as the eye-catching White-tailed Eagle and Osprey.

The area's only Country Park at Upton, wraps around the Holes Bay linking people with nature through active travel routes through woodlands, wetland and meadow.

Bookended to the East with Christchurch harbour and adjacent cliffs and green space, BCP has a unique Coastal Nature Park offering. The cliffs and chines in between the two harbours providing spaces to connect with nature, with lizards on the walls, dune habitats and goats managing the steep cliff faces.

There is a purple wash across BCP that comes from the remaining areas of lowland Heath. Our heathlands are now heavily protected and need careful management to protect them from disturbance and the threat of wildfire.

Along the northern boundary, the Stour valley is an important corridor for people and wildlife. Otter, beavers and kingfishers can be the high-profile wildlife spotting opportunities, alongside increasing species diversity at Stour Valley water meadows SANG, and in the future on land to be set aside for habitat improvements through Biodiversity Net Gain units.

Home to all six native reptiles, with scarce and elusive bugs and birds, they provide natural and wild spaces that are also home to over 60 cattle, ponies, sheep and goats that help support the conservation and maintenance of these precious spaces.

With the Hampshire Avon, the Dorset River catchments flow into our two harbours and bring extensive partnership working to secure water quality improvements.

Alongside spaces designated for conservation, our local green spaces play a huge role where wildlife can thrive. Community parks, verges and corridors are vital spaces for the more familiar and urban animals – hedgehogs, foxes, sparrows and magpies – but they need our help and support just as much as the species living on specialist habitats.

Our gardens, allotments, cemeteries, green and blue spaces are becoming more important as acting as stepping stones for nature and to connect with larger nature reserves.

All of our green spaces are precious, and every effort is required to maximise them for the benefit of nature and people.



3. Designations and land management

For a relatively small council area BCP has many designated nature sites and extensive green space.

BCP Area: 16,132 Ha

Green Space: c. 2,500 Ha = 14%

25 Local Nature Reserves ~ local wildlife sites of special interest that make an important contribution to England's biodiversity. **505 Ha**

Natural England have designated 19 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) 769 Ha ~ wildlife and geological sites of national importance.

Most of these SSSIs also have international designations of Special Areas of Conservation (2), Special Protection Areas (4) and Ramsar (3) designations.

While many of the nationally and internationally designated sites are primarily heathland, they also cover both Poole and Christchurch harbours, River Avon and areas of reedbed, salt marsh and woodlands.

8 Ancient Woodlands

67 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) 160Ha

1 Regionally Important Geological Site



NERC 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) listed S41 species of "principal importance" for the conservation of biodiversity in England. These are species that are of conservation concern and are listed under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan or other priority species framework.

18 Section 41 habitats

191 Section 41 species

NERC 2006 places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to ensure everyone working for a public body must think about how to take care of plants, animals, and where they live and what can be done to carry out improvements for them

Agri-Environmental schemes

The BCP Countryside team manage extensive areas of BCP under agri-environmental schemes, known as Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS). These schemes provide financial incentives to farmers, foresters and land managers to look after and improve the environment.

Total CS Area: 865 Ha

Total HLS Area: 116 Ha



4. Current nature restoration work across BCP team and partners

A summary of actions taken to comply with the biodiversity duty:

The **BCP Countryside team** provide a broad range of functions that include statutory protection and conservation management of habitats.

Typically, 700 hours per month in volunteering is facilitated; education work with schools and uniformed groups; work experience and opportunities for people with additional needs, University students and other specialist groups.

Conservation grazing includes over 60 head of cattle, along with ponies, sheep and goats that help to manage heaths, cliffs, meadows and mire to agri-environmental stewardship scheme compliance.

There are volunteers, or '**Lookers**', who check animal stocks and help the care of our livestock by seeking out our grazing animals every day, let us know where they are on the nature reserves and if all is well, or if an animal needs any attention.

Green space development

team deliver a capital programme of improvements across all our green spaces that will ensure nature is a feature and maximised as part of their delivery through planting, habitat creation and landscaping schemes.

Green space maintenance

team are, where practicable, promoting opportunities for biodiversity. This includes green and blue spaces such as parks, gardens, roadside verges, streams and ponds.

Working in partnership to deliver habitat, regulations, mitigation.

The **Dorset Heaths Partnership** provide monitoring, promotion, the Dorset Dogs initiative, close liaison with the fire service and other agencies across SE Dorset heaths.

- The arson courtroom drama presented to over 3,000 students
- Dog Control, through site specific advice and education for dog walkers, to reduce wildlife disturbance
- Supporting the fighting of over 130 heathland wildfires in SE Dorset in 2025
- Creation of a professional dog walker charter to reduce disturbance through increased education
- BBQ and wildfire messaging campaigns



Working alongside BCP heathland mitigation rangers on site to educate and, where required, enforce behaviour.

Delivery of capital projects to mitigate the impact of housing development on protected sites, through Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) and Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs). These improvements enable housing development through creation or improvement of green spaces, including biodiversity measures.

The **Birds and Recreation Initiative** in Poole Harbour mitigates the impact of public disturbance on birds and delivers projects and promotion to educate people about the harbour's fantastic habitats and species.



Strength in partnership

The **Parks Foundation** are an independent charity that support BCP green spaces. They activate spaces with volunteering, run park cafés that provide a warm and friendly space for park users and offer nature-based activities alongside food growing zones.

These **Green Heart Parks** have nature and access to green spaces at their core. Creating maintenance maps with our park maintenance team helps to manage spaces with a wildlife focus: planting trees, creating ponds and running walks and talks, on everything from fungi to moonlit moths to make nature accessible on people's doorsteps.

There are **Friends and residents' groups** across BCP (Appendix 3) that play a vital role for nature in caring for their local spaces. From planting and maintaining shrub beds and trees in car parks or roadside planters, to fund raising and extensive support for our grounds maintenance teams.

Special help for nature comes from many groups, not all could be mentioned here, who raise funds for maintenance and improvement of reserves, some examples are:



Friends of Stanpit Marsh who help raise funds, host walks and support volunteering across the site, and other green spaces.



Birds of Poole Harbour is a charity that aims to raise the profile of bird conservation, preservation and observation in and around the Poole Harbour area through harbour-wide partnership working, high standards of people engagement work and continuous monitoring of the harbour and its bird populations



Christchurch Harbour

Ornithological Group (CHOG) is an independent organisation and registered charity, which is dedicated to recording, promoting and conserving the birds and other wildlife of the Christchurch Harbour area.



Transition Towns at Turners

Nursery is a Community Orchard with regular monthly volunteer workdays, Started by Transition Town Poole in 2015 with food growing and caring for nature in local spaces, the group brings together people wanting to learn more about living lighter on the planet.



The Merley Wildlife group is a small group of residents passionate about local wildlife with an aim to get the community involved in managing wildlife habitats around them, help enhance and protect wildlife habitats.



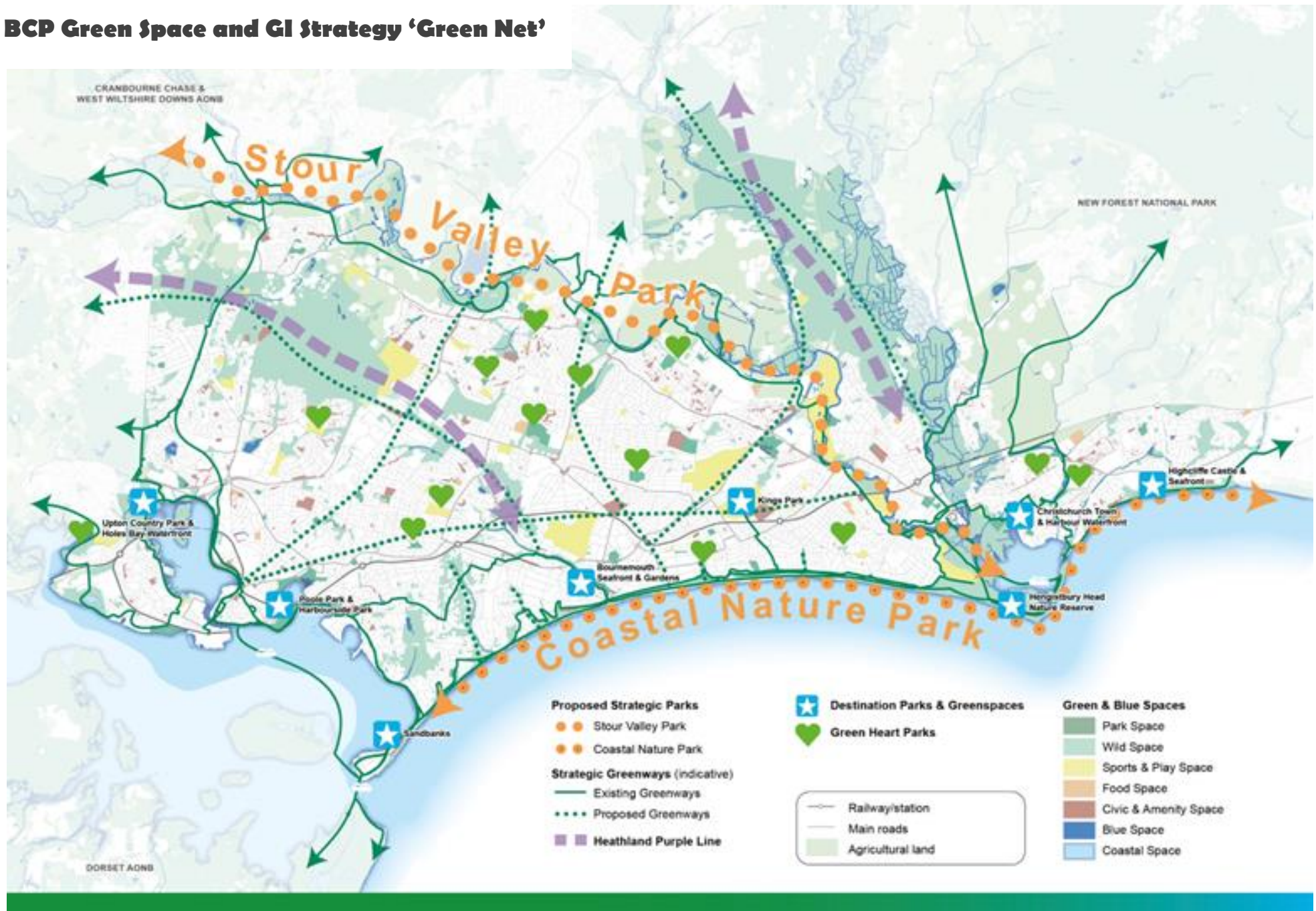
Upton Country Park have regular conservation volunteering, host BioBlitz events surveying habitats and the team work in partnership with the Wareham Arc project and host RSPB events.



Community food growing opportunities such as allotments, garden growing projects, grow zones are supported by charities such as Grounded Communities, Transition Towns and The Parks Foundations, alongside Friends and other groups. These initiatives go hand in hand with supporting nature, for pollinators and wider biodiversity.

We encourage and work with groups across BCP that are passionate about their local natural spaces.

BCP Green Space and GI Strategy 'Green Net'



Action taken:

In the reporting years 2023-24 and 2024-25 the following action has been recorded by BCP Council teams (Appendix 2).

Future reports, and the creation of the Nature recovery delivery group will seek to collate and publish more accurate figures.

2023/24 – 2024/25:



6,576 Trees Planted



670m of Hedge planted



Meadow management.
Enhanced mowing regimes in place to ensure long grass and wildflowers are left where possible.



Meadow maps published:



3.31 Ha Flower Meadow

199 Ha Grass Meadow



14 Green Heart Parks managed in partnership with The Parks Foundation



7 Site Maintenance maps written to support nature recovery interventions, parks maintenance and opportunities to volunteer.

Green spaces capital delivery >£0.5m on landscape and biodiversity projects

2025 Dorset-Wide Nature recovery Strategy published including species priority list.

8 Natterjack toad ponds maintained

2 House Martin towers

1 Swallow nesting shelter

2 Hobby baskets installed

1 Bat hibernaculum at Mudeford Woods

230 Swift boxes/bricks installed and/or provided by CHOG, Birds of Poole Harbour & Dorset Swift Network

28 Ha SANG's/HIPS created

Increase in all biodiversity markers at Throop water meadows SANG (see Appendix XX)

39.8% Reduction in use of Glyphosate usage for highways weed treatment 2023 – 2025

Natural Flood Management at Canford Heath through the Dorset Peat Project.



Working together



5. GI strategy overview

Nature Towns

The Nature Towns and Cities (NTC) Accreditation scheme has been developed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Trust and Natural England. It is a national initiative designed to recognise towns and cities where the local authority is committed to working with communities and other partners to create greener, healthier, resilient and thriving places.



**Bournemouth,
Christchurch and Poole:
Nature Towns**

BCP are the first Nature Towns to be accredited with Foundation status in the UK.

Being accredited as Nature Towns recognises that we are putting nature and green infrastructure at the heart of our place and communities.

The accreditation recognises that BCP is ambitious to deliver for nature and our natural environment. The main strategies and platforms to enable this are:

Green Infrastructure Strategy

Includes a delivery framework, identifies challenges, sets a vision, goals and principles. Supported by a large and robust evidence base for identifying opportunities to strengthen our green Infrastructure. Supported by an Urban greening design guide.

Urban Forest Strategy This also identifies priorities and uses a Tree Equity Score to evaluate and establish where our tree canopy needs to be strengthened. There is a working group for the strategy developing the first phase of delivery to establish a community tree planting programme and

start to address the findings in the strategy. BCP's canopy cover is at 19% which is relatively high for equivalent council areas but is declining meaning increased tree planting and successful establishment is required across BCP.

Local Nature Recovery

Strategy (LNRS) adopted and published December 2025, the LNRS has identified a vision and strong priorities for nature recovery, working to the Lawton principles of 30% of land for nature recovery by 2030.

Priorities have been written specifically for the urban area, highlighting the role that BCP green space can support nature recovery alongside our residents where 24% of BCP land is in residential gardens.

A Dorset Council-led 'rural forum', and a BCP-led 'urban nature forum' will feed in to a new nature delivery group in 2026.

Urban greening

Co-design across council programmes to secure SuDS, tree planting and parklets on capital schemes as part of urban greening is being piloted across three wards.

These wards could be affected most by climate change, through flooding and increased summer temperatures. Making these spaces greener will improve them for people and provide more space for nature.

Draft **Natural environment policies** for the forthcoming Local plan include the use of Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework to mandate that development satisfies BNG that also delivers on urban greening.

See Background Documents and Appendices for further information.

Nature Pledge

The Nature Pledge is a list of principles that help nature thrive in our gardens and green spaces. Whether you have a window box, a small area at your workplace or a large private garden, you can use these principles to improve the habitat for wildlife and insects.

In 2019, BCP Council declared a **climate and ecological emergency** and in September 2022 adopted the [Green Infrastructure strategy](#).

This Nature Pledge supports the Green Infrastructure Strategy and promotes the need for nature-friendly land management, with a view to generating a community of like-minded people and organisations.

The purpose of the pledge is to share simple principles, promote the need for nature friendly land management, encourage commitment to the pledge and generate a community of like-minded organisations.

Our strategic greenspaces team carried out formal engagement with the public in autumn 2022. This Nature Pledge has been created in line with the responses received.



The pledge

Help our nature thrive. Whether you have a window box, small balcony, a large private garden or a small greenspace at your place of work; join us in pledging to do things better for nature, to help bring wildlife to your home, school or workplace.

- ♥ plant **native/wildlife-friendly** tree and plant species
- ♥ collect **rainwater** for watering
- ♥ stop or **reduce chemical use** to control weeds
- ♥ only use **peat-free compost** - or make your own if you can
- ♥ allow areas to **grow naturally** without interference and leave space for wildlife
- ♥ use **natural ground cover** and not artificial/plastic products
- ♥ install **bird and bat boxes**
- ♥ **reduce mowing** to allow more nature in your garden
- ♥ manage **trees for wildlife** value, leaving deadwood and ivy where possible
- ♥ install **ponds** or encourage **wetland areas** if safe to do so
- ♥ consider **nature-friendly material** choices
- ♥ create more **food growing** spaces
- ♥ **volunteer** some time to improve nature locally



6. State of Nature

Headline data

70,000+ known species in the UK¹

5,174 Species recorded in BCP since 2010 = 13% of UK total (for those species groups)

75% of these species were recorded within the last reporting cycle (2020-2024),

197 are listed as species of principle importance in England under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

30 are listed as priority species in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

BCP is home to:

All 6 native species of reptile

6 of the 7 UK amphibians

14 of the 18 UK species of bat

31 of the 68 other UK mammals

45% of UK bird species

40 of the 59 UK butterflies

45% of UK bird species

49% of UK moths

10% of UK true bugs

31% of UK bees, wasps and ants

20% of UK spiders

50% of vascular plants



Species monitoring

Appendix 7 shows a table of recorded species with the BCP area. This table shows the number of species recorded across different groups of plants, animals and fungi, between 2010 and 2025.

The Living Record online database is used by BCP staff, partners and individual naturalists and recorders.

There will be other records and not all data is uploaded to Living Record, so this should be understood as being a limited data set.

There has also not been time within this report writing to seek and collate additional data sources. It is hoped that future reports will be much fuller with greater partner data.

Future reports will comment on trends, use the list of 14 key species (see below) as headline indicators of the state of nature, as well as trends from wider monitoring, such as the Nature Recovery Strategy.

BCP Council Countryside team undertake or facilitate a wide range of species monitoring to inform habitat management and conservation resources.

Often working with volunteers or partner organisations, data is collected on a range of key species:

- Reptiles
- Various key bird species
- Butterflies
- Moths
- Dragonflies and damselflies
- Bats
- Otter
- Various key plant species
- Amphibians

The data represented in this first biodiversity report is not exhaustive and more a snapshot of information readily available at the time of writing.

Future reports can gather and present a much greater range of data and information from a wider group of partners.

Key organisations supporting nature recovery and recording biodiversity are:

- Dorset Heaths Partnership (DHP)
- Birds of Poole Harbour (BoPH)
- Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARC)
- Christchurch Harbour Ornithological Group (CHOG)
- Stour Valley Supporters
- The Parks Foundation
- Upton Country Park and Holes Bay Nature Park
- British Dragonfly Society (BDS)
- Bournemouth University (BU)
- RSPB
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- Dorset Flora Group (DFG)
- Butterfly Conservation (BC)
- Dorset Bird Club
- Lytchett Bay Nature Partnership
- Dorset Bat Group (DBG)
- Dorset Moth Group



Credit: Birds of Poole Harbour



Credit: Birds of Poole Harbour

7. Future action and monitoring

This report presents a first picture of the work undertaken by BCP Council towards nature recovery. Just as importantly though, it sets out a road map for the future to do more for nature, using the platforms, strategies and partnerships that have been put in place.

The accreditation as Nature Towns provides a wrapper to this work, promoting and driving the importance of connecting people with nature.

Nature priorities:

A Green Infrastructure Action Plan

Ensuring there is investment in Green Infrastructure at all scales, from street-corners to whole landscapes, through partnership-led programmes, community engagement and a range of delivery mechanisms.

Nature recovery delivery group and urban nature forum

Facilitating local delivery through new forums and groups that focus on local action, learning, working in partnership and collaboration.

Citizen science strand to ensure the widest possible scope for data collection.

Nature dashboard and corporate policies

Using species monitoring data and the delivery of nature restoration work to create a public-facing dashboard.

BCP Council decision-making governance

Reviewing the Council corporate decision-making processes to better reflect the ecological emergency.

Develop a more robust and detailed reporting and species monitoring programme

Developed through the Nature forums, ensuring future monitoring is more representative of partners. Include mapping of survey areas and species heat maps to inform delivery and other actions that come from the delivery group and forums.

Work towards Higher level Nature Towns and Cities accreditation

Through the Green Infrastructure strategy, action plan and delivery methods develop to the higher-level status of Nature Towns, including development of work with investment partners.



8. BCP's Top 14 species

Key species have been chosen for future monitoring as a guide to the general state of nature in BCP.

These could be argued and debated as to their inclusion over other species; however, they have been chosen as they can be monitored from existing data sources, are readily surveyed and provide a range of species across different taxa.

A table (Appendix 6) provides a species profile with a summary of their habitats and other criteria for data monitoring.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy identified 54 priority species and species assemblages in a short list, itself reduced from over 1,000 originally felt to be significant in Dorset.

Not all of those are present or relevant within the BCP area. The LNRS list identifies priority species as those requiring bespoke or targeted activity for nature restoration.

Those used in this BCP-focussed report will be used in future reports and are felt to reflect 'our' nature, and whilst they need conserving and supporting, their inclusion here is more as a barometer of the state of nature in BCP.

Future work through the nature forums may revise this list for future reports, as will the future availability of survey data and collection opportunities.

Sand Lizard

The sand lizard is one of the UK's rarest and most threatened reptiles, found in only a handful of locations across the country. Dorset is one of its last remaining strongholds, thanks to the county's rich patchwork of lowland heath—a rare habitat that provides the warm, sandy conditions essential for the lizard's survival.

These shy but charismatic creatures are most noticeable in spring and early summer, when the males develop brilliant green flanks to attract mates—a vivid display against the backdrop of purple heather and golden gorse.

The presence of the sand lizard in Dorset is not only a symbol of the county's unique natural heritage but also a testament to what focused conservation action can achieve in reversing species decline.

Trend: Sand lizard populations suffered severe declines throughout the 20th century due to widespread habitat loss, fragmentation, and changes in land use. As a result, the species became locally extinct in many areas, including some parts of southern England.

What can we do to help it? Targeted conservation efforts have helped stabilise and even increase local sand lizard numbers in recent years. Programmes have focused on habitat restoration, careful management of heathlands, and the successful reintroduction of sand lizards to areas where they had previously disappeared.

Fun fact Unlike most reptiles in the UK, sand lizards lay their eggs in warm, sandy burrows rather than giving birth to live young. They are the only native UK lizard to do so, and they rely on open patches of bare sand, which makes habitat management especially important.



European Nightjar

A summer visitor from the scrub grasslands of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a UK population estimate of 4,600 males. The cryptic colours make this bird more likely to be heard than seen. Across much of its range, the Nightjar's breeding distribution is closely associated with rare lowland heath and consequently is mostly scattered across the southern half of Britain.

Trend: Historically, Nightjars were widely distributed throughout Britain & Ireland. A catastrophic decline was recorded between the 1968-72 and 1988-91 breeding atlases; there was a range retraction of more than 50% due mostly to loss of suitable habitat. More recently, there has been a welcome 18% range expansion in Britain from the 1988-91 to 2008-11 atlas. Nightjar is amber listed under UK birds of conservation concern.

What can we do to help it? Management, protection, restoration and creation (or re-creation) of key heathland breeding habitats remain critical for the long-term conservation of Nightjar. It is also necessary to minimise human and pet disturbance, especially during the breeding season.

Recent studies have shown Nightjars also forage in surrounding areas, like grasslands and farmland, not just their nesting sites. A wider, landscape-scale approach to habitat management, in particular retaining existing foraging areas close to the heaths, is critical.

Fun fact The Nightjar has many alternative names through folklore, one being the Goat Sucker, as it was often seen round the udders of livestock. In fact, it was just feeding on the insects that associate with these animals.



Stag Beetle

The Stag beetle is a nationally scarce species of principle importance, mainly found in south-east England, with the BCP area being the south-west limit of its main range. For Dorset the majority of records are in the BCP area.

Stag Beetles spend 3 to 4 years (but can be up to 7 years depending on temperature) as a larva (grub) in underground rotting wood, with adults emerging in late spring to mate.

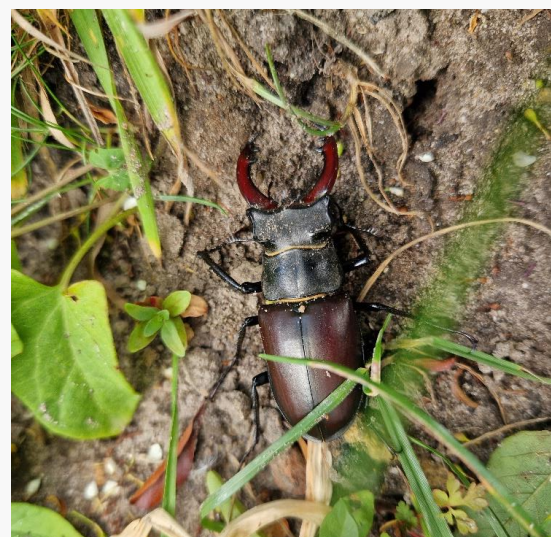
Trend: declining across Europe and in the UK is mainly found in the south-east, with Dorset being the strongest western extent.

The main problems facing Stag beetles are habitat loss and a lack of rotting wood in which to lay their eggs and for their larvae to feed on. The tendency to keep parks and gardens "tidy", including removing old tree stumps and roots.

The larvae are long-lived, and the adults do not move very far from where they emerge. Although males can fly for up to 500m, most females travel no more than 20m

What can we do to help: Avoid removal of old tree stumps, roots, dead or decaying wood habitats which takes away larval food sources.

Fun fact: Stag beetles are harmless and do not damage living wood or timber, as the larvae only feed on decaying wood.



Hedgehog

The European hedgehog is a much-loved mammal across the United Kingdom, including Dorset. Recognisable by its spines and nocturnal habits, the hedgehog plays an important role in the local ecosystem, where they act as nature's indicator.

They help control garden pests naturally, reducing reliance on harmful chemicals.

Hedgehogs are nocturnal insectivores, feeding primarily on beetles, caterpillars, earthworms, and slugs. Adults typically have between 6,000 and 7,000 spines, which also act as shock absorbers if they fall.

Trend: Hedgehog numbers have fallen significantly in recent decades, and Dorset reflects this national trend. Reasons include the reduction of hedgerows and wild spaces, lack of suitable habitat connectivity, road traffic accidents, use of pesticides and slug pellets.

What can we do to help: Conserving hedgehogs in Dorset requires an integrated approach that combines habitat management, reduction of human-induced threats, and active community involvement. Linking urban greenspaces and creating small openings in garden fences and walls; reduction of pesticide use.

Fun Fact

Despite their small size, hedgehogs can travel up to two miles in a single night while searching for food and mates. In urban settings they require access to 12 average gardens to get enough food to survive.

Green woodpecker

The green woodpecker is a large, mostly green woodpecker with a red crown and a laughing "yaffle" call. It is principally a ground-feeding species that favours mature trees for nest holes and nearby open turf or parkland for foraging across southern and central Britain.

Trend: National monitoring shows little long-term change but Bird Breeding Survey indices reported worryingly strong short-term declines in recent years.

Green woodpeckers are regularly recorded within the BCP area, especially where there are mature trees, open grassland/parkland and low-intensity greenspaces. They do not tend to move far, around 1km for adults and 3km for juveniles.

Likely causes of decline include loss of veteran/standing deadwood and suitable nest sites, pesticide use reducing ants as prey, fragmentation of parkland, and urban development.

What we can do to help: Retain and create veteran trees and standing deadwood; avoid routine removal of large branches. Reduce pesticide/insecticide use on parks, verges and golf courses to maintain ant populations.

Manage grassland as semi-natural meadow/ant-friendly patches and leave ant-rich microhabitats (bare patches/anthills). Protect and connect parkland & hedgerow networks.

Fun fact: The common name "yaffle" is onomatopoeic — it imitates the loud, ringing call that often betrays this otherwise skulking bird's presence



Heath Spotted-orchid

In June to August, the striking purple, pink, and white flower spikes of the Heath Spotted-orchid can be seen scattered across opens areas of wetland – an indication of healthy, undisturbed habitats.

Scattered by the wind, their seeds are tiny and dust-like, containing no food reserves – instead relying on fungi within the soil to provide nutrients to the germinating seedling.

The BCP populations of Heath Spotted-orchid are a vital link between the larger populations of Purbeck and the New Forest.

Trend: Populations are declining as habitats are lost through land management changes, nutrient enrichment, drainage, and development, especially across our heathlands and water meadows.

What we can do to help: Grazing is the principal intervention to preserve populations of Heath Spotted-orchid. In addition, re-wetting of habitats can be beneficial, as well as avoiding nutrient enrichment and chemical pollution of soils to promote this species and others.

Fun Fact: It's vibrant, spotted flowers are 'food-deceptive' – attracting pollinators however offering no sweet reward. This strategy relies on the curiosity and foraging behaviour of insects, particularly bumblebees, which visit the flowers expecting nectar and inadvertently assist in pollination.



Natterjack toad

The Natterjack Toad is one of our rarest amphibians, associated with sand dune and heathland sites. Within the BCP area it can only be found at Hengistbury Head, where a colony was reintroduced in the 1980s. This species has complex habitat requirements and careful and ongoing management is necessary to sustain this fragile and isolated population.

Nationally and locally there is a downward trend, which is felt to be linked to changing climate and reduction in suitable habitat.

This is a nocturnal species and can only be seen close to breeding pools at Hengistbury Head, during the spring and summer.

Natterjacks are a key positive indicator of the health of the habitats where they are found and an integral part of the food chain and through ecological interactions.

Trend: Following widespread historical decline they are only surviving thanks to interventions and dedicated habitat management. We have a moral and legal duty to prevent further declines and loss of this species.

Changing climatic conditions cause breeding ponds to dry too quickly with mild winters (and increased nitrates) allowing more vegetative growth leading to lack of open sand and short turf necessary for burrowing and feeding. There is a general need for more intensive habitat management, including grazing and scrub clearance as well as provision of artificial ponds in some circumstances.

Fun fact: The loud call of the male toad in breeding season can travel up to 2km



Silver-Studded Blue butterfly

The Silver-studded Blue is a rare butterfly found mainly on the lowland heathlands of southern England. Dorset is one of their strongholds, home to important populations which can be found across the county.

This species gets its name from the distinctive silvery-blue scales on the hindwing, which are absent in our other blue butterflies. Weak fliers and generally sedentary, they are best seen on calm, sunny days in their large colonies skirting atop the heather.

Small but mighty, the silver-studded blue is an excellent indicator of healthy, well-functioning heathland ecosystems due to its complex habitat requirements.

Trend: Listed as Vulnerable on the GB Red List, the Silver-studded blue has suffered severe recent population declines, with an estimated 80% loss in its range over the past 100 years. Habitat loss is a main driver; this species relies on a mosaic of mixed-age vegetation which deteriorates quickly without active management.

Fun fact: They have a strong mutualistic symbiotic relationship with black ants *Lasius spp.*, on which the Silver-studded blues are dependant. Laying eggs only where ant pheromones are present, the ants take the developing butterfly larvae within their nests where they feed on the sweet honeydew the caterpillar produces. At dusk, the ants escort the larvae to its favourite foodplants, protecting it from predators while it eats.



Golden-Ringed dragonfly

The Golden-ringed Dragonfly is an unmistakable species, with its striking black body, yellow rings and bright green eyes. It is also one of the largest dragonflies in UK at 75-85mm long and a wingspan of 100mm.

On the wing from May to September. It is widely distributed but absent from central and eastern England. It can live in a stream or river for up to 5 years before emerging as an adult to live for a matter of weeks.

It is generally associated with heathlands, as it breeds in streams, rivers and bog pools with an acidic nature. Whilst it is mainly found on heathlands, it may be found hunting away from its breeding habitat indicating the importance of surrounding habitats, not just heathland.

Trend: Contrary to what is happening with the majority of dragonfly species in this country, that have benefited from a changing climate, the trend is downwards with the Golden-ringed Dragonfly dropping very slightly from 1970 to 2019.

It is a good indicator of water quality in streams as opposed to rivers as streams are more susceptible to climate change and reacts to rainfall, which affects the volume of water in streams and pools and ultimately, rivers. Pollution can have a devastating effect on this species.

Fun fact: Independent wings allow it to fly backwards and it is the punk of the dragonfly world - the female lays its eggs by pogoing up and down into the sediment at the bottom of streams.



Brown long-eared bat

While bats are hard to identify without specialist equipment, they do act as great indicator species of general health of nature.

The brown long-eared bat is medium sized and, as its name suggests has enormous ears.

BCP is in a privileged location to have Brown Long-eared and the very rare Grey Long-eared Bat. It is not always possible to tell the difference between the two, many records are recorded as long-eared bat species.

As with all bats, they are nocturnal, feeding on midges, moths and other flying insects, using echolocation to catch their prey.

Roosting in holes in trees and old buildings, showing the value of traditional building materials and leaving standing dead-wood.

They feed in parks, gardens and woodlands.

Trend: Since 1999 it has been stable, but roost counts over the last 5 years show decline

What we can do to help: leave dead wood on trees, plant hedges and food sources for moths and insects.

Fun fact: The brown long-eared bat certainly lives up to its name as its ears are nearly as long as its body



Eurasian otter

We have a population of Eurasian otters within the BCP Council area. The Eurasian otter is the most widely distributed otter, its range includes parts of Asia and northern Africa and is also spread across Europe. It inhabits unpolluted bodies of fresh water such as lakes, streams, rivers and ponds.

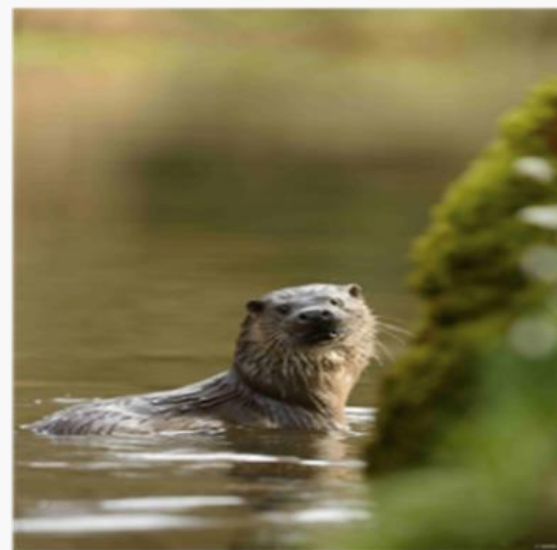
They mainly eat fish, but during the winter and in colder environments will feed on birds, eggs, worms, amphibians, insects and small amounts of vegetation.

Otters are very territorial, living alone most of the time. An individual's territory can vary between about 1 and 25 miles long.

They live in holes in riverbanks called holts; a holt will have a few different entrances to protect against flooding, with at least one entrance being above water level.

Trend: Currently a low population in BCP and they are very vulnerable to pollution and disturbance.

Fun fact: They have many adaptations for swimming – long streamlined bodies with strong tails, webbed feet and they can close their ears and nostrils whilst underwater. They have 2 layers of fur: a thick waterproof outer one and a warm inner one with 50,000 hairs/cm².



Waxcap

Brightly coloured waxcap fungi play an important ecological role as key indicators of healthy grasslands. Their sensitivity to disturbances such as chemical inputs, air pollution, and habitat change makes them valuable biological markers of ecosystem condition.

They can be seen throughout the autumn in meadows, lawns, and cemeteries.

There are around 40 species in the UK, which is home to half the world's population. Their bright colouration, distinctive features, and specific habitat requirements means waxcaps can be easily identifiable

Trend: Britain is home to some of the world's most valuable waxcap grasslands, though many species remain rare or under threat. Over 97% of the UK's species-rich grassland has been lost in less than a century.

What we can do to help: Avoid the use of fungicides, pesticides, and proprietary lawn treatments. Remove all cut grass to ensure nutrients don't build up. Recording sightings through projects such as Plantlife's Waxcap Watch is a great way to contribute to the conservation of this species and others.

Fun Fact: Waxcap fungi develop partnerships with nearby plants, exchanging nutrients and water which enable both to thrive in places they might otherwise struggle to survive. Fungi can supply up to 80% of a plant's nitrogen requirements, 100% of its nitrogen requirements, also providing water in times of drought or dormancy.



Swift

This bird is a much-loved sign of summer which overwinters in Africa and comes to the UK for a few months, just to breed.

Mainly nesting in roof eaves, it is also a bird of urban areas, feeding on mosquitoes and other aerial invertebrates.

Trend: This is a species that has suffered major declines over a relatively short period (down 66% between 1995 and 2022). Various factors have led to this, not least the loss of nest locations due to the rise of uPVC soffits and fascia boards as we seal any gaps in our rooves.

What we can do to help: We all need to support this species and encourage everyone to install boxes and bricks. Providing nesting locations is a proven way to boost populations.

We also need to encourage nature friendly practices to boost the insects which Swifts eat. Dorset Swift Network is an umbrella partnership working locally to help raise awareness and reverse declines.

Fun Fact: Swifts only land to breed, so do everything on the wing – from sleeping to drinking and even mating.



Glow-worm

The Glow-worm despite its name is not a worm but a beetle, the flightless females of which emit a yellow-green glow at night, making them unmistakable for any other beetle and captivate any observer.

The male looks like a typical beetle with hard wing cases and can fly. They are often associated with calcareous grasslands, which may include meadows, railway embankments, woodland edges and even road verges. In BCP they also occur on our lowland heaths.

Only the adult female glows brightly, caused by a chemical reaction in the last two segments of her abdomen, creating the bright glow (bioluminescence). The females live a short sedentary life, rarely moving more than 30cm from one night to the next.

They can be seen on warm nights between May and September. The glow is used to attract a mate, once mated she will turn out her light. Diet consists of small slugs and snails.

Trend: The Glow-worm shares threats with many other invertebrates, such as habitat loss and fragmentation (resulting in isolation and unsustainable populations), pesticide use, climate change and light pollution. The species is near-threatened, and the rate of decline suggests it is a species at risk of extinction in the UK.

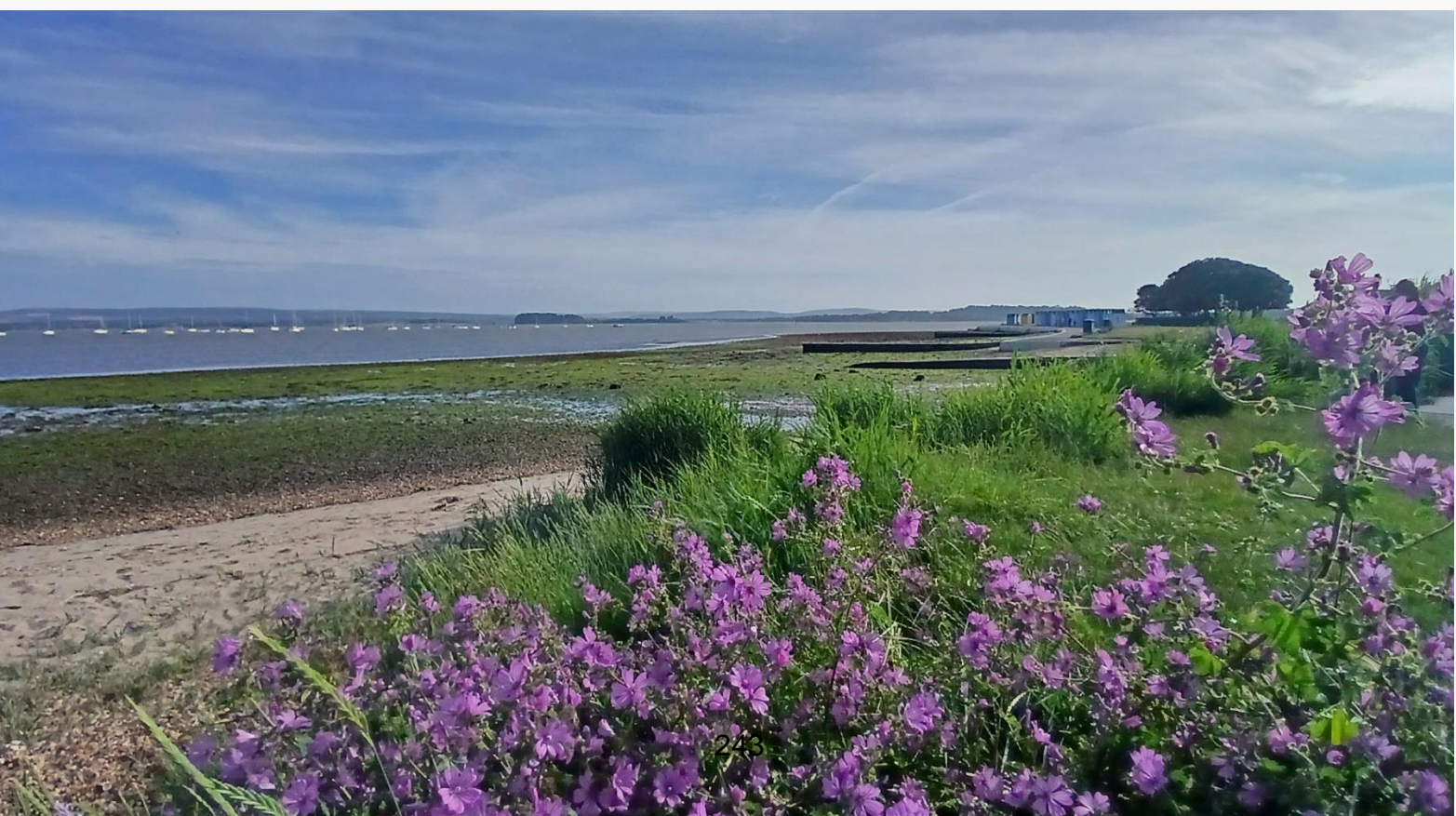
What can we do to help it?

Survey our local Open spaces to find where they are and how many are present. Protect sites where present. They need a supply of snails and slugs and to keep spaces as dark as possible. Don't ever take them home.

Fun Fact: Mentioned by the novelist Thomas Hardy in 'The Return of the Native', first published in 1878.



Credit: Sam Deakin



9. Background Information and Appendices

Background reading and links:

- BCP Projects [Website](#):
 - [Nature Towns](#) page and information
 - The [Future Parks programme](#)
 - Green spaces [Strategies and plans](#)
 - [Let it Grow](#) pages, with maintenance maps for selected parks
 - Download and share the [Nature pledge](#)
- The Parks Foundation [website](#):
 - [Guides to support the Nature Pledge](#)
 - The [Nature Neighbourhoods](#) project
- The Dorset [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)
- Dorset-wide [Habitat regulations mitigation](#)
- [The Economics of Biodiversity The Dasgupta Review: Headline Messages](#)

List of Appendices:

1. GI Strategic Framework, Action plan and delivery model – separate document
2. BCP Nature quantitative progress report 2025
3. Friends' groups in BCP
4. Statement on Highway weed management treatment.
5. Case Studies – separate document
6. BCP's Top 14 species - Summary of species, their habitats and recording platforms/groups.
7. Species recorded within BCP
8. BCP Countryside Team and partner species monitoring 2023-2025
9. Highlighted species trends - Species lost

Appendix 2

BCP Council Nature Quantitative Progress Report - 2025				
	Measure	unit of measurement	2023-24	2024-25
Measure 1: designated sites	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	no. of sites	19	19
	Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance)	no. of sites	3	3
	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	no. of sites or hectares	0	0
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	no. of sites or hectares	2	2
	Special Protection Area (SPA)	no. of sites or hectares	4	4
	Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	no. of sites or hectares	25	25
	Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)	no. of sites or hectares	67	67
	Local Geological Sites (Regionally Important Geological Sites)	no. of sites or hectares	1	1
	Land managed by BCP Council in a countryside stewardship agreement to improve condition of site	hectares	865Ha	865Ha
	Value of countryside stewardship agreements held by BCP Council	£	c £300k pa	c £300k pa
	Land purchased to create new habitat	hectares		
Measure 2: Countryside Team	Verges managed to enhance their value for nature	sq m		
	Rights of way improvements to make nature more accessible	km		
	Percentage of Herbicide (glyphosate) decreased when managing weed growth within BCP highway network	%		
	Trees planted	no. of	5593	620
	Hedgerow planted	no. of	50m	620m
	Shrubs planted	no. of		
	Wildflower seeds	sq m		
	Removal of invasive and non-native species	sq m		
	Wetland creation	sq m		

Measure 3: Landscape design and projects	Trees planted	no. of trees	151	212
	Hedgerow planted	no. of		
	Shrubs planted			
	Wildflower seeds	sq m		
	Removal of invasive and non-native species	sq m		
	Total schemes that enhance or create nature	no.of schemes		
	Value of the schemes that enhance or create nature	£		
Measure 4: Other Capital Projects eg BCP Homes	Schools and community buildings with new or enhanced space for nature	no. of buildings / schemes		
	Schemes with a long-term landscape and ecological management plan (XX years)	no. of schemes		
	Trees planted	no. of		
	Hedgrow planted	no. of		
	Shrubs planted	sq m		
	Wildflower seeds	sq m		
	Wetland creation	sq m		
	Wildlife enhancements (e.g. bee bricks, bird boxes, bat boxes, reptile chambers, log piles, dormouse nest boxes)	no. of		
	no. of schemes with Sustainable Drainage features	no. of		
Measure 5: Highways projects	Trees planted	no. of trees		
	Hedgrow planted	no. of		
	Shrubs planted	sq m		
	Wildflower planting	sq m or km		

No current Data.
Information to be collated
and supplied for further
reports.

Measure 6: Arboriculture	New trees planted	no. of trees	
Measure 7: Biodiversity gain through development	Biodiversity units on offer through habitat banks secured by BCP Council	no. of units	
	Biodiversity net gain agreed through planning applications	units and % from master gov ? no. of agreed planning applications where BNG applies? No. of developments delivering on-site BNG	
	wildlife enhancements secured through biodiversity plans (e.g. bee bricks, bird boxes, bat boxes, reptile chambers, log piles, dormouse nest boxes)	no. of	
	Land use/management change to deliver nutrient mitigation which by default will deliver nature recovery (increase in biodiversity) - ha	hectares	
	Nitrogen removed as part of nutrient mitigation as part of planning	kilograms of nitrogen per hectare per year	
	SANGs with nature-friendly management plan	hectares	13Ha
Measure 8: Sustainable Farming	County farms managed using sustainable farming practices	%	
Measure 9: Nature-based solutions	Natural flood management projects	hectares	
	Nature Based Solution opportunity project		

No current Data.
Information to be collated
and supplied for further
reports.

Measure 10: Nature Recovery Dorset network	Nature Recovery Dorset network members	no.of	No current Data. Information to be collated and supplied for further reports.
	Approx. hectares space for nature created by all the NRD members	ha	
	Member of public	ha	
	Community Group	ha	
	Charity or social enterprise	ha	
	Farmer	ha	
	Land manager	ha	
	Landowner	ha	
	Organisation	ha	
	Public body	ha	
	School	ha	
	Other	ha	

Appendix 3

Group Name	Location
Friends of Fisherman's Walk	Southbourne
Friends of Knyveton and Spencer Gardens	Knyveton and Spencer Gardens
Friends of Boscombe Chine Gardens	Boscombe
Southbourne, Wick and Tuckton Action Group (SWAT)	Southbourne, Wick and Tuckton
Friends of Seafield Gardens	Seafield gardens
Winton Library Garden	Winton Library
Friends of Skerryvore Garden	Skerryvore Garden
Stour Valley Supporters	Stour Valley
Southbourne in Bloom	Southbourne Green
Mallard Road Park	Mallard Road Park
Friends of Coy Pond	Coy Pond Gardens and Upper Gardens Rockery
Adastral Square Gardening Group	Adastral Square, Canford Heath estate
BH12 Planters	Planters in Albert Road, and surrounding roads, Poole
Broadstone in Bloom	Broadstone High Street
Friends of Broadstone Nature Reserve	Broadstone Nature Reserve (Broadstone Heath)
Friends of Hamworthy Park	Hamworthy Park
Friends of Turners Nursery	Newtown
Friends of Upton Country Park	Upton Country Park
Heathland Lookers	Canford Heath
Merley Nature Group	Sopwith Crescent Open Space, Fenners Field Rec, Chichester Walk, Oakley Lane, Selkirk Close Park, Magna Road, Down in the Woods Pre school, Harrier Drive
Oakdale Library Gardens Association	Oakdale Library
Pinecliff Gardens volunteers	Pinecliff Sunken Gardens, Pinecliff Road
Sterte Community Garden Association	Sterte Court apartment blocks, Sterte Close
Friends of Sterte Green	Sterte Green
Tatnam Organic Patch	Oakdale
Parkstone Rotary Club	Parkstone
Bluebell Woods	Behind St Michael's Church, Hamworthy
Hamworthy Gardening Volunteers	Hamworthy
Rossmore Library Community Garden	Rossmore
Haskells Rec Community Group	Haskells Rec
Alum Chine Tropical Gardens Volunteer Group	Alum Chine
OLGA - Oakdale Library Garden Association	Oakdale
Alexandra Park GreenFingers	Alexandra Park

Parks in Mind Project	Shelley Park, Knyveton Gardens, Boscombe Overcliff, Fisherman's Walk, Woodland Walk, Kings Park
Winton Recreation Ground GreenFingers Volunteers	Winton Rec
Winton Rec Community Cafe Volunteers	Winton Rec
Muscliffe Park GreenFingers Volunteers	Muscliffe Park
Slades Farm Community Garden	Slades Farm (rear of Cycle track)
Seafeld Gardens GreenFingers and Nature Tots	Seafeld Gardens
Kinson and West Howe GreenFingers	Moore Avenue, Pelhams Park, Kinson Manor Playing Fields
Redhill Park GreenFingers	Redhill Park
Boscombe Chine Gardens	Boscombe Chine Gardens
Pelhams Park GreenFingers	Pelhams Park
Kings Park Nursery	Kings Park Drive
Friends of Druitt Gardens	Druitt Gardens
Friends of Stanpit Marsh	Stanpit Marsh and surrounding areas
Friends of St Catherine's Hill	St Catherine's Hill
Highcliffe and Walkford in Bloom	Various
Watermans Park GreenFingers and Wildlings	Watermans Park
Mudeford Woods	Mudeford Woods
South West Lakes Trust	Christchurch Harbour

Appendix 4

Statement on Highway weed management treatment.

Highways based weed management treatment involving the use of Glyphosate has significantly reduced due to the reinstatement of effective twice annual spot treatment reducing growth following a backlog in treatment during the pandemic and subsequent management programme.

The Council is committed to securing sustainable opportunities to further reduce its use of glyphosate and is working with its Contractors and Suppliers to trial the effectiveness of reducing the level of active product quantities.

Usage Data:

Year	Product quantities used in litres	Quantities of active ingredient used
2023	2226	801.36kg
2024	1371	493.56kg
2025	1340	482.40kg

Appendix 5

Case studies – see separate document.

- i. Stour Valley water meadows SANG
- ii. The Parks Foundation: Urban Greening project evaluation and nature interventions.
- iii. Green Heart Parks
- iv. The Nature Pledge
- v. The Peat project

Appendix 6

BCP's Top 14 species - Summary of species, their habitats and recording platforms/groups.

	Heath	Ponds	Rivers /streams	Gardens	Woodland	Monitoring in place	Partner orgs involved	Data sources	Current monitoring	Future monitoring
Sand Lizard <i>Lacerta agilis</i>	Y					Y	ARC	ARC	National Reptile Survey	National Reptile Survey ¹
European Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Y					Y	RSPB	BTO	Heathland Bird Survey	Heathland Birds Survey ²
Stag Beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i>	Y			Y	Y			Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist		European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network ³
Hedgehog <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	Y			Y	Y			Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist		
Green Woodpecker <i>Picus viridis</i>	Y			Y	Y	Y		Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist	Breeding Bird Survey	Breeding Bird Survey ⁵
Heath Spotted Orchid <i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	Y	Y	Y			Y		Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist	Count	Count ⁶
Natterjack Toad <i>Epidalea calamita</i>	Y	Y				Y	ARC	Living Record, ARC	String, tadpole & toadlet count	String, tadpole and toadlet count ⁷

Silver-studded Blue <i>Plebejus argus</i>	Y					Y	BC	iRecord	UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme	UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme ⁸
Golden Ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>	Y	Y	Y			Y	BDS	iRecord	British Dragonfly Survey	British Dragonfly Survey ⁹
Brown Long-eared Bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		DBG	Living Record	Bat box survey Bat activity transects Static bat survey	Bat box survey ¹⁰ Bat activity transects ¹¹ Static bat survey ¹²
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>		Y	Y			Y			Ad-hoc field sign surveys	Field sign surveys ¹³
Waxcaps <i>Hygrocybe spp.</i>	Y			Y	Y			Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist		Waxcap Watch ¹⁴
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	Y			Y	Y	Y	CHOG, BoPH, Dorset Swift Network	CHOG, RPSB Swift Mapper	Swift box occupation	Swift box occupation ¹⁵
Glow-worm <i>Lampyris noctiluca</i>	Y			Y	Y			Living Record, iRecord, iNaturalist		UK Glow Worm Survey ¹⁶

1 – [protocol | National Reptile Survey](#)

2 – [nightjar survey methods 2025.pdf](#)

3 – [Protocol-for-the-European-Stag-Beetle-Survey-1.pdf](#)

- 4 –
- 5 – [Methodology and survey design | BTO](#)
- 6 –
- 7 –
- 8 – [UKBMS Factsheet TR1](#)
- 9 – [Survey-guidance.pdf](#)
- 10 –
- 11 – [Bat Survey Guidelines 2015](#)
- 12
- 13 – [Microsoft Word - HRSSM_16003 HR_Otter.docx](#)
- 14 – [Take part in Waxcap Watch 2025 - Plantlife](#)
- 15 –
- 16 – [UK Glow worm survey home page](#)

Appendix 7

Species recorded within BCP

BCP Council predominantly use the Living Record online recording system for inputting data from species monitoring. This data is presented in the table below and all data is passed to the Dorset Environmental Records Centre for county-wide monitoring purposes.

Reptile survey data is managed through the National reptile Survey, coordinated by Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC). Data is also collected via apps and field survey field maps.

Care should be taken when drawing inferences from this data due to various complexities.

- This is a record of species richness (and to some extent recorder effort) rather than biodiversity – it doesn't give information on changes in population size and is purely the number of species present in certain time periods.
- UK species totals are based on best available information and change on a regular basis as new species arrive or are amalgamated
- Despite large overlaps, species will not wholly be the same in each time-period – some species will have been lost and some will have been gained.
- There is no indication of recorder effort year by year or available expertise.
- Abundance (and relative abundance) is not shown but is measured for some species groups.
- Although Living Record is extensively used in Dorset, it is not the only record database and therefore it does not give a complete picture of actual species recorded. However, data is all verified by County Recorders before going live and should be seen as robust.
- Recording is often time-intensive, and specialist knowledge often has a monetary cost. Funding is often limited and infrequent, making fair comparison difficult. (e.g. apparent spider decline is very likely due to lack of recording effort)
- Data for 2025 is still incoming/not fully verified and only included in the 'all-time' record column. This is therefore subject to change.

Species recorded within BCP on Living Record Database												
Species Group	UK species	S41 Species	LNRS S12 Species	2010-2025	% of UK	2010-2014	2015-2019	2020-2024	% UK	% BCP	Richness Trend	
Amphibians (native)	7	3/4*	1/1	6	86	5	5	6	86	100	Up	20%
Bats	18	7/26	9/10	14	78	10	13	12	67	86	Down	-8%
Bees, Wasps, Ants	590	3/31	0/6	183	31	23	44	169	29	92	Up	284%
Beetles	4072	5/75	1/1	298	7	68	202	159	4	53	Down	-21%
Birds	640	31/49	8/15	198	31	145	170	157	25	79	Down	-8%
Birds (CHOG records)	640	36/49	9/15	287	45	260	246	252	39	88	Up	2%
Bugs (Hemiptera)	1830	0/10	0	176	10	33	104	129	7	73	Up	24%
Butterflies	59	10/22	1/4	39	66	33	33	36	61	92	Up	9%
Caddisflies	199	0/3	0	54	27	49	4	24	12	44	Up	500%
Dragonflies & Damselflies	57	1/2	0/1	35	61	28	30	33	58	94	Up	10%
Flies	7000	4/29	0	292	4	70	136	192	3	66	Up	41%
Freshwater Fish	64	17/35	1/2	18	28	3	11	9	14	50	Down	-18%
Fungi	14889	2/61	0	345	2	51	221	205	1	59	Down	-7%
Grasshoppers & Crickets (native)	38	0/3	0/1	28	74	17	20	25	66	89	Up	25%
Larger Crustaceans	36	0/6	0/1	5	14	0	4	2	6	40	Down	-50%
Lichens	1800	2/97	0	271	15	129	134	132	7	49	Down	-1%
Mammals (exc. bats)	68	6/6	2/4	31	46	19	24	29	43	94	Up	21%
Marine Fish	330	21	1/1	15	5	0	8	9	3	60	Up	11%
Molluscs (non marine)	239	1/20	0	33	14	6	24	18	8	55	Down	-25%
Mosses & Liverworts etc	1110	0/77	0/3	188	17	1	60	177	16	94	Up	195%
Moths	2610	70/142	2/12	1288	49	907	1036	1068	41	83	Up	3%
Reptiles (native)	6	6/6	0	6	100	6	6	6	100	100	No change	0%
Sawflies	500	0	0	19	4	2	6	11	2	58	Up	83%
Seaweeds	644	0/6	0	26	4	0	19	8	1	31	Down	-58%
Spiders & Harvestmen	707	1/30	0/1	144	20	34	129	44	6	31	Down	-66%
Vascular Plants	2951	7/151	4/9	1461	50	522	956	1236	42	85	Up	29%
Total**	40464	197/943	30	5173	13	2161	3393	3896	10	75	Up	15%
*Great Crested Newt records are probable deliberate/accidental introductions												
** excludes CHOG records												
Christchurch Harbour Ornithological Group (CHOG)												

Appendix 8

BCP Countryside Team and partner species monitoring 2023-2025

Year	Site	Funder/For	Type		Species/Group	Surveyor
Central team						
2025	Turbary Common	BTO	BBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Turbary Common	BTO	WBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Turbary Common	BC	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house
2025	Turbary Common	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Stour Valley	BTO	WEBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Stour Valley	BTO	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house/volunteers
2025	Stour Valley		Trap		Moth	In-house
2025	Stour Valley	BDS	BDS transect		Odonata	In-house
2025	Millhams	BTO	BBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Millhams	BTO	WBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Millhams	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	ARC
2025	Millhams	BC	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house
2025	Kinson Common	BTO	BBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Kinson Common	BTO	WBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Kinson Common	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Kinson Common	BC	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house/volunteers
Year	Site	Funder/For	Type		Species/Group	Surveyor
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	Butterfly Conservation	UKBMS transect		Butterflies	In-house
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	n/a	Bee transect		Bees	Silvia Freire
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	n/a	Walking transect		Bats	in-house
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	BTO	Breeding bird survey		Birds	in-house

2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	BTO	Winter bird survey		Birds	in-house
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	n/a	Presence/absence survey		Dragonflies	in-house
2025	Stour valley water meadows SANG	n/a	Field survey		Otter	Guy Finucane
West team						
Year	Site	Funder/For	Type		Species/Group	Surveyor
2025	Bourne Valley		BBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Bourne Valley	BC	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house
2025	Bourne Valley	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Bourne Valley		Count		Southern marsh orchid	In-house
2026	Bourne Valley	DBS	BDS point/transect		Odonata	In-house
2025	Canford Heath		BBS transect		Bird	In-house
2025	Canford Heath		HBS transect		Dartford/nightjar/woodlark	RSPB
2025	Canford Heath	BC	UKBMS transect		Butterfly	In-house
2025	Canford Heath		Trap		Moth	In-house
2025	Canford Heath	BDS	BDS point		Odonata	In-house
2025	Canford Heath	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Canford Heath	SRT	PondNet count		Marsh clubmoss	In-house
2025	Canford Heath		Count		Pale butterwort	In-house
2025	Canford Heath		Count		Dorset Heath	DFG
2026	Canford Heath		Trap		Moth	In-house
2026	Canford Heath	ARC	Emergence		Reptile	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills North		HBS transect		Dartford/nightjar/woodlark	RSPB
2025	Corfe Hills North	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills North		PondNet count		Marsh clubmoss	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills North		Count		Pale butterwort	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills North		Count		Marsh gentian	In-house

2025	Corfe Hills North	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	ARC volunteer
2025	Corfe Hills Middle	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills South		HBS transect		Dartford/nightjar	In-house
2025	Corfe Hills South	ARC	NRS transect		Reptile	ARC volunteer
2025	Hatch Pond	BTO	Ringling		Bird	BTO
2025	Hatch Pond		Field Surveys		Bird	Volunteers and BCP staff
2025	Hatch Pond		Trap		Moth	In-house
2025	Poole Harbour		WeBs		Bird	
East team						
Year	Site	Funder/For	Type		Species/Group	Surveyor
2025	Stanpit Marsh	FOSM/CHOG	Field survey		Insects	Bryan Pinchen
2025	Stanpit Marsh	FOSM	Light trapping		Moths	Phil Budd
2025	Christchurch Harbour	Southern IFCA	Seine net trapping		Fish	Southern IFCA
2025	Hengistbury Head	Buglife	Pitfall trapping		Scaly Cricket	Caroline Kelly
2025	Hengistbury Head	n/a	Light trapping		Moths	in-house/Mike Jeffes
2025	Hengistbury Head	Butterfly Conservation	UKBMS transect		Butterflies	in-house
2025	Hengistbury Head	n/a	Pond transect		Dragonflies	in-house/volunteers
2025	Stanpit Marsh	Butterfly Conservation	UKBMS transect		Butterflies	volunteers
2025	Mude Valley	Butterfly Conservation	UKBMS transect		Butterflies	in-house
2025	St Catherine's Hill	Butterfly Conservation	UKBMS transect		Butterflies	in-house
2025	Christchurch Harbour	BTO	WeBs count		Birds	CHOG
2025	Christchurch Harbour	CHOG	Breeding bird survey		Birds	CHOG
2025	Christchurch Harbour	n/a	Field survey		Insects	Paul Morrison
2025	St Catherine's Hill	ARC	Refugia transect		Reptiles	in-house

2025	Hengistbury Head	ARC	Refugia transect		Reptiles	in-house
2025	Hengistbury Head	n/a	Pond survey		Natterjack Toad	in-house
2025	St Catherine's Hill	DHP	Heathland Bird Survey		Birds	

Selected additional wildlife monitoring data sources:

Holes bay nature park

- [Website](#)
- [2024 latest survey report](#)

Appendix 9

Highlighted species trends - species lost

There are many species where their distribution and density are changing across Dorset, many are not clearly known but some are very apparent. Invertebrates are generally seeing an overall decline and species that were once common in Dorset are now rare.

Long-term data shows that more species have decreased significantly in number than have increased. The factors are not always known but many that have become apparent have strong correlations with climate and/or habitat.

Where habitat restoration has occurred, there is encouraging evidence that nature can respond quickly, if given the chance. Birds, Butterflies, Moths and Dragonflies tend to be the most easily and regularly observed and recorded taxa, with many professional and amateur recorders located across the county, providing annual insights into any clear or rapid changes.

Appendix XX highlights a small representation of species that have seen significant changes within BCP, highlighting the need to avoid complacency about what we have, and also to expect new arrivals.

The need for continual monitoring is vital to understand both local and national changes and the health of our environment and take action where it is possible. It is hoped in the future to be able to produce graphs and visuals related to the trends shown below.

Class	Species	Trend	Likely reasons	Comment
Birds	Willow Warbler	Decreasing	Climate Productivity	63% decline in SW England since 1995. This once common breeder is almost now restricted to a passage migrant within BCP. Northern population is increasing, suggesting a shift northward.
	Wood warbler	Extinct	Climate Predation	32 pairs were reported across Dorset in 1998, bred in Delph Woods. Part of a national decline, has been on UK red list since 2009
	Spotted Flycatcher	Decreasing	Low 1 st year survival rates Lack of flying insects Predation Traditional habitat management has changed.	Another summer migrant suffering severe declines. 66% decline in SW England since 1995. Improved habitat, reduced use of pesticides may assist recovery.

	Goldeneye	Rapidly decreasing	Climate Birds no longer need to migrate as far south.	Dramatic decline, Poole harbour was a nationally important wintering site, with up to 500 birds in the 60's, 208 were counted in Feb 1991, with just 5 birds in Feb 2025
	Woodlark	Increasing	Habitat Management	One of the many species that has benefited from improved heathland management. It also now breeds away from traditional heathland habitat and the recovery of habitat at Wild Woodbury (DWT) has enabled the species to breed there in the past two years.
	Firecrest	Increasing	Climate	Rapid population growth, from just a few breeders in the west of the county, can now be encountered breeding across Dorset and BCP.
	Egrets and Herons	New arrival	Climate Habitat restoration	Numerous species colonising and expanding rapidly. Little, Great and Cattle Egrets in particular.
	Osprey	Increasing	Reintroduction and protections	First successful pair to breed in southern England for 200 years occurred in Poole Harbour in 2022. 2025 saw a second pair successfully breed.
Invertebrates	Jersey Tiger moth	New arrival	Climate	New species of moth continue to colonise Dorset having arrived since the year 2000 but many are in decline
	Willow Emerald damselfly	New arrival	Climate	Recent colonist; first recorded in significant numbers in East Anglia in 2009. Since then, it has rapidly expanded its range and was first recorded in Dorset at Hengistbury head in 2021 and is now spreading west, having been found at Upton County Park in 2024
	Praying Mantis (A Mantis)	New arrival	Climate / illegal releases	

BCP Council

Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategic Framework.

Solid black edging to boxes are existing policies/mechanisms.

Dashed edges to boxes are new policies/mechanisms



BCP Corporate Strategy

Our place and environment

Our people and communities

BCP Local Plan

Climate and Ecological Emergency declaration

BCP Strategies and Policies

Habitats Regs

Heathlands, Heath's Air Quality, Poole Harbour Recreation, Nitrates

Mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain

Green Infrastructure Strategy

Urban Greening Design Guide & Nature Pledge

Urban Forest Strategy

Canopy cover % increase

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Informs sites for priority nature recovery across Dorset.


Statutory Duty to Biodiversity Reporting and monitoring. State of Nature.

Mechanisms for delivery

Green Infrastructure Action Plan

- Delivery of strategic aims
- Working with charitable partners and community organisations
- Enabling social value through working with businesses on mutual benefits

See p3

 Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole: Nature Towns

Foundation accreditation. Levering future investment opportunities.

Financing Nature

A vehicle for BNG Units and to improve habitats

Nature Recovery Dorset delivery group.

Dorset Council-led 'rural nature forum' and a BCP-led 'urban nature forum'.

See p5

Community partnership working across green spaces, nature recovery and GI.

Nature Neighbourhood Plans

Creating GI plans, starting with three wards identified by the Urban Forest Strategy as having lowest Tree Equity Scores, to enable delivery with local communities.

Pilot funding for 2025-26 – street tree planting and SuDS schemes being identified. Development of a street tree planting scheme across BCP.

Green space and Urban Greening capital delivery programme

Plan for Play programme. SANGs and Heathland infrastructure projects. Landscape Improvements.

Investible Pipeline

Scale of green investment opportunities, from landscape to street corners.

See p2

Green Infrastructure Investible Pipeline

These are the platforms and scales where there are opportunities for investment in BCP's green infrastructure.



**Green Infrastructure
Action Plan**

- Delivery of strategic aims
- Working with charitable partners and community organisations
- Enabling social value through working with businesses on mutual benefits

This table takes the scale of green infrastructure investment from the chart above and breaks it down in to deliverable objectives, projects and areas of work.

The delivery plan is still broad and draws together information and workstreams from:

- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy
- The Future Parks and Nature Towns programmes
- Green space site audits and green space maintenance needs
- Partnership working with The Parks Foundation

As the LNRS delivery group and the urban and rural nature forums become established (see below), so this table and other ideas will be formed and developed with a timeline to seek routes to delivery.

These actions need to be developed with partner organisations and funders, but more importantly need to be developed and delivered in partnership with residents, communities and organisations at a local scale.

Scale	Action to deliver
1. Local, Street level	Embed urban greening into new developments.
	Prioritise including quality Green Infrastructure when master planning for regeneration areas, significant new sites and where re-designing public realm is possible.
	Convert underused streets and public realm into small urban ‘pocket parks’.
	Increase tree canopy cover, particularly in wards with lower tree equity. In the public realm, allowing natural succession on amenity grass areas and highway verges.
	Develop and support community tree planting and stewardship programmes.
	Showcase the use of green roofs and walls on public sector buildings as well as the use of other Green Infrastructure. Be a great example.
	Encourage home and business, renters and owners, to create wildlife friendly buildings, grounds and gardens. Through partnerships and education.
	BCP Council to adopt the Nature Pledge. Continue to promote the Nature Pledge with external partners.
2. Green Heart Parks and community spaces	Plan and prioritise parks improvements in line with a periodic auditing programme. This includes destination parks, community parks and coastal gardens.
	Continue Green Heart Parks initiative. Working with partners to improve community parks - activating a café, community growing, nature education, landscape improvements, volunteering, less intense mowing, native planting, new signage and interpretation.
	Strategic Improvements of destination spaces at Harbourside park and Kings Park.
	Progression of the Plan for Play delivery plan.
	Review of parks buildings / land parcels (bowling greens, park corners) to ensure maximised value for community benefit/usage, and nature recovery
3. Nature Neighbourhoods	Explore the feasibility of creating new Local Nature Reserves close to urban populations.
	Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain supply sites and achieve habitat improvements and species recovery
	Enhance access to nature in our greenspaces identifying further projects such as the osprey viewing platform at Ham common.
	Build on the work happening for community food growing
	Targeted rewilding of urban green spaces to increase biodiversity and bring people closer to nature. Particularly enhancing the ecological value of our urban heaths.
	Continue and expand the Let it Grow campaign. Lowering the intensity of grass cutting in parks and on verges where appropriate.
	Enhancing the biodiversity of cemeteries and churchyards managing the spaces with a greater focus on their value for nature.
	Open up culverted, piped and covered surface water drains and create vegetated sustainable drainage systems/swales where possible and appropriate. Minimise the use of sealed and nonporous surfaces. Create a target to de-pave an amount of land per year.
	Work with partners to investigate the potential of a large-scale tree planting programme.
	Ward Based Green Infrastructure plans to deliver Urban Greening features such as street trees, ponds, native planting. Beginning in low tree equity areas.

4. Strategic corridors	Increase 'nature reserve qualities' within SANGs – re-label as 'Nature Parks' and support both habitat regulations mitigation and improved nature outcomes.
	Develop a Cliffs, Chines and Coast nature park and trail between Highcliffe and Hamworthy, in line with seafront strategy.
	Create new SANGs / Nature Parks to support delivery of housing.
	Explore opportunities for tree planting and/or meadow creation on grass verges along key transport corridors.
	Work with partners at a landscape-scale to improve the ecological condition of the rivers and harbours in BCP. This may be through landscape-scale rewilding and nature conservation programmes.
	Work with partners to investigate opportunities for riparian/ floodplain and intertidal habitat creation as part of natural flood defence and coastal protection schemes.
	Strengthen green connections between areas supporting delivery of the relevant 'Connectivity Corridors' and 'Cycle Freeways' routes. This will include but is not limited to improving the Littledown Greenway, the chines and other important trailways and short coastal and river trails (examples include the Mude valley, Bourne valley, Woodland Walk etc.).
	Develop the Stour Valley Way as a continuous countryside route connecting Merley to Millhams Mead to Hengistbury Head in line with the Stour Valley Strategy. This is likely to include improving the route, footpath quality, river crossings and cycleway connections.
	Explore the feasibility of creating the Purple Line – a connected walking and cycling route linking heathlands between Upton Country Park and Christchurch Harbour
5. Landscape scale	Explore options for repurposing a Sports & Play Space to create new Wild Space and benefits for public use.
	Work with partners on developing landscape-scale rewilding and nature conservation programmes in the Stour Valley.
	Explore opportunities for connecting and enriching biodiversity and wildlife habitats at a landscape-scale by extending heathland sites and re-establishing physical links where possible between sites to strengthen BCP's ecological network.
	Work with partners to improve the ecological condition of the coastal and maritime habitats (saltmarsh, saline lagoons, mudflats, sand dunes and dune heath) within the protected areas of the harbours.
6. Strategic	Improve interpretation and replace signage as part of programmed site improvements.
	Develop mechanisms to harness private finance, including BNG. Delivering nature restoration within BCP area.
	Nominate senior leadership and councillors to be advocates for green infrastructure.
	Establishment of a BCP Green Infrastructure & Urban Nature Forum to bring together key delivery partners and stakeholders and to empower communities.
	Align the council's and partner organisations' policies, plans and operational practices with the Green Infrastructure Strategy's goals and priorities.
	Continue to review and implement actions from the Greenspace Volunteering strategy to strengthen community involvement.
	Changing mindsets for a greener future including community champions and working with council teams and stakeholders. This should include securing adequate support and funding for maintenance of existing and new street trees and green infrastructure.
	Work toward Nature Towns advanced accreditation. This will include having a pipeline of investment ready projects and be business planning at a high level.

Delivery Groups and Forums

Dorset nature recovery delivery group.

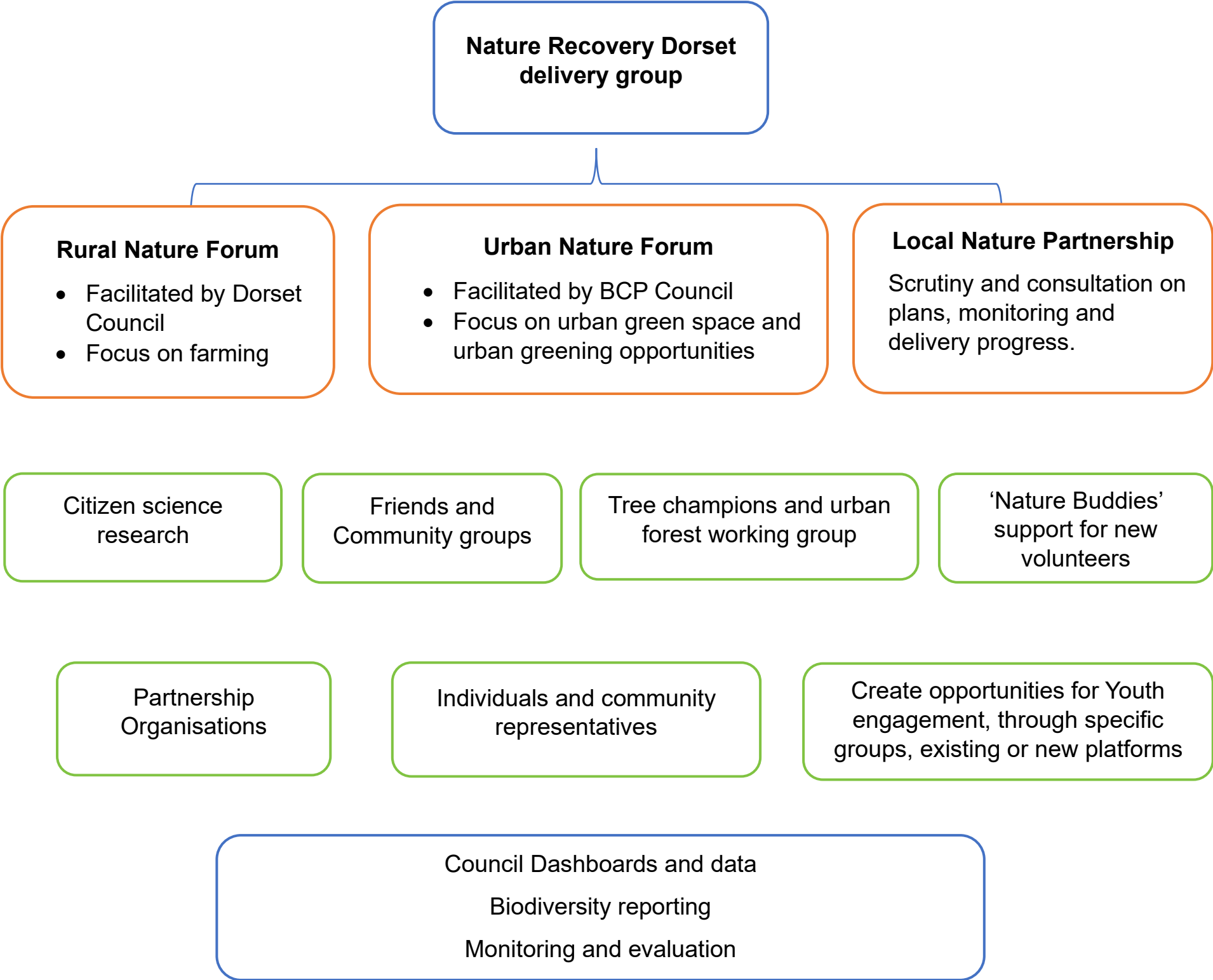
Dorset Council-led ‘rural nature forum’

BCP-led ‘urban nature forum’

Creating ways for individuals, residents and organisations to come together to act to support nature recovery across Dorset.

The BCP area will have an urban focus on how to maximise our current green spaces for nature, and turn grey to green in our denser, more urbanised areas.

The boxes below represent different ways of developing this work, creating new forums and encouraging wider participation.



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Case study 2025 - Throop SANG



Prepared by Frankie Gamble, Lead SANG Ranger
October 2025

Contents

Summary.....	1
Introduction	1
Bats	1
Birds	3
Invertebrates	7
Mammals	10
Reptiles and Amphibians.....	10
Plants	11
Baseline	13
Future Survey Schedule	13
Conclusion	15
Appendices	15
Appendix 1: Scoring system for valuing commuting and foraging bats	15
Appendix 2: Otter and Water Vole survey 2025	15
	0

Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibious</i>).....	16
Plan WV1	16
Otter (<i>Lutra Lutra</i>)	16
Survey conclusions	18
Appendix 3: Reports referenced	18

Summary

BCP council’s heathland mitigation team have converted a low biodiversity 30acre private farm into an improving biodiverse public SANG (Suitable alternative natural greenspace), for local foot traffic which alleviates the many pressures on local SSSI nature reserves. This case study has found a marked increase in various species diversity and density from baseline data and 2023 survey results. Bats, Birds, Butterfly and Bee species in particular have benefitted from a ‘green’ approach to delivering a SANG with creation of high quality and varied robust habitat. These results highlight how land managers can achieve biodiversity improvements on public, disturbed SANG sites.

Introduction

This case study provides an overview of the biodiversity at Throop Water Meadows SANG (also known as Throop SANG), in 2025, with the objective of evaluating the effectiveness of ongoing site management efforts in supporting wildlife. Comprehensive species surveys were conducted by our conservation team in collaboration with local ecological consultancies, focusing on key taxa including bats, birds, butterflies, and otters. Additional species data was collected through surveys led by local experts and BCP Council Rangers, as well as through incidental observations.

All the data collected from the various surveys will be or have already been uploaded onto living record or onto relevant conservation organisations’ databases (e.g. British trust for ornithology, Butterfly conservation). Throop SANG is a 30 acre former private farm that has undergone a transformation through various habitat management techniques as is an important link in the Stour valley way, improving the connectivity along this important stretch of river and surrounding habitats.

Bats

Abbas Ecology carried out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) in 2019, revised in 2021 at the SANG. In the PEA report, the site was described as having a potentially low value for foraging bats due to the lack of linear features, such as hedgerows.

Bat surveys were carried out in 2022 by Tetra Tech. These included walked transect surveys, automated detector surveys and tree roost assessment surveys.

The walked transect survey in June found four species of bat, which were Soprano pipistrelle, Common pipistrelle, Noctule and Daubenton’s bat. The pipistrelles were the dominant species, with only occasional passes of the other species. Most bats were found foraging near trees along the river stour, which provide shelter and invertebrates to eat.

The automated detector surveys were positioned in the east and west of the site in June and showed significantly higher levels of activity in the east, which was near a stream leading to the Stour. Two additional species were recorded, which were Brown Long-eared bat and Serotine.

Other surveys carried out by a local volunteer showed an additional species Nathusius' pipistrelle is present on site.

The value for the foraging and commuting bats present has been assessed as Local or Parish level by Tetra Tech based on the Wray et al. method (see Appendix 1), supporting Abbas Ecology's prediction.

Subsequent to this, the 2025 surveying season performed by the team yielded Common, Soprano and occasionally Nathusius's Pipistrelle, Noctule, Serotine and Daubenton's bat. The dominant species were Soprano and Common pipistrelles, with 31 Soprano pipistrelles identified on one survey in April. A survey in May recorded 7 species in one survey. The 2024/25 planting regime in several areas around the site will play an important role in foraging opportunities for the bats in the future.

Species	2023	2025
Brown long-eared	0	0
Common pipistrelle	4	18
Daubentons	0	3
Myotis species	2	2
Nathusius pipistrelle	2	3
Noctule	2	7
Serotine	2	2
Soprano pipistrelle	24	31

Table 1: Highest count for each species recorded on surveys in 2023 and 2025



Figure 1: Bat transect route – Throop SANG

The bat transect route (in blue), starts at the SANG car park and moves north, lasting for approximately 2 hours. The team used a Batlogger device and found the busiest areas of bat activity were near the mill stream, the south-eastern end of the SANG and the woodland near Taylor drive.

Birds

All the bird surveys were carried out once a month on both Careys field by volunteer Silvia Freire and on the main Throop SANG route by the ranger team. The data has been uploaded onto BTO's BirdTrack database in line with the other bird survey data from BCP central sites.

The winter bird surveys were conducted from January to March and will be completed monthly in November to December. In the first three months of the year, 35 species were recorded on site.

There has been a good number of ad hoc observations on site which include: Spotted Flycatcher, Northern Wheatear, Nightjar, Great White Egret, Western Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Water Rail, Eurasian Siskin, Cuckoo, Lapwing and Kingfisher.

Some of the more 'commonplace' green listed species such as Great Tit, Robin, Blackbird, Carrion Crow, Goldfinch and Magpie were widespread and are now a familiar feature on site.

In 2025, The highest number of species spotted on a survey was 36, with an average of 26 species found each survey. In 2024, the highest number of species was 25 with an average of 20 species a survey. In 2023 the highest number of species was 24 species with an average of 19.

The highest total number of individual birds in 2025 recorded on a survey was 172. The highest total number of birds recorded in 2024 was 136 and 74 in 2023. The avian biodiversity and density on site is moving in a positive direction.

Previous actions to improve habitat by planting native trees and hedgerows has been delivered, with more planting planned in 2026.

Species	Baseline	2025
Blackbird	4	7
Blackcap	1	1
Black-headed Gull	13	18
Blue Tit	5	12
Brent Goose	3	0
Bullfinch	2	0
Buzzard	3	2
Canada Goose	2	2
Carrion crow	0	9
Cattle Egret	1	0
Cetti's warbler	0	2
Chaffinch	2	4
Chiffchaff	1	7
Common Gull	1	0
Common Sandpiper	1	0
Collared Dove	0	0
Cormorant	3	6
Dunnock	3	4
Egyptian Goose	4	0
Fieldfare	0	0
Feral pigeon	0	8
Goldcrest	0	2
Goldfinch	0	59
Goosander	2	0
Great tit	5	8
Great spotted woodpecker	2	1
Greenfinch	12	8
Grey heron	1	3
Grey Partridge	2	0
Grey Wagtail	2	1
Greylag Goose	5	0
Herring Gull	2	20
Hobby	0	1

House martin	0	20
House sparrow	3	19
Jackdaw	0	11
Jay	1	3
Kestrel	2	2
Kingfisher	0	0
Little Egret	1	3
Little Grebe	1	0
Long-tailed tit	5	8
Magpie	3	6
Mallard	8	14
Meadow pipit	3	19
Mediterranean Gull	0	1
Mistle Thrush	0	1
Moorhen	7	8
Mute swan	10	4
Nightjar	1	0
Nuthatch	0	1
Peregrine falcon	0	1
Pheasant	5	3
Pied Wagtail	0	5
Raven	0	1
Red kite	0	1
Redwing	1	1
Reed Bunting	1	1
Reed warbler	1	4
Robin	4	10
Rook	0	5
Sedge Warbler	1	0
Snipe	22	0
Song thrush	2	2
Sparrowhawk	1	1
Starling	200	35
Swift	4	11
Tawny Owl	1	0
Teal	3	0
Stonechat	0	4
Swallow	0	15
Treecreeper	0	1
Wheatear	0	0
Whitethroat	1	4
Woodpigeon	17	24
Wren	3	7

Table 2: Baseline versus 2025 highest individual count for species spotted during surveys at Throop SANG



Figure 2: Kestrel are a common sight on Throop SANG now with the improvement of habitat for prey species



Figure 3: Stonechat have been found breeding on site

Invertebrates

Butterfly transects were undertaken weekly between the beginning of April and the end of September 2025 around the SANG by the team. Our data was uploaded to the UK Butterfly monitoring scheme (UKBMS), with all the rest of the data across the central BCP countryside sites. We followed the UKBMS transect methodology.

The transect route was split into seven sections to roughly follow areas of different habitat. Surveys were carried out during calm, warm, sunny days when possible. The route was walked at a continuous pace and butterflies recorded within 5m ahead or to the side of the surveyor. The highest amount of Butterfly activity was found in sections 1, 2, 6 and 7.



Figure 4: Butterfly transect route on Throop SANG

Species	Baseline	2023	2025
Small Skipper	1	8	39
Small/Essex Skipper	0	2	4
Large Skipper	5	9	0
Brimstone	2	4	1
Clouded yellow	0	0	1
Large White	0	10	45
Small White	0	10	41
Green-veined white	1	0	9
Orange Tip	0	4	1

Small Copper	0	2	1
Brown argus	1	0	1
Common Blue	1	2	9
Holly Blue	3	4	3
Red Admiral	1	17	13
Painted Lady	1	2	1
Peacock	3	18	14
Comma	0	3	10
Speckled Wood	2	5	4
Marbled White	2	2	1
Gatekeeper	1	61	107
Meadow Brown	50	183	89
Small Heath	2	0	0
Small Tortoiseshell	4	0	0

Table 3: Highest count of each species spotted during transects during 2025, 2023 and baseline surveys

In total, 20 species of butterfly were spotted at Throop SANG during the 2025 transect survey period. Additional ad-hoc sightings of Small heath, Small Tortoiseshell, Purple hairstreak, Large skipper and Clouded Yellow were also on site this year. In comparison, 16 species were identified during the Baseline, with 18 species in 2023, indicating the improved habitat management is having a positive effect on butterfly species on Throop SANG.

Recommendations for improving Butterfly species on site:

- Continue floristic diversity by restoring the floodplain meadows.
- Increase species diversity in hedgerow species to provide more food opportunities.

Bee surveys were carried out by Silvia Freire and followed the Bumble Conservation Guidelines for their Bee surveys. The transect route follows the same path as the butterfly transect and is walked once per month in March to October in fair weather with low winds and between 11am and 5pm.

Species	Baseline	2023	2025
Andrena nitida	0	0	1
Andrena sp.	0	0	1
Bombus sp	0	0	1
Brown Banded Carder Bee	0	9	2
Buff-tailed Bumblebee	0	6	8
Common Carder Bee	0	18	24
Common Mining Bee	0	1	0
Early Bumblebee	1	0	9
European Hornet	0	0	1
Garden Bumblebee	0	1	1
Honey Bee	1	40	26
Large Sharp Tailed Bee	0	1	0

Patchwork leaf-cutter bee	0	0	2
Red-tailed Bumblebee	0	2	0
Shrill Carder Bee	0	4	0
Tawny Mining bee	0	0	1
Tree Bumblebee	0	0	2
White-tailed Bumblebee	1	14	11

Table 4: Total Bees spotted on surveys across 2025, 2023 and the baseline study

Recommendations for improving Bee species on site:

- Continue delivering higher quality floodplain meadow habitat.
- Create new habitat piles which include brash and logs.
- Encourage more flowering species on banks.
- Coppice bramble thickets on rotation to provide more flowers.
- Cut small patches of finished thistles to encourage regrowth and reflowering in autumn.

The data available for Odonata in 2025 is currently incomplete bar ad-hoc sightings, with a presence/absence survey planned in 2026. All sightings are entered onto living record.

The transect route encompasses the waterbodies and wet areas of the SANG, including the ditch, the mill stream and along the river.



Figure 5: Route of the Odonata survey in pink

No data for Riverflies has been collected in 2025. Records of riverflies including Blue Winged Olive mayfly and Narrow-Bodied Stoneflies were found at two sites upstream of the Stour at the SANG.

Actions to improve habitat for invertebrate species:

- Plant more native trees and shrubs.
- Encourage wildflowers to re-establish.
- Sensitively manage the river corridor.

Mammals

Formal surveys of Otter and Water Vole have been carried out at the SANG in previous years, though Roe deer, Field Mouse and Weasel have been observed ad hoc. There has been no conclusive evidence of Water Vole yet, but they have been reported (Guy Finucane, 22).

Guy Finucane surveys for Otter and Water Vole for the Dorset Mammal Group and has evidence of activity nearby the boundaries of the SANG, including spraints, a couch and photographs of Otter at Hicks Farm. There was also a holt nearby, so it is likely that Otter utilised the river corridor along the SANG as part of a wider territory (Finucane, 2022).

Surveys were carried out on several dates in June and October 2025 by Guy Finucane. The slower flowing water at Mill stream and pond are conditions favoured by water vole, but much of the riverbank on these stretches has wide mud margins which is not suitable habitat and there hasn't been any sighting of the species.

The flooding in 2024 had a largely negative impact on Otter numbers both locally and nationally. However, potential signs of Otter activity around Throop SANG with discarded food sources and an ad-hoc sighting showed that there might be a small contingent or solitary individual in the area.

Key species:

- Otter
- Water vole

Actions to improve habitat:

- Sensitive management of river corridor
- Grazing grassland areas
- Protect potential Water Vole habitats by preventing dog access into the mill stream.
- Limit feeding of water birds on the waterways as it leads to a rapid increase in the population of brown rats
- Planting native trees and shrubs.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Reptile surveys have been carried out by BCP without much success. It is possible that low numbers of reptiles used the site due to lack of suitable vegetation structure. Grass snakes have been seen ad hoc by locals and BCP staff. No amphibian surveys have been carried out.

Key species:

- Grass snake
- Slow worm

Actions to improve habitat:

- Ditch restoration
- Grazing grassland areas
- Creation of a wildlife pond
- Creating brash piles for refugia, basking and hibernation

Plants

Abbas Ecology's 2019 PEA, taking place on the private farm after flowering season, noted only the dominant presence of False Oat Grass within the horse paddocks, with some Yarrow, Autumn hawkbit and Red clover in the sward. There were patches of Marsh Cudweed in poached bare soil, Amphibious Bistort on the river margins and Purple Loosestrife in the reed swamp. The open grassland at the SANG was described as having low ecological value, being dominated by coarse grasses and lacking good structure. Another field was dominated by bramble patches and ruderals including Teasel, thistles and Burdock.

No formal plant surveys have been undertaken in 2025, but the intensive floodplain meadow restoration project which consists of 26 x 3m rotavated strips - has already seen a diverse range of native meadow plants already emerge, with more expected next season. After working in partnership with the Countryside regeneration trust, who have undertaken an impressive floodplain meadow restoration project of their own at Bere Marsh farm - Our seed mix was purchased from Heritage seeds, who collected the specialist mix from Wyke farm, a large-scale floodplain meadow restoration project itself that has been going for nearly 25 years. A local farmer harrowed, seeded and rolled the mix into the ground, which was subsequently grazed later in the year to knock back encroaching dominant grass species.

Throop SANG has also seen an impressive planting regime in 2025 that has installed some 2,154 whips and 6 mature trees, through various funding streams. 170m worth of native hedgerow whips have been awarded to the site from the Tree council/DEFRA Trees outside woodland fund which will further help to increase biodiversity on Throop SANG.



Figure 6: Throop SANG floodplain meadow restoration project

Wyke Farm

Typical Representation

Species

Occurance

Percentage

Total Representation

Wildflowe 75.77 %

Grasses 24.23 %

From a 4 gram sample

Common Knopweed →	Betonica officinalis	4	1.23
	Centaurea nigra	16	4.91
	Centaurea scabiosa	5	1.53
	Euphrasia sp	30	9.20
Meadowsweet	Filipendula vulgaris	2	0.61
	Galium verum	14	4.29
	Galium mollugo	9	2.76
Common Cat's ear →	Hypochoeris radicata	12	3.68
	Galium saxatile	2	0.61
Meadow vetchling →	Lathyrus pratensis	1	0.31
	Leontodon hispidus	2	0.61
Autumn Hawkbit →	Leontodon autumnalis	1	0.31
Oxeye daisy →	Leucanthemum vulgare	2	0.61
	Linum catharticum	18	5.52
Bindweed trefoil →	Lotus corniculatus	4	1.23
	Lotus uliginosus	2	0.61
	Medicago arabica	2	0.61
	Pimpinella saxifraga	18	5.52
Cowslip →	Primula veris	4	1.23
Ribwort plantain →	Plantago lanceolata	20	6.13
	Plantago media	12	3.68
Selfheal →	Prunella vulgaris	14	4.29
Meadow buttercup →	Ranunculus acris	18	5.52
Yellow rattle →	Rhinanthus minor	9	2.76
Pepper Saxifrage →	Silene silaus	8	2.45
Tufted vetch →	Vicia carraca	4	1.23
	Surrotula tinctoria	2	0.61
Red clover →	Trifolium pratense	9	2.76
	Vicia sativa	3	0.92
	GRASSES		
Creeping bent →	Agrostis capillaris	3	0.92
Meadow foxtail →	Aloperceris pratensis	3	0.92
	Trisetum flavescens	4	1.23
Quaking grass →	Briza media	2	0.61
Crested dogs tail →	Cynosurus cristatus	35	10.74
	Dactylis glomerata	8	2.45
	Festuca ovina	11	3.37
	Poa pratensis	8	2.45
	Juncus effusus	5	1.53
		326	100.00

Figure 7: Seed mix species used in the floodplain meadow restoration project with the percentage of each found in mixture

Actions to improve habitat:

- Grazing grassland areas
- Topping ruderals followed by grazing
- Hay cut, followed by grazing
- Green hay cut from suitable donor site, followed by grazing
- Cutting back dominant grass species around whips

Baseline

Throop SANG currently features a variety of habitats which have been carefully built up and created by the team. However, it looked very different before. Mature woodland, developing planted woodland, bramble scrub, reedbed and swamp, riverbank and wet margins and native hedgerow, were described as good resources for wildlife such as birds, bats and invertebrates. The original open grassland was assessed to be of low ecological value, and the overall biodiversity of the site was found to be modest (Abbas Ecology, 2021).

No further protected species surveys were recommended by Abbas Ecology except for Otter, which is now being surveyed. The implication was that other than Otter and bats, the site had low potential for protected species whilst the site was still a private farm.

The creation of the car park was assessed as having little impact beyond the removal of several trees, which have negligible potential for roosting bats, and the possible damage to old hedgerows which were prevented by protective fences and buffer zones during works. With planted native flowers on the banks of the car parks in conjunction with planted whips and volunteers cutting back encroaching thistle, dock and grass species, the car park area is now yielding excellent invertebrate species which in turn is encouraging various birds into the area.

Future Survey Schedule

A yearly survey schedule (Table 5) has been created to monitor various species over time. Surveys will follow standard survey methodology by trained surveyors to create a comparable data set. Bird, bat and Otter surveys will use the same method as the baseline surveys.

We expect future vegetation surveys to follow the Rapid Condition Assessment method, streamlining the data and focussing on key indicator species to quickly assess changes in habitat quality. There is scope for a good botanist to record all plant species present to prove changes in biodiversity at greater intervals of time.

Butterfly surveys will follow UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme method, picking up day flying moths at the same time. Regular bioblitzes could help fill any gaps in biodiversity data not included in routine surveying.

Task	Description	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Breeding bird survey	Once per month between 6am-11am												
Winter bird survey	Once per month												
Butterfly survey	UKBMS method: Weekly 10:45-15:45 in favourable conditions												
Moth surveys	Daytime moths included in Butterfly surveys aswell as ad hoc records												
Bat survey	Monthly: 2 hours after sunset												
Bee survey	Monthly												
Odonata survey	Presence/absence survey annually as well as ad hoc records												
Amphibian survey	Visible inspection and ad hoc records												
Mammal survey (Badger, water vole & Otter)	Four times a year												

Table 5: Proposed yearly survey schedule

Conclusion

The team are very happy with the direction that Throop SANG is moving into in terms of visitor enjoyment of the site, as well as the increase in biodiversity for a wide variety of native species. The site is now seen by many as a robust nature reserve in its own right, which only encourages more visitors in and away from SSSIs and other precious nature reserves. One of the main reasons that the public visits SSSI nature reserves is the abundance of flora and fauna and Throop SANG is looking to mimic that wild feeling for our users who could easily choose to visit a barren, open monotypic grassland in the form of parks, if they just wanted their dogs to run around. Ultimately, we believe this management style is the benchmark for how SANGs should be delivered, encouraging additional people and dogs to the countryside whilst delivering biodiversity gains for multiple species.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Scoring system for valuing commuting and foraging bats

Geographic frame of reference	Number of bats
International	> 50
National	41-50
Regional	31-40
County	21-30
District, local or parish	11-20
Not important	1-10

(Wrey et al., 2010)

Appendix 2: Otter and Water Vole survey 2025

Hicks Farm – Site of Alternative Natural Greenspace



Otter and Water Vole Survey – 2025

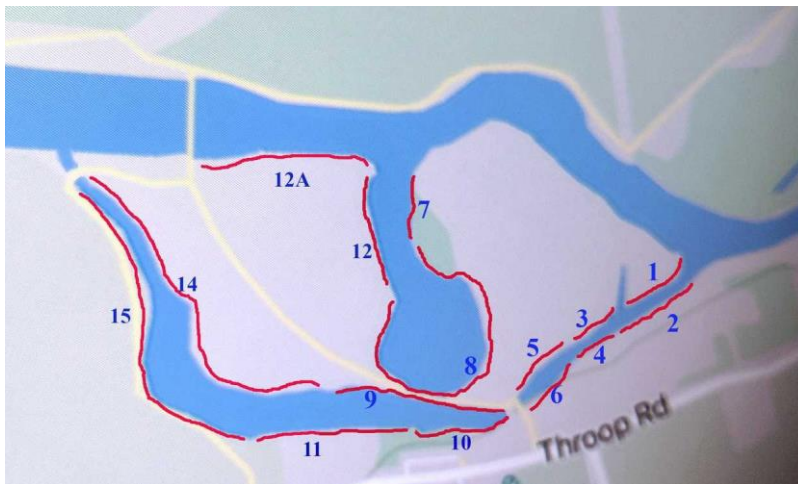
Surveys were carried out on several dates in June and October 2025 by Guy Finucane.

Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibious*)

As previously reported, slower flowing water, as found on the mill stream and mill pond, is preferred by water voles but much of the riverbank on these stretches has wide mud margins which is not suitable habitat. Private gardens meet the riverbank along Areas 2 and 11 (see plan WV1). This is a more suitable habitat but no evidence of water vole habitation was observed. No detailed survey has been conducted for this 2025 report but I visit the river almost on a daily basis and no evidence of water vole activity was observed.

A number of holes in the riverbank were observed on the northern section of Area 14 but I have since established that these are occupied by brown rats (*Rattus norvegicus*).

Plan WV1



As water voles are our most endangered mammal, it would be prudent to protect potential habitats, for water voles and other wildlife, by preventing dog access into the mill stream. Feeding of water birds in this location should be discouraged as it leads to a rapid increase in the population of brown rats (*Rattus norvegicus*).

Otter (*Lutra Lutra*)

2024 was bad year for our local otters. Flooding in 2024 was hugely detrimental to otters both locally and nationally. Locally, two kits are known to have died and another was seen running along the footpath leading from the sewage works to the river. Separated from its mother, it is unlikely that the kit would have survived.



Otter kit rescued from the riverbank near Kingfisher Barn in April 2024. Unfortunately, it didn't survive.



Dead otter kit found beside footpath near Throop Mill Cottage. It's possible it became separated from its mother, wandered into hostile territory and was killed by a jaw bite from an adult male.



Mother and two kits observed at Stour Valley Local Nature Reserve in October 2024. These elusive mammals tend to be much more 'visible' when raising kits. The lack of any subsequent sightings, despite prolonged daily visits over the following three weeks, leads me to question if these kits survived.

Dead kits were sent to the Environment Agency and then onwards to Cardiff University for post mortem. The high mortality rate in 2024 may account for the infrequency of subsequent sightings into 2025.

Areas around Hicks Farm SANG and stretches of river upstream and downstream of the SANG were surveyed on various dates in June and October 2025.

A survey of the mill pond in June found a large number of fresh water mussel shells on both sides of the channel close to where it meets the main river. This could be indicative of otter feeding although no otter footprints were observed and no spraint was observed in the vicinity.



Freshwater mussel shells beside the mill pond – June 2025.

In August 2025, a reliable source advised me of their sighting of an otter near the weir bridge. It was observed

on the path on the north side of the river, crossed the grass and entered the river under the weir bridge and then headed downstream.

In October 2025, I surveyed areas around the millstream, the north side of the river from the weir bridge, heading upstream, and the south side of the river from the weir bridge up to the Wessex Water road bridge. No evidence of otter activity was observed.

Survey conclusions

No evidence of water voles and limited evidence of otter activity in 2025 in the area of the SANG although otters are present a short distance upstream. The two kits observed in 2024 and 2025 will soon be separating from their mother and will need to find territory of their own so may take up territory in the vicinity of the SANG.

Report Submitted by Guy Finucane
30th October 2023

Appendix 3: Reports referenced

Hicks Farm SANG BAT REPORT 784-B032855 (Tetra Tech Limited, 2022)
Hicks Farm SANG BREEDING BIRD SURVEY REPORT 784-B032855 (Tetra Tech Limited, 2022)
Hicks Farm SANG WINTERING BIRD SURVEY REPORT 784-B032855 (Tetra Tech Limited, 2022)
2021 Odonata Survey Stour Valley · Millhams Mead · Throop Nature Park Report. Reference: BCP-OS-01 (BCP Council, 2021)
Hicks Farm SANG - Otter and Water Vole Survey – Spring 2022 (Guy Finucane, 2022)
Hicks Farm SANG - Otter and Water Vole Survey – Winter 2022 (Guy Finucane, 2022)
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal: Proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace at Hick's Farm, Throop. August 2019 revised January 2021. (Abbas Ecology, 2021)
Hicks Farm Plant species list FA Woodhead 2018 (Felicity Woodhead, 2018)
Hicks Farm Species Records GF and Otter and Water vole survey 2025 (Guy Finucane, 2022)

Urban Greening project evaluation

The Urban Greening project aim was to: ‘Enable communities to take practical action around urban greening (residents, business and private small-scale landowners or local facilities).’

The two primary work packages were:

- ‘Curate and create resources to enable people to make nature-positive changes on their own land.’ (4.1)
- ‘Provide practical support through pilot projects to enable action and test programmes for scalability.’ (4.2)

These were split further and achieved as outlined in this Evaluation document.

4.1 Curate and create resources to enable people to make nature-positive changes on their own land

We created several different types of resources. Each to engage with different community groups, in different ways, with an aim to reach the widest audience achievable.

These include:

- 2 presentations made for in person wildlife gardening talks.
- 10 downloadable how-to guides on wildlife gardening.
- Multiple ‘Back 2 Nature’ events held in parks engaging people around and sharing the subject of the downloadable guides.
- 4 videos created for social media further adding to the content of the guides.
- Interactive map for members of the public to have their nature improvements added too, showing all nature friendly gardens across BCP.

Breakdown and Engagement numbers:

Wildlife talks: 8 talks given on wildlife gardening (Presentations can be found here: [Presentations](#)), 150+ attendees. Talks delivered at Stewarts Garden centre, Red House Museum, 2 Churches and 2 Community centres.

Talks always well received and requests for more. Presentations can continue to be used for future talks.

Testimonials from talks:

“You speak so well, the enthusiasm and passion is amazing, and it was a great balance of hard hitting truths, optimistic information about how people can help, all delivered with humour and sincerity. I’m sure the popularity of these will grow if there is appetite to continue in future.” Stewart’s garden centre

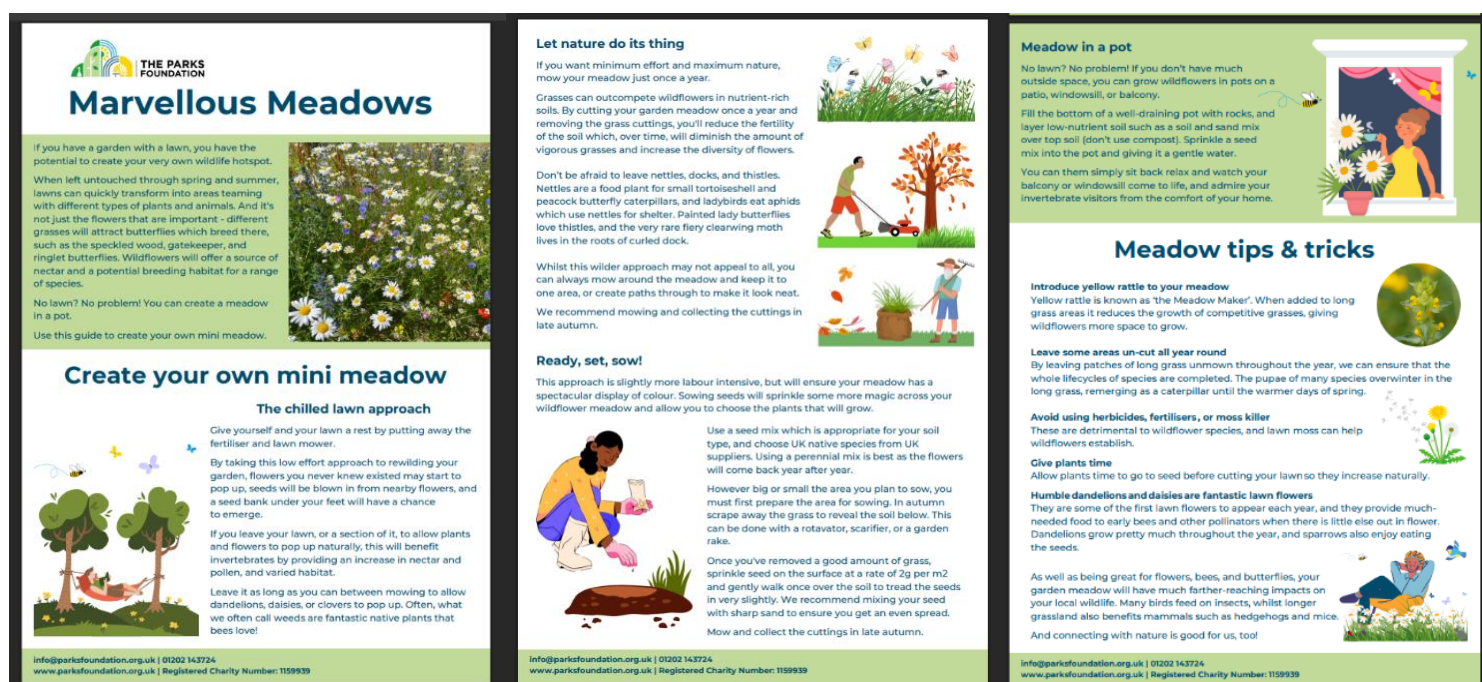
“Sorry this is late but I just wanted to let you know there were very many compliments about your talk a couple of weeks ago.” Red House museum

“Just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the talk at Stewarts last night. Very clear, interesting and helpful. I have tried to get my head around changing the lawn to wild flowers but always seemed so complicated. You made it easy to understand and have inspired me to get going! Many thanks Jane”

“Your talks were brilliant, it got all the important points across but I think you have so many do able solutions to people that they left feeling like they could have a positive impact.” Stewart’s garden centre

Downloadable How-to guides: 10 guides made covering Meadows, Composting, Ponds, Tree planting, Bird Boxes, Flowers for Pollinators, Butterflies and Moths, Garden Habitats, Gardening for Hedgehogs and Bulb planting.

Total downloads to date: 462



Example downloadable guide covering Meadows

Back 2 Nature events: Events to engage residents with urban nature conservation. Each event had a take home message encouraging people to think about how they can encourage wildlife into their own outdoor spaces. Often more pitched at children and parents they expanded on the content of the downloadable guides.

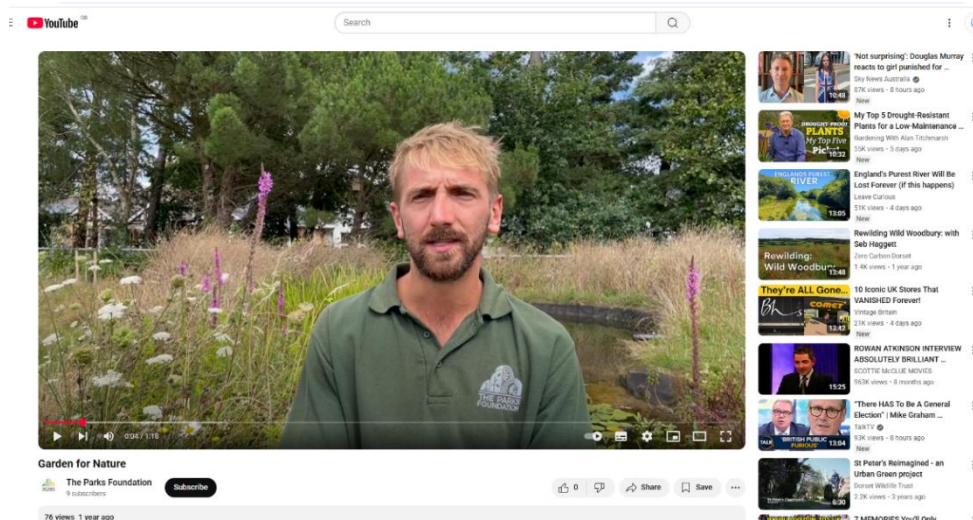
- August 23 – Bird boxes: 159 attendees across GHPs
- September 23 – Hedgehogs: 177 attendees across GHPs

- October 23 – Magical mycelium: 124 attendees across GHPs
- Break for winter works, reduced number of parks where events were held moving forwards.
- March 24 – Meadows: 51 attendees
- April 24 – Ponds: 102 attendees
- May 24 – Butterflies: 12 attendees
- June 24 – Dragonflies: 19 attendees
- July 24 – Hawkmoths: 17 attendees
- **Total Back 2 Nature attendees: 661**



Craft butterflies made during an event

Social Media Videos: 4 Videos created shared across Youtube, Instagram and Facebook totalling



Garden for nature landing page video gained 80 views.

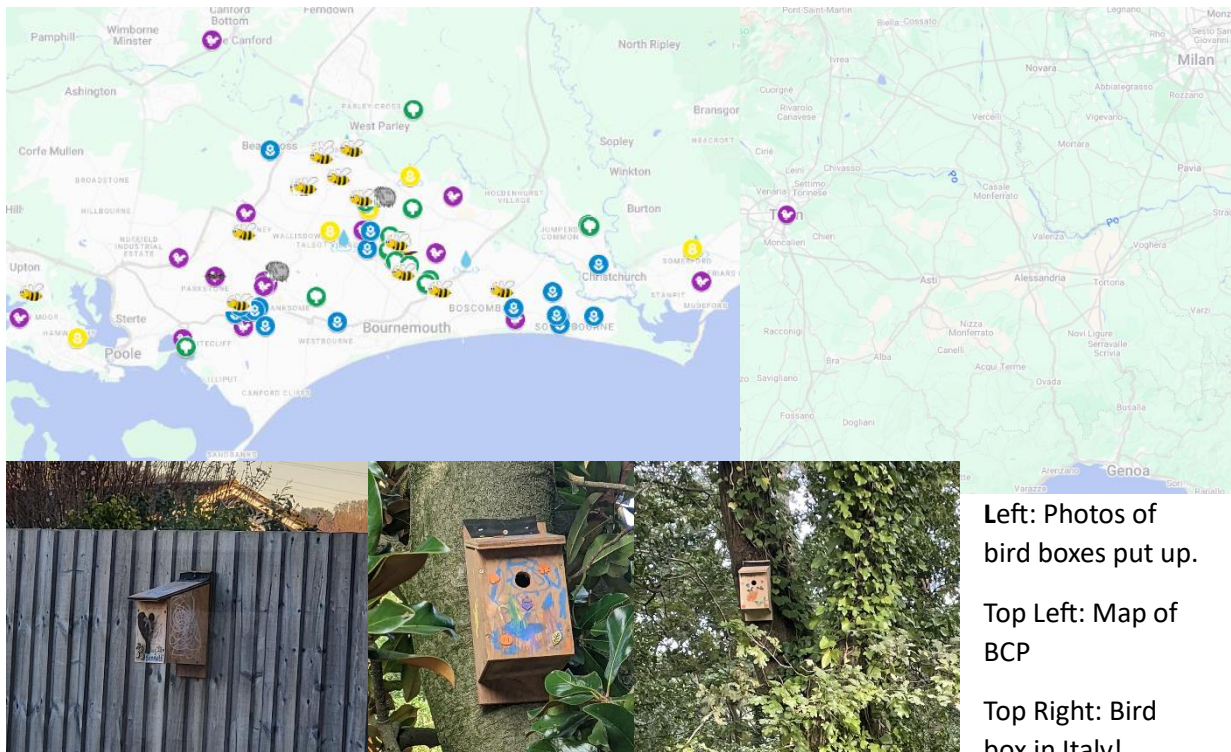
Gardening for Hedgehogs video gained 828 views total across multiple platforms.

Bird box installation guide video gained 1813 views total across multiple platforms.

Bulb planting video gained 642 views total across multiple platforms.

Gardening for Hedgehogs video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_s2eEEwfGs

Interactive Map: We created a map logging actual changes people had made in their own outdoor spaces after attending one of our events. The map is currently on TPF website and will continue to be updated as and when people send in locations and pictures of changes made. One of our bird boxes even made it further afield to Italy.



Left: Photos of bird boxes put up.

Top Left: Map of BCP

Top Right: Bird box in Italy!

4.1 Conclusion

The various resources were well received over the different medias, and the map demonstrates good engagement and community action.

Further work and Legacy post project

The benefit of the resources created is they can continue to be present on our website and used or referred to during future events. We would expect to see videos continue to gain views and online guides continue to be downloaded. The guides are useful references when printed out and displayed during events and with minor adaption could be used in a 'train the teacher' methodology to expand school engagement capacity.

One more downloadable guide covering 'dragonflies' was near completion and will be completed and added to the website post project.

We intend to continue to add videos covering the topics in the guides as we believe the twin media format helps us reach the widest audience with minimal administration which benefits the core charity.

We will continue to update the map as and when members of the public submit improvements. The administration time needed for this is minimal and it benefits the charity's wider goals.

One more wildlife talk presentation was booked with Stuarts Garden centre with more of a focus on natural predator's vs pests rather than unnatural methods. These 3 presentations will then be able to be reused in the future if we feel the venue is suitable and benefits the charity's wider messaging or progression.

4.2 Provide practical support through pilot projects to enable action and test programmes for scalability.

We took part in seven main projects across the BCP catchment, with other smaller bits of work tying into each.

The projects are:

- Swift street and conservation
- House martin tower and pond
- Greening street planters
- Sustainable Urban Drainage systems(Suds)
- Littledown Greenway
- Schools adopting urban greening
- Maintenance Maps

Swift street – Portfield Close, Christchurch and Swift awareness.

The Parks Foundation worked with Christchurch Harbour Ornithological Group and BCP Council to identify Portfield Close as a swift hotspot with potential for improvement. Swifts are a now red-listed bird that frequents our urban areas to nest in buildings however it is facing issues in available nest sites and food source.

TPF and CHOG then started door knocking along Portfield close to engage residents with swift conservation and offer them the chance to have a swift nesting box and silhouette to attract them installed.

12 houses had boxes and silhouettes installed down Portfield close.

Christchurch Junior School on board with the project. See schools breakdown below.

We also helped CHOG to deliver events in 5 locations during Swift Awareness Week (29th June – 7th July 2024) – In these we promoted swift conservation and encouraged members of the public to get a box fitted or adopt urban greening principles to encourage flying insects (swift food sources) . 60 attendees.



Kings Park (Gloucester road) Swift Awareness event

House Martin tower and pond

The Hoburne estate has a good population of House Martins, however their long-term future is uncertain. Some residents actively deter the birds from nesting on their property, and the building site where they currently collect mud to build their nests is soon to be closed. The project aims to secure the birds longevity by providing alternative nesting sites (HM tower) and a long-term source of sediment (pond) to build their nests.

Collaborative project with CHOG, New Milton Men's Shed, NM Sand and Ballast. Men's shed built the nest tower. NMSB provided aggregates for pond works. BCP helped with permissions and Tower installation.

TPF installed a wildlife pond and native planting with the help of 20 volunteers. The house martin tower was installed in November 2024 with approx. 70 local people attending its official opening, including councillors, young rangers, residents etc.

Reduced mowing practices in surrounding greenspaces were added to a maintenance map to further encourage increased biodiversity and flying insects (House martin food source)

While it was expected to take some time for house martins to start using the tower/pond we documented multiple occasions of them using the pond to clean and gather mud during its first summer. Really good feedback from local residents including "best thing to happen to Hoburne" – Local resident.



Volunteers planting up the pond at Hoburne



House Martin tower grand opening event



House Martin tower during construction and installation

Local news post: <https://www.bournemouthecho.co.uk/news/25134222.wildlife-area-help-house-martins-opens-highcliffe/>

Greening street planters

We were approached by a community champion at Bourne Community Hub who put forward the idea of improving the barren and unloved chicane planters over a handful of roads on the Bourne estate, with the aim to create a nectar rich corridor running along Arne Ave, Northmere Rd, and Melbury Ave.

The Councils landscape architect created a suitable planting list. 1000 plants were bought as well as compost, funded by Bourne Big Local, a community group, for £3,000. Completed over several planting days with the team from the Parks Foundation, ensuring fellow residents were on board with 25 local volunteers. 24 planters were completed April 2024.

Bourne Community Hub to be responsible for planters going forward with TPF paying BCP to water over summer 2025 to help plants establish. Some issues later arose around volunteers maintaining the beds on a busy road.



Sustainable urban drainage (SuDs) in parks

We pursued two Suds projects both with the aim of capturing rainwater and finding an alternative usage or allowing it to soak away naturally. This reduces pressure on urban sewage systems, reduced tap water consumption and can provide valuable wetland habitat for a large number of species.

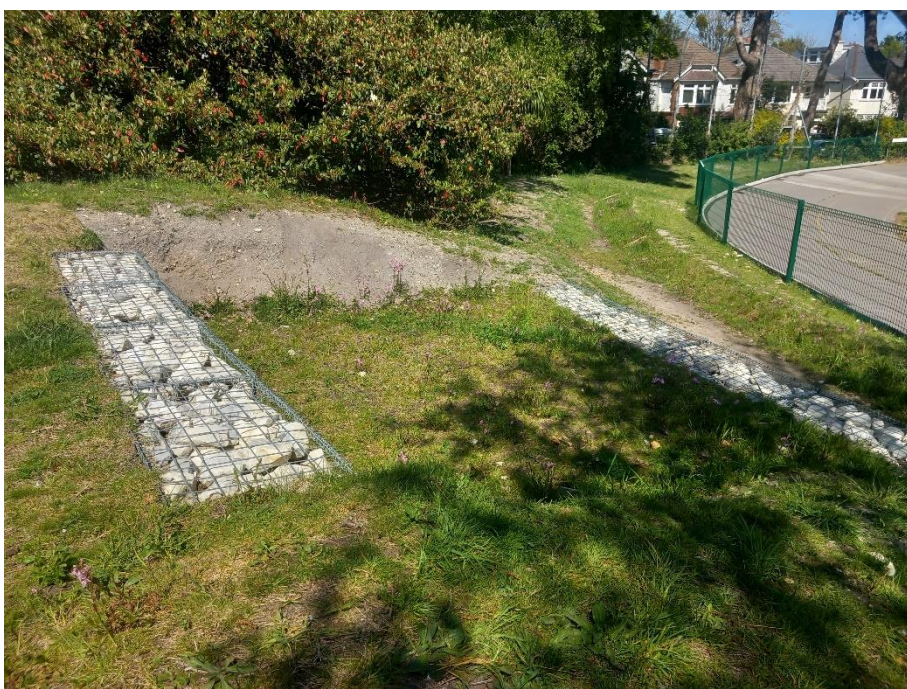
The projects were:

- Community gardens rainwater harvesting. We identified several locations around our community veg growing gardens or next to our park ponds where rainwater could be harvested from a roof to provide water through hotter dry periods. Ponds particularly benefit from natural rainwater to sustain the delicate ecosystem in the water, whereas community garden volunteers could more easily water the vegetables during summer and not need excess tap water. The rainwater is stored in large heavy duty rainwater butts which we sourced and installed with relevant permissions.



Pelhams park growing space water butt

- Wetland Suds projects. We spoke with the BCP Councils expert to identify key drainage problem areas and attempted to come up with a solution. Often centred around tarmac areas with improper drainage. We would capture and divert the rainwater at source and slow down its flowrate with landscaping and native planting to allow it time to soak away naturally. This would also provide a wild area that would remain wetter than the surrounding landscape for longer, allowing a more diverse range of wetland suited wildflower and grass species and providing a different habitat for a wide range of wildlife. We identified 2 locations which would benefit.



Winton Rec wetland
Suds

The Littledown Greenway

A multi stakeholder wildlife corridor project running from the river Stour in the east to Boscombe over cliff nature reserve in the south. By engaging various landowners with nature conservation green space management techniques, we can create a 3.7km nature corridor. Nature corridors are vital for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem health by connecting fragmented habitats. They enable wildlife to move freely between areas, supporting essential activities like foraging, breeding, and migration. This connectivity helps prevent local extinctions, enhances genetic diversity, and improves the overall resilience of ecosystems.

Key stakeholders:

- BHLive Littledown Park
- NHS – Royal Bournemouth hospital
- JP Morgan
- BCP council – Kings Park and Woodland walk
- Gloucester Road residents
- St Peters Catholic Primary School, Avonbourne Academies, Iford Academy (Tregonwell)

Littledown park

Site meetings with the BH live general manager and BCP parks ops to discuss long term management of greenspace resulted in them adopting a reduced mowing regime with cut and collect.



Royal Bournemouth Hospital and JP Morgan

Speaking with grounds staff, they were both keen to adopt some urban greening principles

Kings Park and Woodland Walk

~6000m² meadow with cut and collect initially agreed with 1 semi mature oak tree planted. See 'Further work' below for woodland walk infrastructure improvements.

Gloucester Road

Initial engagement with residents to try to encourage adoption of Urban greening principles.

St Peters Primary, Avonbourne and Iford Academy

The 3 schools border each other through the Littledown greenway, enabling us to connect them with a circa 700m native hedgerow (and associated marginal meadow habitat) running along their perimeters. Further details in schools breakdown below. Planting occurred in two phases over two winters 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Schools adopting urban greening principles

12 schools engaged with Urban Greening principles. Schools were selected based on proximity to Green Heart Parks or in areas where there is potential to enhance wildlife connectivity. Emails were sent out offering free advice on how to enhance biodiversity of site, initial site meetings highlighted key areas to focus on. In some cases, we delivered planting events with the students and supported by paying for watering where necessary over the following years to ensure success of the project.

St Peters Catholic Primary School

- 425m native mix hedgerow planted (approx. 1900 whips)
- 1 wildlife pond installed

Part of the Littledown Greenway wildlife corridor project. We offered the school free advice and trees to enhance biodiversity onsite. The school already had funds for a pond but had doubts about installation. We helped plan and install the pond and fencing. Part of the Littledown greenway project this school received the largest portion of the planned hedgerow for connectivity.

Two planting events held over phase 1 and 2.

Phase 1, 2024: Planting of hedgerow carried out during Feb half term with students, parents and staff (45 attendees).

Phase 2, 2025: This event finished the hedgerow at this school (60 attendees)

Pond installed with students during school time.

Avonbourne Academy

- 150m native mix hedgerow planted (approx. 600 whips)

The second stretch in the Littledown greenway hedgerow. One planting event held in phase 2, 2025 during school (20 attendees).

Iford Academy

- 125m native mix hedgerow (approx. 550 whips)

The final section in the Littledown greenway hedgerow. Whips planted with students and staff.

Joseph Phillips – Iford Academy head teacher:

“The planting project you undertook at Iford was great as an opportunity to engage our students with their natural environment and also provide ecological enhancement on our site. You and your colleagues were great working with our very challenging cohort and the students responded really positively to you. The whips are growing well and we are already seeing the beginning of the hedgerow. We would be very keen to participate in any future projects.”

Iford Academy students and teachers planting the hedge

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School –

- 9 semi-mature native trees

- 20m hedgerow
- Annual/perennial meadow sown (50m²)

Planted with students and staff

Ronald Rideout – Site manager:

“Dear Josh, sorry that you are leaving. As you know the assistance you gave us was invaluable in setting up our tree planting, hedge planting, and the wildlife garden. It is now getting established and made such a difference to the children's education in such a deprived area. Thank you again for all your help and we wish you well in your new position.”

St Joseph's students planting trees

Somerford Primary School

- Annual/perennial meadows sown (80m²)
- Mowing regime reduced allowing natural meadow regeneration
- 3 x double swift boxes and 3 x silhouettes fitted

We had built a relationship with the school by inviting them across to Watermans Park in 2022 to help plant some trees. During the project we installed a meadow in their front green along with agreeing a reduced mowing plan. Swift boxes installed as they were near a potential hotspot and had a suitable building. They will continue to monitor the boxes for activity.



Somerford Primary School – Swift box installation and annual/perennial meadow

Christchurch Jr School –

- Installed 3 x swift double boxes and 3 x swift silhouettes as part of the Portfield close Swift Street project
- Advised on 3 semi-mature trees and native whips.
- Adopted reduced mowing regime

Due to their proximity to the Portfield swift street they agreed to have swift boxes installed on their building, they will continue to monitor them. Site walk and consultation lead them to reduce mowing and bring nature into their school.

Sam Fuller – CJS Head Teacher:

Since your involvement at CJS, we have seen a positive impact:

- We now have two areas of grassland within the school site which we have allowed to grow to meadow. This has seen increased wildlife and more children wanting to play/explore in these areas.



Swift boxes and silhouettes on CJS building

- We have Swift Boxes and silhouettes which are hoping will encourage swifts (part of the Portfield Road swift street project). We have shared information about this with our families and it has meant greater discussion and interest being shown.

There is a good deal more talk about our environment now, with children actively wanting to do their bit to help it thrive.

Longspee academy

- Advised on urban greening principles

We started delivering regular ‘Longspee Ranger’ sessions funded the academy and another project, getting the students out into Slades Farm to help with park maintenance.

Longspee has now built a polytunnel and growing space and the school collective plans to roll out more in other sites.

Magna Academy

- Advised on urban greening principles and native tree species.

Katherine Stafford – Magna Academy:

“Working with Josh and the Urban Greening Project has been extremely beneficial for our academy. He has educated our Magna Changemakers for Climate group about how to re-wild the playground and which plants would thrive in that environment. He also advised our site team about what instructions to give our local council regarding rewilding our grounds and advised on

the purchase of trees for one of our playgrounds. Josh has always been willing to advise and visit the academy and the students have learnt a lot from him.”

- Planted trees with the school and advised on hedge planting and the allotment space.



Site walks with other schools to encourage adoption of Urban Greening principles

- Bayside Academy
- Avonwood Primary School
- Manorside Academy
- Twynham School

Maintenance Maps

Site visits planned to all our existing Green Heart Parks with BCP Council architects, park operative area managers and ground staff team leaders present to establish a maintenance map for each. The maps primarily look at mowing plans to identify areas that could be left to no-mow meadow or potentially to receive a yearly cut/collect. The maps would also be updated with completed tree planting and green infrastructure completed by us under the GHP project along with plans for future works. The resulting map will optimize the benefit for nature in that area while considering all other park uses and practicalities with input from park Ops. A copy will be made available for residents and the council will then adopt that plan as their primary maintenance reference.

This has resulted in 50km2+ of no mow meadow being officially committed to by BCP Council providing habitat for millions of invertebrates, which in turn will feed into the wider ecosystem.



Maintenance map for Muscliff Park

4.2 Conclusion

Each project was deemed a success by us and stakeholders, achieving its initial aim with further roll out and scalability only dependant on additional funding. While we would not expect to see an immediate biodiversity improvement as nature can take time to recover, the methods we used are well documented to be beneficial and in some cases we have seen a remarkably quick benefit to wildlife, E.g. Hoburne house martin pond.

Further work and Legacy post project

We have continued with swift awareness post project, with our partnership alongside CHOG. Using most of the materials created for the 2024 events we delivered 6 events in 2025 engaging 160 people with swift conservation.

The house martin tower and pond will receive its own maintenance map and will be maintained by BCP council alongside one of our GHP volunteer groups.

Not all the Suds have been installed by project end so we will continue to install them in time for water to be collected and used in summer 2026.

The Littledown greenway project has gained a lot of traction with interest from other potential funders and partners looking to get involved. As stated, watering is paid for until summer 2026 and we will continue to monitor the success of the hedgerow. Funding was sourced to install a wildlife pond, plant native understory whips and install bird boxes in Woodland Walk in 2025, this further adds to the nature infrastructure along the Greenway. We are looking to get as much of the greenway put into maintenance maps and will revisit stakeholders to check on progress and encourage more.

We will continue to develop our relationships with the schools involved with the project, inviting them to future events and checking on the improvements they made, offering further advice if needed.

Not all the GHP parks have been visited for their maintenance map or if they have, some are still awaiting the map to be completed by the BCP architects. We will continue to push the final parks and will adopt the same mapping method for any future green spaces the charity moves into.

GREEN HEART PARKS

We believe that our community parks can thrive when we work in partnership. The co-management of our community parks, where BCP Council continues with its current levels of maintenance and The Parks Foundation provides additional benefits

including fundraising, community engagement, nature education, biodiversity improvements and café management. Continual collection of data about park use, satisfaction and changes in demand will help create spaces that communities can cherish.

Staff Efforts

Co-ordination of the sites by Parks Activators who will bring together maintenance teams, local stakeholders, volunteers etc.

Team Park - Volunteers

Increased breadth and depth of volunteering meaning more opportunities to get involved.

Grants, Donations Legacies

Generate additional funding for parks by working with trusts, philanthropists and corporate partners, as well as promoting donations from residents.



Healthier communities

More welcoming spaces will encourage longer visits that will improve the mental and physical wellbeing of park users.



Closer communities

Work with individuals and groups to achieve specific goals, resulting in a community that feels better connected to their parks and each other.



Safer spaces

Anti-social behaviour and vandalism reduce in parks because of increased activities, informal staff presence and infrastructure improvements.



Connecting with nature

We will improve our parks for nature, creating more habitats for birds, animals and insects, to address the ecological crisis and to give our communities spaces on their doorsteps where they can connect with and learn more about wildlife.



Greenspace Economy

Increase income through the improvement of redundant buildings, introduction of new facilities and fundraising events.



Working in Partnership



Nature Pledge

The Nature Pledge is a list of principles that help nature thrive in our gardens and greenspaces. Putting these principles into action, whether you have **a window box, a small area at your workplace or a large private garden**, can improve habitat for wildlife and insects, as well as mitigating the impact of climate change and improving your physical and mental wellbeing.

Could you, or your workplace pledge to support nature in the BCP area?



The pledge

Help our nature thrive. Whether you have a window box, small balcony, a large private garden or a small greenspace at your place of work; join us in pledging to do things better for nature, to help bring wildlife to your home, school or workplace.

- ♥ plant **native/wildlife-friendly** tree and plant species
- ♥ collect **rainwater** for watering
- ♥ stop or **reduce chemical use** to control weeds
- ♥ only use **peat-free compost** - or make your own if you can
- ♥ allow areas to **grow naturally** without interference and leave space for wildlife
- 50♥ use **natural ground cover** and not artificial/plastic products
- ♥ install **bird and bat boxes**
- ♥ **reduce mowing** to allow more nature in your garden
- ♥ manage **trees for wildlife** value, leaving deadwood and ivy where possible
- ♥ install **ponds** or encourage **wetland areas** if safe to do so
- ♥ consider **nature-friendly material** choices
- ♥ create more **food growing** spaces
- ♥ **volunteer** some time to improve nature locally

Programme Summary:

Dorset Peat Partnership



Our programme focus

Healthy peat habitats support fantastically diverse and highly specialised wildlife. They reduce climate and flood risks by storing significant carbon and rainwater and improve water quality downstream by trapping nutrients and sediment. Dorset's peatlands are fragmented and often in poor condition due to historic land drainage. By restoring peat in Dorset, this programme will:

- Restore, connect and expand the range of protected habitats and species.
- Mitigate climate risks by holding water back in the landscape to reduce downstream impacts of high rainfall events and improve drought resilience.
- Reduce wildfire risk through removal of fuel load, increasing water in the landscape as a firebreak and providing a refuge for wildlife in high-risk areas.
- Reduce CO₂ loss from degraded peat and eventually sequestering additional carbon.

Discovery phase- December 2021-August 2023

80 sites were assessed for the potential to deliver high quality outcomes within a tight funding window. 16 sites covering a total of 172ha were prioritised for restoration, with a number of other sites noted as high potential for future restoration but where delivery is complex, long term or requires significant preparation.

At the 16 priority sites, in-depth surveys were carried out to assess peat depth and condition, water levels at different times of year, vegetation, and the implications of potential restoration on any historic environment features present. Detailed restoration plans were then developed.

Restoration phase- August 2023- March 2025

Spread over two years, the programme will deliver peatland restoration over 16 sites across the Dorset Heaths SAC. Restoration is tailored to each site, but primarily comprises:

1. Removing trees and scrub which very effectively pull water out of the peat through transpiration and break up the peat structure with their roots
2. Flailing Purple Moor Grass (*Molinia sp*) tussocks to limit regrowth and maximise habitat potential for peat-forming sphagnum mosses.
3. Identifying and blocking artificial drains to hold water within the mire and stop the remaining peat degrading further.

Canford Heath Focus

BCP's Canford Heath was part of this project and in 2025, two mires underwent restoration works, with pre and post monitoring.

- At Culliford Crescent an incised drainage gully was removing water from the mire habitat. This has been filled with the spoil banks and the material from the felled Scots Pine trees, utilised to create timber dams to slow the flow and block water in this area, also reducing flooding of the nearby urban infrastructure.
- Larger scale works on the north side of the heath, saw a main drain that ran west to east through the site, blocked with a series of timber and peat bunds, to improve and rewet

Programme Summary:

Dorset Peat Partnership



the habitat. Dense tussocks of Mollinia were mulched, to allow groundwater back to the surface.

Peat is the biggest Carbon store in the UK; it needs to be kept wet to lock in its carbon. If it dries and oxygen and sunlight reach the peat, it then starts to release Carbon Dioxide. These rewetting projects will increase the areas that retain water and hold it for longer.

A good functioning peatland captures more Carbon than woodland, though it's about the right system in the right place, so both peatlands and woodlands work together to mitigate climate change.

Information about the additional carbon capture, that has been calculated for the 16 site across Dorset, is detailed below and more information is available at [Dorset Peat Discovery Project | Dorset Catchment Partnerships](#) & [Dorset Peat Partnership Project](#)

Carbon dioxide equivalent emissions across the 16 sites before restoration was calculated at 3.32 tonnes per hectare/per year. By restoring these sites, the emission factor will reduce to 0.32 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, per hectare/per year, over a transmission period of 15 years.

Our partnership

The Peat Partnership is led by Dorset Wildlife Trust and includes the National Trust, RSPB, BCP Council, Dorset Council, Forestry England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The partnership also includes one private landowner.

The partnership has an established steering group, chaired by the Catchment Partnership. Our partners are experienced at working together and readily share expertise and resources to achieve the ambitious delivery plans of this programme within a tight window, as well as secure a sustainable legacy of monitoring and ongoing restoration.

Funding

The programme is funded through approximately £900,000 from Government's Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme covering the Discovery and Restoration phases. This has been matched by £100,000 from the Wytch Farm Landscape Access and Enhancement Fund and approximately £200,000 in cash and in-kind contributions from other partners. This funding will ensure the approved restoration of the 16 sites up to 31st March 2025. All activity after this date will be funded through other sources and partners' core maintenance budgets.

The current tranche of delivery is the beginning of the story of peatland restoration in Dorset and partners are working to embed future restoration in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and develop future conduits for building on the success of this initial work.

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Summary of Public Health Implications of Biodiversity

1. What will this do for the health and wellbeing of the population? Will this reduce health inequalities locally?

Biodiversity is a key determinant of health. Loss of natural habitats can increase air pollution, heat stress, and mental health burdens. Integrating biodiversity into planning such as green corridors, urban trees, and nature-based solutions aligns with the One Health approach, benefiting people, wildlife, and ecosystems (WHO, 2025). Creating and safeguarding biodiverse green spaces and protecting wetlands delivers co-benefits: climate resilience, reduced air pollution, and improved wellbeing (UK Health Alliance, 2025; WHO, 2025).

Health and Wellbeing Benefits

- **Physical Activity:** Biodiverse environments encourage walking, cycling, and outdoor recreation, reducing risks of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and some cancers. Physical activity also helps maintain a healthy BMI, strengthens the immune system, and improves mental health. (NHS England, 2025)
- **Mental Health:** Access to biodiverse spaces reduces depression, stress, anxiety and other mental health conditions and helps support and manage symptoms of existing conditions. (WHO, 2025).
- Natural spaces with high biodiversity provide stronger mental health benefits than low-diversity areas. People living near nature rich areas report better mental health outcomes compared to those in highly built-up environments. (King's College London, 2024; The Wildlife Trust, 2022)
- **Air Quality:** Trees and vegetation filter pollutants, reducing respiratory illnesses such as asthma and COPD, while promoting wellbeing through cleaner air. (WHO, 2025)
- **Climate Resilience:** Biodiversity mitigates climate impacts such as heatwaves and flooding, reducing related health risks. Climate resilience requires a comprehensive plan and programme to protect and improve population health (UK Health and Security Agency, 2023).
- **Microbiome Benefits:** Ongoing biodiversity declines and inadequate green areas in residential environments can limit human exposure to beneficial microbes. Contact with biodiverse environments exposes people to beneficial microorganisms, strengthening

immune function and reducing allergies and autoimmune disorders. (Natural England, 2024; Haahtela, 2022; Lehtimäki, 2025)

Reducing Health Inequalities

- Biodiversity conservation can reduce inequalities by improving access to nutritious food, clean water, and natural spaces especially in deprived areas (WHO, 2025).
- People living in the most deprived areas are four times more likely to live in neighbourhoods with the least access to biodiversity and green space compared to the least deprived areas. 28% of people in the most deprived neighbourhoods fall into the bottom 10% for green space access, versus only 7% in the least deprived neighbourhoods (The Health Foundation, 2024).
- Protecting biodiversity ensures that new housing developments do not eliminate access to nature, which is essential for wellbeing. We need to ensure that housing growth does not eliminate access to nature, which is linked to better mental health and lower chronic disease rates (The Wildlife Trust, 2022).

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Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

The Council is legally required by the Equality Act 2010 to evidence how it has considered its equality duties in its decision-making process.

The Council must have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to -

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

A link to the full text of [s149 of the Equality Act 2010](#) which must be considered when making decisions.

1	What is being reviewed?	Reporting on BCP Council's statutory duty to biodiversity and bringing forward a vehicle for financing nature and improve habitats.
2	What changes are being made?	Strategic delivery of improvements to green spaces for nature and to enable access for people. Improved monitoring and evaluation of nature, people's access and understanding trends and impact of improvements. Creation of a mechanism to secure funds from developers to improve the quality of habitats
3	Service Unit:	Environment
4	Participants in the conversation:	BCP green spaces team: Strategic Lead Greenspace development manager Countryside area managers
5	Conversation date/s:	Through the development and writing of the work that is feeding in to two cabinet reports in December 2025.
6	Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	<p>The potential client base is extensive as anyone can access our public open spaces, be in contact with nature and benefit from increased nature.</p> <p>Key BCP stats from Consultation dashboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP population 409,000 people • 18% ethnic minority backgrounds • 16,132 Ha in size, 19% of which is covered by trees • 4.2% expected population growth by 2032 • 10.3 million visitors pa (2022) <p>It is understood that not everyone feels able to engage with nature, and people or organisation's may not understand what their role is, or what they can do to enable nature recovery. Having peers, role models and lived experience in accessing nature and new spaces is important.</p>

7	<p>Do different groups have different needs or experiences?</p> <p>age (young/old), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, members of the armed forces community, any other factors/groups e.g. socioeconomic status, carers, human rights.</p>	<p>We have considered all protected characteristics and have identified no differences in needs or experiences. Project specific EIA's will be developed as changes to land areas, access of opportunities come forward from the nature recovery work.</p>
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Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Positive Impact	There will be a positive impact on old people, children and young people as the aim of implementing this work looks to improve nature across BCP, and wider Dorset County, which also brings benefits for people. A healthy natural environment gives us what we need to survive, from clean air and water, to flood protection and carbon storage, as well as beautiful outdoor places to enjoy.
Disability	Positive Impact	Implementing this work seeks to improve nature across the county, including accessibility to nature spaces and increasing accessible opportunities for people to get involved in nature recovery activities. Mental and physical health benefits can be expected from increased nature recovery areas and accessibility.
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
Religion and belief	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Sexual orientation	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected characteristic group
People with caring responsibilities	Positive Impact	Implementing the strategy looks to improve nature across BCP, including accessibility to nature spaces which may benefit people with caring responsibilities.
Socio-economic deprivation	Positive Impact	Implementation of this strategy will include more opportunities for people to get involved in nature recovery and connect with nature.
Single parents	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected group
Armed forces communities	Neutral Impact	Having considered, we don't believe there will any impact on this protected group

8	Will this change affect any service users?	Not negatively, only positive impacts from nature recovery and enabling greater access to nature.
9	n/a	
10	What are the benefits or positive equality impacts of the change on current or potential users?	<p>This work aims to create nature that is bigger, better and more joined up. This will benefit the environment, food production, all our natural systems and human health. There are also huge health and well-being benefits from time spent in nature.</p> <p>This work will monitor our nature, key trends and species that are identifiable. It will encourage citizen science and informal enjoyment of nature. It will encourage people to do more for nature in their own spaces, or locally in someone else's.</p> <p>BCP will meet its statutory duties, we will be actively delivering for nature and communities.</p>
11	What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?	None identified.
12	Will the change affect employees?	No
13	Will the change affect the wider community?	Yes, as above through nature connectedness and strategy delivery.
14	What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?	<p>We are setting up a local nature delivery group, we will create citizen science and other means for local participation.</p> <p>A residents urban nature forum will seek local input from a broad range of representative stakeholders, individuals and organisations.</p>

15	<p>Summary of Equality Implications:</p>	<p>The two cabinet reports related to financing Nature and the Statutory reporting of biodiversity are promoting and committing BCP Council to clear Biodiversity outputs, delivery and governance, seeking ways to innovate, improve and support our residents and communities in accessing and supporting nature.</p> <p>A forward plan of nature recovery delivery work will create more ways to engage with and seek support from local organisations and individuals through new forums and platforms.</p> <p>Equality considerations show that while everyone in theory can have access to nature, we know there are barriers, and work is required to understand how to remove those and develop opportunities for more diverse groups to support this work, be more involved in decision making and realise the benefits from time in green spaces and nature.</p>
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CABINET



Report subject	Improving biodiversity in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>BCP Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and has committed, in its Shared Vision 2024 – 2028, to create ‘vibrant places where people and nature flourish’.</p> <p>Three council-owned sites have been identified where different land management approaches would increase the diversity of wildlife, create nature corridors and improve residents’ health and wellbeing by making natural areas more accessible to explore and enjoy. These are Erlin Farm, Millhams Mead and Solent Meads.</p> <p>To avoid creating new pressure on the budget at a time of financial challenge across the council, this paper sets out a sustainable funding proposal and options for a mechanism to deliver this.</p> <p>A previous Cabinet paper approved the principle of creating a mechanism to enable BCP Council to sell Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) units from council-owned land, either in-house or via an arms-length organisation. This paper focuses on the funding mechanism and outlines options with a recommended approach.</p> <p>Since BNG became law in February 2024, approximately £187k worth of funding for nature (in the form of BNG unit purchases) has gone to other areas of England from development activity which has taken place in BCP Council’s Local Planning Authority (LPA) area. This means areas outside BCP are benefiting from improved biodiversity and the associated improved health and wellbeing impacts. The recommendations in this paper would establish a mechanism to ensure the benefits of the BNG planning policy would remain within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.</p> <p>Where the current use of a site is proposed to change, a period of public and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken to ensure the best approach for nature and residents. This will come forward in a future report for a further decision.</p> <p>None of the changes will involve building on these sites, this would fundamentally contradict the objective of creating more habitat and increasing biodiversity.</p>

Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Notes the previous Cabinet decision to sell BNG units in principle and approves an in-house mechanism for selling BNG units, while continuing to monitor the BNG market and explore alternative approaches. b) Approves the improvement of habitats at up to three Council-owned sites (Erlyn Farm / Millhams Mead / Solent Meads outside the golf course area) for future supply of BNG units c) To look to improve nature as part of the re-tendering of golf and other leisure use for the existing Solent Meads golf course area
Reason for recommendations	<p>Improving biodiversity across BCP benefits nature which in turn improves residents' health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Creating a sustainable funding mechanism for this work avoids additional pressure on BCP Council budgets.</p> <p>BCP residents will benefit from the requirement for developers to leave habitats for wildlife in a measurably better state than they were before development.</p> <p>The longer BCP remains without a supply of BNG units, the greater the risk to its green infrastructure. This could lead to environmental degradation and the loss of investment to areas outside BCP, missing the opportunity to deliver high quality nature for local communities.</p> <p>Managing the delivery of BNG units in-house on at least one council-owned site offers the fastest and most practical route to improving biodiversity in the conurbation. It also enables the council to test the BNG sale process and market with minimal investment and risk. This approach allows BCP Council to learn, address uncertainties, observe how the emerging market evolves, and assess the ease of selling units.</p> <p>Delegating authority to officers to select the initial site/s provides the necessary time and mandate to carry out detailed modelling, planning, costing, and stakeholder engagement ensuring informed decisions about which sites to prioritise.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley – Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	<p>Martin Whitchurch – Strategic Lead Greenspace & Conservation</p> <p>Ruth Wharton – Greenspace Development Manager</p> <p>Janna Bloice – Project Manager</p>
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation / Decision

Background

1. The UK is one of the most depleted countries in the world in terms of biodiversity.
2. The Environment Act 2021 strengthens the biodiversity duty originally set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requiring public authorities to:
 - a. Consider what actions they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
 - b. Agree policies and specific objectives based on that consideration.
 - c. Act to deliver those policies and achieve the objectives.
 - d. Report on their actions and future plans.
3. This applies to all public authorities, including local authorities and local planning authorities such as BCP Council.
4. The strengthened Duty means as a public authority, BCP must:
 - a. Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
 - b. Agree policies and specific objectives based on your consideration.
 - c. Act to deliver your policies and achieve your objectives.
5. To deliver these duties, BCP Council has identified three potential sites where a change in land management approach will increase and improve biodiversity. This paper outlines recommendations for establishing a sustainable funding mechanism to support this initiative.
6. The Environment Act 2021 aims to halt and reverse decline in UK biodiversity through several measures including BNG, a mandatory obligation on most new development, to be secured through the Local Planning Authority. BNG will be delivered either on the development site, or off-site on biodiversity gain sites.
7. BNG requires developers provide an increase in natural habitat and ecological features affected by a development i.e. to leave nature in a measurably better state than they found it by a value of 10% or more. In fulfilling this mandatory obligation developers will have to quantify their anticipated impact on habitats as part of their planning application, and produce a long-term plan that can deliver, monitor and maintain an area of habitat. In doing so they may need to deliver biodiversity gains off-site and can rely on other landowners, with land in need of nature recovery, to provide biodiversity to meet the required 10% net gain.
8. Land in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole can be used and improved for nature, through tree planting, creation of meadows, ponds, ditches and hedgerows and other habitat management.
9. These factors present an opportunity for BCP Council to:
 - a. Deliver its statutory duties in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 by improving habitats and increasing biodiversity.
 - b. Improve residents' health and wellbeing through access to nature.
 - c. Create a sustainable funding mechanism and avoid budget pressure by attracting investment in its natural environment via the sale of BNG units.
 - d. Provide an avenue for BNG income and its benefits to remain within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
10. In September 2024 a [Cabinet paper](#) explained the opportunity for BCP Council to attract investment in its natural environment and local wildlife via the creation of a mechanism to manage sales of BNG units.
11. Appendix 1 provides a summary explanation of BCP Council's Financing Nature project including a brief description of BNG, Habitat Banking Vehicles and BCP Council's work to date.

12. BCP Council's Green Spaces Development Team secured external funding to work with industry experts [Finance Earth](#)¹ to understand the scope of habitat banking and consider different operating models for selling BNG units from council-owned sites.
13. Finance Earth have worked with Plymouth City Council (PCC) to create an arms-length mechanism [Ocean City Nature](#).
14. The City of Doncaster Council are supplying BNG units via an in-house arrangement.
15. These two operating models (in-house and arms-length) have been explored for enabling the sale of BNG units from BCP Council-owned land. For a summary of both see appendix 2.

Current situation

16. Without a funding mechanism and sites allocated for habitat improvement, BCP Council are currently unable to offer a supply of BNG units within the LPA area. In the absence of a local supply, development sites that require offsite BNG units are having to purchase BNG units from outside the LPA area or statutory BNG credits. This means developers within BCP are paying to improve nature elsewhere.
17. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric, published by Defra for calculating BNG units, includes a spatial risk multiplier which increases the number of units a developer must provide if the units are not supplied from within the same LPA area or National Character Area (NCA). This means that local developers are paying an increased cost to meet BNG requirements. Therefore, offering a local supply should be attractive with Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
18. Habitat mitigation is not always provided on-site by developers and habitat improvements are being made outside Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as a result. Since BNG became law in February 2024, approximately £187,107 worth of funding that could have been used for nature improvements in the three towns (in the form of BNG unit purchases) has gone to other areas of England from development activity within BCP Council's LPA area. Further detail provided in appendix 3.
19. Commercial actors have been quick to establish themselves in the BNG space to tap into the potentially material profitability of BNG. The largest two habitat banking businesses in the UK, representing c.50% of the market, are funded by international profit-seeking firms. This is money that BCP Council could capture for the benefit of residents and the local area instead.
20. It is difficult to predict how many BNG units the council may need in coming years to support its own housing or other development, especially with current high housing targets set by the government. The position with the Local Plan and uncertainty over development site viability make any predictions unreliable. However, it is anticipated that the council will bring forward housing development that will necessitate the purchase of BNG units.
21. The key criteria for selecting potential BNG sites within BCP Council include:
 - a. Size – larger sites, at least 20ha of land for habitat improvement.
 - b. Habitat type – generally grassland sites generate units faster.
 - c. Geographic location of site – public access and adjacent to any upcoming development projects. Future sites should also consider inclusion in the [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) (LNRS) because they will benefit from a strategic significance multiplier, receiving 1.15 times more biodiversity units than would otherwise be awarded.

¹ Finance Earth provides advice to BCP Council through a framework of "Green Finance" support to local authorities funded and co-ordinated by the National Trust and partners. To date all work between Finance Earth and BCP Council has been grant funded by the National Trust or other 3rd parties, BCP Council has not directly paid Finance Earth for this work.

- d. Existing grant/public funding being received by site – to ensure that BNG income will be additional.
 - e. Suggested sites from the council's Countryside team.
22. Initially, five sites were considered. These have been reduced to three BCP Council-owned sites for habitat banking. This is based on meeting the above criteria, availability and potential to secure future income linked to the current ecological value of the land:
- a. Erlin Farm, off Muscliffe Lane, BH9 – no public access, currently used for winter grazing. Managed by BCP Countryside team and council freehold.
 - b. Millhams Mead, Bournemouth, BH11 9BT – publicly accessible Local Nature Reserve. Located within Kinson ward. Managed by BCP Countryside team and council freehold.
 - c. Solent Meads, Broadway, Bournemouth, BH6 4EL – publicly accessible land, council freehold. One parcel of the land is currently a golf course managed by a tenant operating the golf concession, with a lease expiring in November 2026.
- Appendix 4 provides more information about these sites and their BNG potential.
23. Options for how to improve each site are still being considered and the council is committed to engaging with the public and stakeholders before making any decisions on any change for users of the space. None of these options would involve building on these sites as this would fundamentally contradict the objective of creating more habitat and increasing biodiversity.

Creating a supply of BNG units

- 24. Land must be secured via a legal agreement (section 106 or [conservation covenant](#)) for the creation and maintenance of habitats for a minimum of 30 years.
- 25. Once approved by the LPA, the site is registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register, making the units available for purchase to meet BNG requirements.
- 26. By becoming a seller of BNG units, the nature creation / restoration of a site within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole replaces the habitat loss on a development site, either within the three towns or elsewhere. No net loss of nature occurs at an authority level and investment stays within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. It could even come from outside the area.
- 27. BCP Council can enhance its own green spaces for people and wildlife, funded by a sustainable revenue stream and business model. There is no impact on the collection of Community Infrastructure Levy and other developer contributions, e.g. Habitats regulations, as these will still be required.
- 28. Establishing a mechanism for selling offsite BNG units will also ensure the council can meet its own BNG obligations that might arise from developing its own land.
- 29. This could also unlock future land purchase opportunities, funded by BNG.
- 30. Dorset Council (DC) are registered as a Responsible Body so BCP Council could use DC for creating conservation covenants where needed (in-house arrangement).

Options Appraisal

- 31. Option 1 In-house: Quickest route to market, BCP Council directly manages and operates the habitat banking activities within existing council structures and departments. The council would use its own staff, systems and processes to deliver BNG projects, maintaining direct control over all operations but with limited ability to act commercially due to Local Authority constraints under the Localism Act.
- 32. Option 2 Arms-length: A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) or subsidiary company, which is distinct from the council while maintaining full council ownership or control, created as a Habitat Banking Vehicle (HBV). This provides commercial flexibility to respond quickly

to BNG market developments while transferring risk away from the council to the separate entity.

33. Option 3 Stepped: Setting up an in-house arrangement for specified sites (any or all the sites listed above) while continuing to consider an arms-length arrangement for any future BNG supply sites. Learning from the in-house arrangement to potentially develop an arms-length mechanism with time.

34. Summary of the risks, issues and benefits of each approach below, more detail can be found in appendix 5.

	1. In-house	2. Arms-length	3. Stepped
Key risks, issues and benefits	Operated site by site. Risk for the council is low. Costs of set up are relatively low. Direct council control over all decisions.	Can generate surplus funds for additional improvements to BCP's green infrastructure. Greater commercial flexibility and credibility with private actors. Off balance sheet operations reduce risk. Could raise private capital if desired.	Able to immediately begin habitat creation at a selected site/s. Allows habitat investment within BCP's LPA area to support planning applications, while continuing to explore alternative approaches. Time to learn from the in-house BNG supply site.
Pros	Quick start. Direct control. Uses existing expertise.	Scale potential. Commercial credibility. Risk management.	Immediate action. Learning opportunity. Market validation.
Cons	Limited scale. Commercial restrictions. Conflict of interest issues (being the landowner and LPA). No surplus generation.	Some additional short-term complexity and higher initial costs. More difficult to close if activity halted.	Both models retain their limitations at each phase.

35. The two operating models (in-house and arms-length) are outline in appendix 6, including illustrations.

Next steps

36. As outlined in appendix 6, an internal project board will need to be set up. This board will be responsible for the habitat bank and will be the core governance arrangement. This will have representation from key council services to include finance, legal and countryside management. This group will consider the three Council-owned sites and decide which to take forward first.

37. The project board will also review the case for the establishment of an arms-length body and return to BCP's cabinet with appropriate recommendations.

Summary of financial implications

38. For each site taken forward, a Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) will be developed to refine and confirm interventions based on ecological surveys. Once

these details are understood, cost estimates will become more accurate. The principle is that all costs for site enhancement and 30-year maintenance will be included and recovered through the sale of BNG units.

39. £400k of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding was allocated to this project when presented to Cabinet in September 2024. These funds will be used to invest in the chosen sites and cover all habitat banking costs, including habitat improvements, maintenance, access works, and management of the operating model. This enables biodiversity enhancements to occur before BNG units are sold. These costs will be recovered from unit sales and remain in a ring-fenced budget. This enables biodiversity enhancements to occur before BNG units are sold. These funds will be recovered from unit sales and remain in a ring-fenced budget.
40. Appendix 7 provides estimated the upfront capital requirements to meet the upfront capital costs for the three sites and a proportion of their short-term working capital requirements. These estimates are based on BCP data and market data and are subject to change.
41. Cost estimates for the three potential council-owned BNG supply sites include legal and financial support, site improvements and 30 years of maintenance. Ongoing support from finance colleagues will also be required to manage the operating model and facilitate unit sales. These costs will be incorporated into the BNG unit pricing and recovered through BNG unit sales.
42. The priority is to offer units that are competitively priced while reflecting delivery and management costs, whilst not unreasonably undermining the market.
43. Without a BCP Council mechanism for selling BNG units, opportunities for local nature improvements will continue to be missed.
44. At Solent Meads, potential revenue loss could be offset through BNG unit sales and other commercial opportunities linked to the buildings. These will be explored in the next phase, alongside public engagement on Solent Meads' future use. Erlin Farm and Millhams Mead currently generate no significant income.

Summary of legal implications

45. Any council-owned BNG supply site created using an in-house operating model will need to enter into a form of legal agreement known as a "Conservation Covenant" with a Responsible Body. At the time of writing, there are currently [33 designated Responsible Bodies](#), including Dorset Council.
46. The Conservation Covenant will require BCP Council to install habitats on the relevant areas of land and maintain them for a minimum of 30 years. This then creates BNG units which can be allocated to the council's own developments or sold to private developer. The Council can undertake its legal work through existing resources.
47. New concession opportunities linked to the BNG supply sites would need support for any new lease arrangements.

Summary of human resources implications

48. A Financing Nature working group has been in place to bring forward the cabinet papers over the last two years. This group will evolve as the in-house operating model begins to be set up, with staff time required from the following teams:
 - a. Green Spaces Development – continued project management of the Financing Nature project and its deliverables
 - b. Countryside – delivery of nature restoration / habitat creation and maintenance of the sites
 - c. Planning – to liaise on BNG units and implementation of planning policy
 - d. Finance – to ensure a mechanism is working to regulations and to monitor all transactions

- e. Legal – regarding any new commercial leases, as well as the governance of the mechanism
 - f. Estates – regarding land use and asset management
49. Careful project management should ensure that all staff time used in the progression of the project is factored into the BNG unit price and will be recovered once the units sell.

Summary of sustainability impact

50. BCP Council have declared a [Climate and Ecological Emergency](#), recently adopted the [Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) and have existing [Green Infrastructure](#) and [Urban Forest](#) strategies. Improving wildlife and nature within BCP meets the aims and principles of these strategies and supports the accreditation as [Nature Towns](#). It also meets the statutory duties as set out earlier in the report.

Summary of public health implications

51. Enhancing BCP's green infrastructure contributes to improving the quality of life for people through enhanced access to nature and potential investment in green spaces. This has known physical health benefits such as boosting the immune system, improving heart health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases; supports mental health through reducing stress and anxiety, lowering depression rates and enhancing emotional resilience.
52. Societal benefits include the promotion of social connection through outdoor activities that foster cooperation, kindness and a sense of belonging. Time in nature also strengthens environmental awareness and regular exposure can encourage sustainable behaviours and positive attitudes to nature.

Summary of equality implications

53. This report is promoting and committing BCP Council to clear biodiversity outputs, delivery and governance, seeking ways to innovate, improve and support our residents and communities in accessing and supporting nature.
54. A forward plan of nature recovery delivery work will create more ways to engage with and seek support from local organisations and individuals through new forums and platforms.
55. Equality considerations show that while everyone in theory can have access to nature, we know there are barriers. Work is required to understand how to remove barriers and develop opportunities for more diverse groups to support this work, be more involved in decision making and realise the benefits from time in green spaces and nature.
56. Further EIAs will be undertaken for specific site proposals and considering feedback received during engagement activities.

Summary of risk assessment

57. Risks associated with the various options for the different mechanisms are noted above. Other specific risks include:
- a. BCP Council invests in improving nature and then cannot recoup costs through sales of the resultant BNG units. Careful project management will ensure that habitat restoration is programmed with cashflow considerations a priority. Research has been done to consider existing schemes run by other councils, as well as the current market for BNG units. Also, the benefits gained for wildlife, people and the wider BCP community will still be delivered, even if insufficient sales are made.
 - b. The BNG market is in its infancy and therefore has the potential to change e.g. a poor performing housing market will not support developers to bring forward

planning applications, therefore their requirement for BNG units does not materialise. There is no evidence that housing development will markedly slow within BCP and there are high housing targets for the forthcoming Local Plan. BNG units can be sold to developers outside the LPA, although BCP Council's preference would be to support growth within the area.

- c. Resistance from residents to change the use of certain sites for nature restoration / habitat creation. Good community engagement and information sharing will minimise negative response.
- d. Potential loss of revenue if sites currently have income-generating activity or opportunity. Any impact on the revenue budget will need to be offset by new commercial activity and income from BNG unit sales.
- e. If there is future need for technical support through a consultant these costs will be reflected in the eventual BNG unit pricing that will be re-couped from the selling of BNG units

Background papers

- Cabinet report Financing Nature 04/09/2024
- Cabinet report on Biodiversity Duty 17/12/2025 with report on BNG numbers and BCP Biodiversity report.
- [Nature Towns and Cities programme](#). BCP was the first group of towns to be accredited by this new programme (previous support offered under the predecessor programme, the Future Parks Accelerator).
- [BCP Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)
- [BCP Council's Urban Forest Strategy](#)
- [Dorset's Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Financing Nature briefing note 13/11/2025
- Appendix 2 – Summary of Plymouth City Council's arms-length experience and City of Doncaster's in-house experience
- Appendix 3 – Estimation of BNG units which could have been purchased by developments from within BCP had there been a local supply 01/02/24 – 06/10/25
- Appendix 4 – Potential BCP Council-owned BNG supply sites
- Appendix 5 – Detailed risks, issues and benefits of each approach
- Appendix 6 – Overview of delivery models
- Appendix 7 – In-house BNG delivery costs

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Green Finance (also known as impact investing / social investment)

The overarching term used to refer to direct financial flows to support the delivery of the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#), alongside a financial return e.g. renewable energy schemes bring a clear return on investment via selling units of energy to consumers.

Natural Capital

Investing in the natural environment is not as straightforward as selling units of energy. Investment markets look to the presence of codes, standards and methodologies to gain confidence in impact and future incomes (see image 1).

Biodiversity Net Gain

[Biodiversity Net Gain](#) (BNG) is planning policy that requires development projects to result in a measurable improvement in biodiversity, leaving the natural environment in a better state than it was before. At least a 10% net gain is mandated under the Environment Act 2021 in England.

The [Statutory Biodiversity Metric](#), published by Defra, is used to calculate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) by quantifying the change in biodiversity value of a site before (baseline) and after (target condition) a [development](#) or [land management change](#). It calculates the value of habitat in terms of "biodiversity units" based on factors like habitat type, condition, size, and location.

Development site (demanding offsite BNG units)

The Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy sets out a list of priority actions. First, avoidance of adverse impacts on onsite habitats. Where avoidance is not feasible, measures should be applied to minimise the impact. Where onsite habitats are still negatively affected by development, compensation must be provided in a prioritised sequence:

1. Enhance existing onsite habitats → 2. [Create new habitats offsite](#) → 3. If necessary, purchasing statutory credits

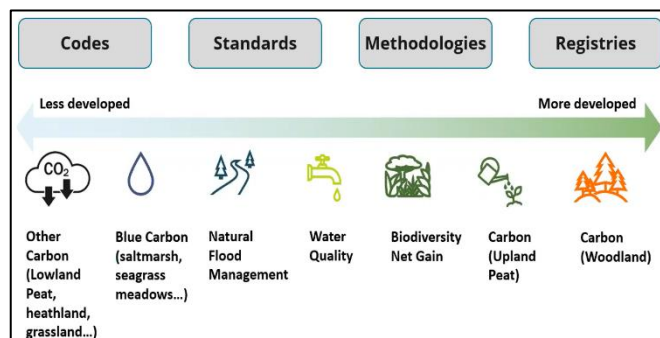
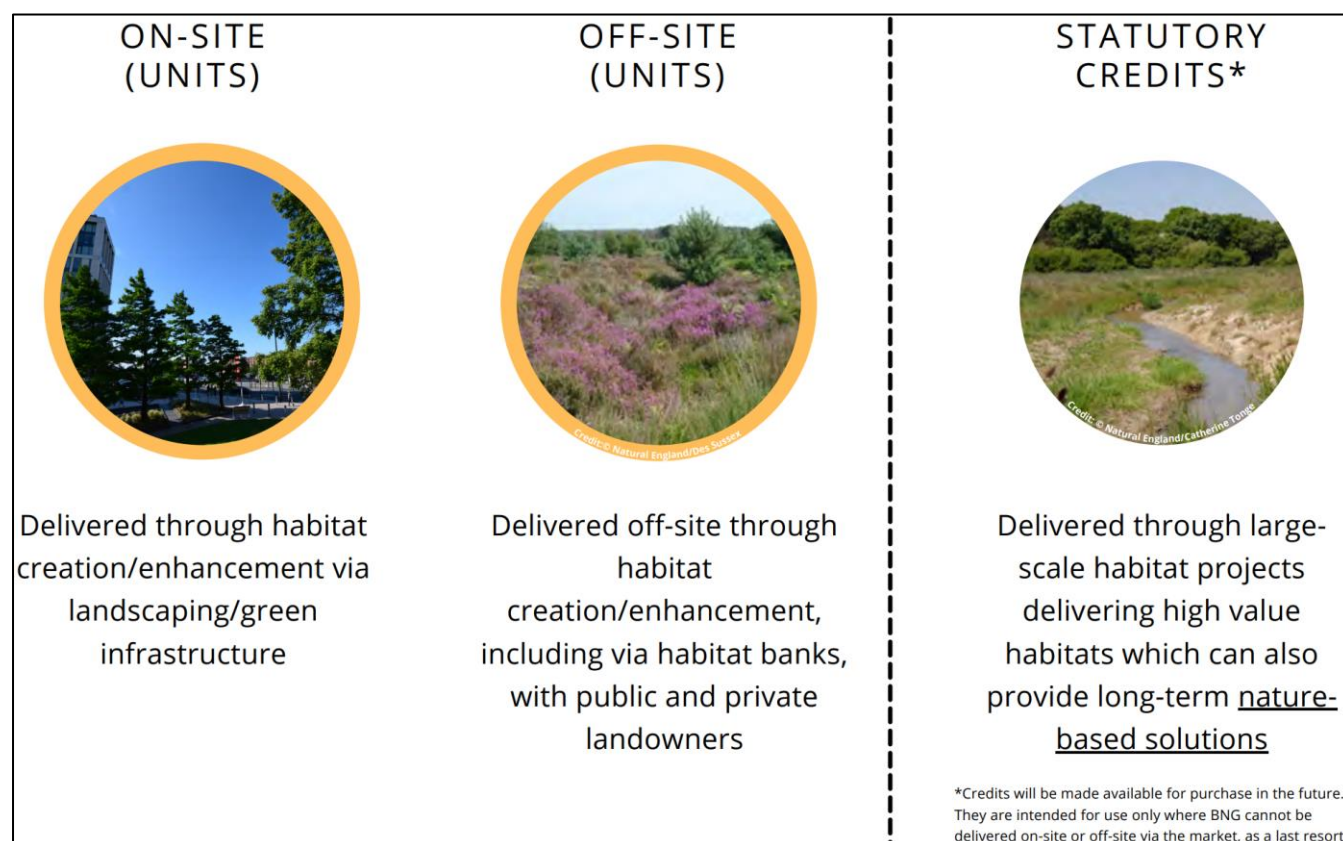


Image 1 – illustration of how well-developed various markets are

Land management change site (supplying off-site BNG units)

Landowners have the option to manage their land in ways that enhance its value for nature, making it more supportive of wildlife. This approach is known as habitat banking, where areas are improved to generate BNG units. These units can then be sold to developers who require offsite compensation for their [development](#). A Biodiversity Gain Plan and Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) will provide information about how biodiversity gains can be established at the site and this data is inputted into the metric which then calculates the BNG units which could be created.

BCP Council's Financing Nature work to date

Future Parks Accelerator (FPA)

An initiative set up to secure the future of the UK's urban parks and green spaces (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Trust and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). BCP was one of eight urban areas selected to be part of the FPA programme. BCP focused on creating a new green infrastructure strategy for the area, designed to improve development for people and nature. Plymouth were also involved in the programme, their involvement focused on [green finance](#) opportunities from which they created [Ocean City Nature](#).

Urban Greening Development project

A continuation of the FPA programme which included BCP exploring a [green finance](#) opportunities assessment, learning from Plymouth's experience and working with industry experts [Finance Earth](#) (FE) to understand the scope of [natural capital](#) within BCP.

Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund

£21 - 53 billion of investment is needed, by 2032, to deliver England's nature-related ambitions¹. One scheme which has helped grow the nature / conservation investment market is the Defra funded [Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund](#) (NEIRF).

National Urban Nature Fund, 2023/24

BCP Council partnered in a NEIRF project, led by National Trust (NT) and working with FE. The project delivered baseline ecological survey data and proposed habitat management plans for five Council-owned potential [BNG supply sites](#). This information provided an estimate of the potential BNG units each site could generate, forming the foundation of a business case for BCP Council to establish a financial mechanism to enable investment in BCP's natural environment, enabling a [paper to be presented to Cabinet in September 2024](#).

Aggregated investment model for farmers to secure Stour Valley's nature recovery, 2024/25

The [Stour Valley](#) is a strategically significant river corridor with strong potential for ecological restoration. To explore ways of unlocking investment in nature-based solutions, BCP Council led a NEIRF funded project (including partners NT, FE and five farmers with different land types, sizes, and ways of farming). The project increased farmers' understanding and readiness to participate in the BNG market, while also identifying the BNG potential of their individual farms. Additionally, legal advisors [Freeths](#) provided information to BCP Council about the implications of the Localism Act on creating an in-house [Habitat Banking Vehicle](#) (with regards to generating surplus funds for added value work).

BCP Council Cabinet approval, September 2024

The [Cabinet report](#) presented the opportunity of creating a mechanism (see image 2) to enable BCP Council to sell BNG units from Council-owned land. Approval was received from Cabinet for this to be explored further and for a detailed implementation plan to be presented at a future Cabinet meeting, with a preferred option for delivery (in-house / arm's length organisation).

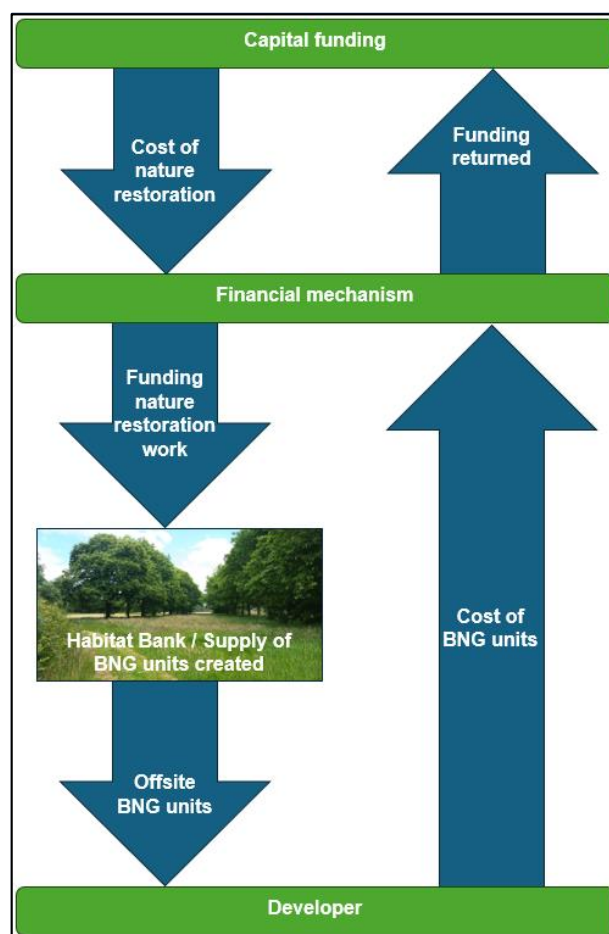


Image 2 – illustrative model

¹ Report published by the Green Finance Institute (GFI) called 'The Finance Gap for UK Nature'.

What is a Habitat Banking Vehicle (HBV) and why do we need one in BCP?

An HBV is an entity that creates, restores, and enhances nature to generate BNG units. These BNG units are then sold to development sites with planning permission granted and with a requirement to meet mandatory BNG. The HBV uses the funds generated to cover the upfront costs of habitat restoration and provides long-term funding for maintenance (minimum 30 years). A BCP Council HBV would provide:

- Support for BCP Council schemes demanding BNG units (e.g. social housing and infrastructure projects), strategic goals and, as part of the [local nature recovery strategy](#), habitat connectivity and high-quality biodiversity.
- Joined up landscape-scale planning.
- Assurance that developer BNG spend from BCP can find a home within BCP rather than beyond our boundaries.
- Greater financial sustainability for long-term maintenance of nature rich green infrastructure.
- Public access on high-quality nature sites and ensure they are close to development impact, as well as situated next to historically marginalised communities / neighbourhoods (most private habitat banks do not offer public access, this is a key benefit of a public sector led approach).
- A response to the [Climate and Ecological Emergency, declared by BCP Council in 2019](#). Selling BNG units would contribute towards BCP adapting to unavoidable impacts of climate change, increasing local nature and climate resilience.
- Fractions of BNG units which will be beneficial for developers. Much of the development in BCP is on small sites and requires the developer to buy fractions of BNG units.
- Can also finance other local conservation initiatives, if operated at arms-length (local authority HBVs are subject to restrictions on income generation, a feature of the Localism Act's restrictions on commercial activity).

Future aspirations/opportunities

- BNG ecological assessments on more BCP Council-owned sites.
- Mapping of BCP's natural capital estate and collaborating with the BCP colleagues to avoid conflicts e.g. using a field for a solar farm or habitat creation / enhancement.
 - sites could be used for both setting up a solar farm and delivering BNG with public access allowed on parts of the site. This is a viable model since the solar farm itself will have some BNG demand.
- Explore emerging markets in addition to BNG (see image 1).
- Stakeholder training and engagement.

Further reading / useful resources

- UK Government guidance – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-finance>
- Green Finance Institute – <https://www.greenfinanceinstitute.com/>
- Good Finance - <https://www.goodfinance.org.uk/understanding-social-investment>
- Global Impact Investing Network - <https://thegiin.org/impact-investing/need-to-know/#what-is-impact-investing>
- Big Society Capital - <https://bigsocietycapital.com/latest/uk-social-impact-investment-market-swells-to-a-record-64-billion-in-year-of-the-pandemic/>
- Planning Advisory Service BNG FAQs - <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/environment/biodiversity-net-gain-local-authorities/biodiversity-net-gain-faqs>
- [A guide to setting up an Urban Habitat Bank](#)

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Appendix 2

Summary of examples of two operating models

City of Doncaster's in-house experience

Doncaster identified that they had a field of wheat in their ownership and in [July 2023 put a principle to cabinet of using the site for BNG delivery](#). In Sept 2023 they started habitat improvement and planting finished in Jan 2025. In [Nov 2025 they put a report to cabinet to decide what to charge for their BNG units](#).

They considered an arms-length structure but have decided on an in-house structure to avoid additional complexity, the need for directors, constituting and the scale at which they may operate. This might be their only site. They have a project manager role managing this at the Council and their operating model does not attract any surplus funds, only full cost recovery.

There is a conservation covenant through their neighbouring authority. The site generates 130 BNG units and they have assigned some of these to internal council teams to support development, the remainder will be sold and they anticipate selling these at £21,000 per unit.

Plymouth City Council's arms-length experience

Finance Earth has supported a wide range of local authorities, private companies, charities (particularly Wildlife Trusts) and farmers to explore the opportunity for Biodiversity Net Gain and "Habitat Banking". The most advanced Local Authority example is that of Plymouth City Council (PCC), exploring a variety of natural capital opportunities, and the setup of different operating structures and vehicles to operationalise nature recovery and net zero plans.

Launched a natural capital operating vehicle (arms-length company) [Ocean City Nature](#) in 2023, and earlier this year opened their habitat banking vehicle Ocean City Biodiversity with an initial [£500k investment from the council supporting initial habitat sites](#). So far PCC has issued 12 BNG quotes to potential buyers receiving substantial interest.

Another example of an arms-length HBV is [Greater Manchester Environment Trust](#).

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Appendix 3

Estimation of BNG units which could have been purchased by developments from within BCP had there been a local supply 01/02/24 – 06/10/25

Units bought so far (outside LPA area)			
Habitat purchased	Number of units	Distinctiveness	
10.74	Other neutral grassland	Medium	
1.95	Other lowland meadow	High	
0.14	Mixed scrub	Medium	
0.09	Hedgerow	Medium	
Calculating number of units that could have been purchased from BCP instead and indicative prices:			
Habitats required	Number of units	Distinctiveness	Price if purchased in LPA area
Individual trees or higher distinctiveness	1.35	Medium	£43,498.35
Other neutral grassland or higher distinctiveness	1.66	Medium	£42,788.16
Woodland or higher distinctiveness	0.36	Medium	£13,192.56
Any habitat units to offset low distinctiveness habitats	3.33	Low	£85,824.08
Hedgerow	0.07	Medium	£1,804.11
Total	6.77		£187,107.26

*Unit prices based on those quoted for England (South) in the Biodiversity Units UK Pricing Report June 2025

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Appendix 4

Potential BCP Council-owned BNG supply sites

Finance Earth have assisted in modelling the delivery of BNG at three sites across the conurbation, offering improvements in access and the provision of nature as part of the Stour Valley (a strategically important area), as well as the opportunity to create exemplary nature reserves. As well as conservation work, this could include information signage, art and high-quality landscaping.

Criteria to create sites with a high potential for nature value and therefore high BNG impact, potential community benefits, distribution of sites, viability and habitat make-up were used to identify three sites:

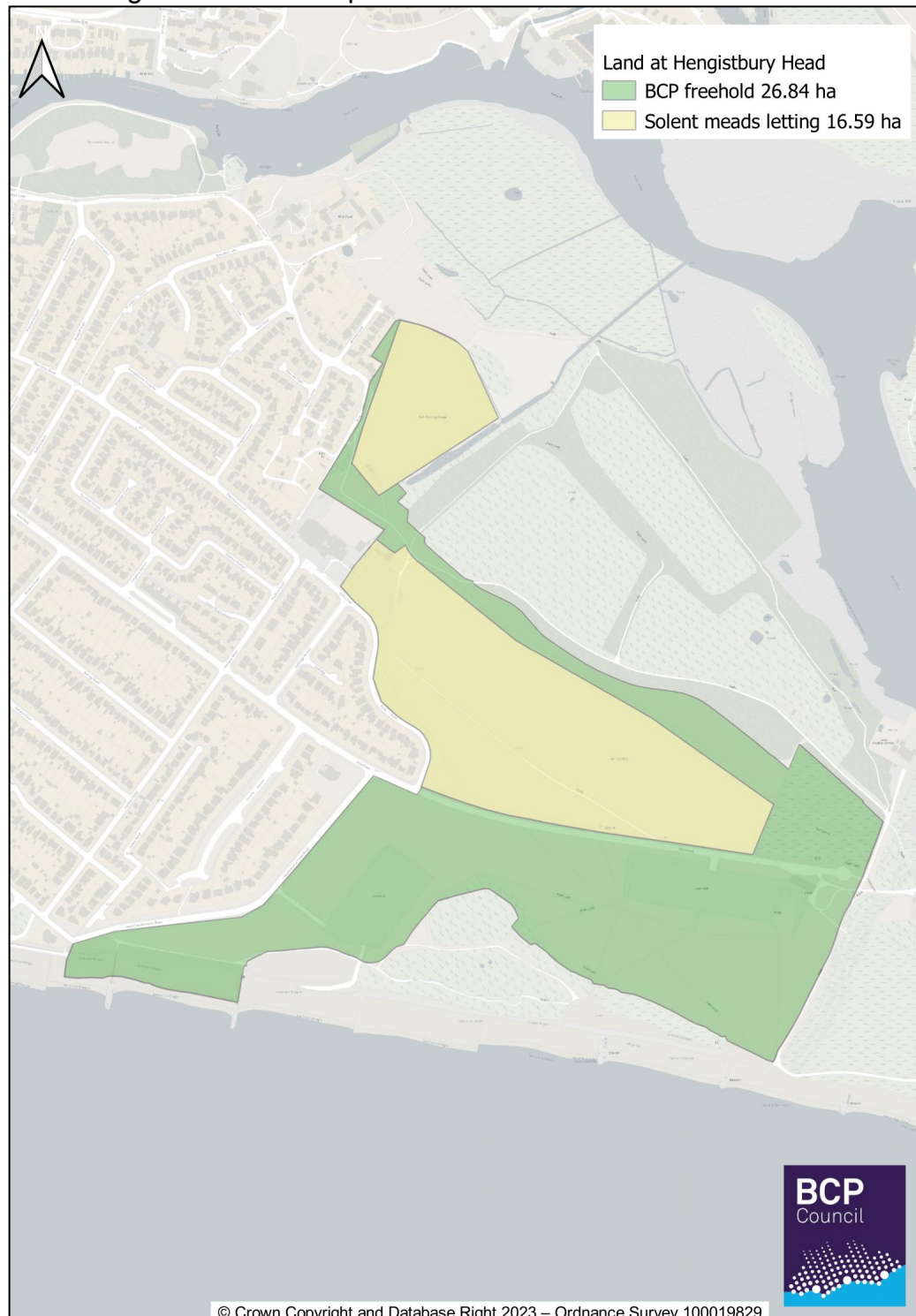
1. Erlin Farm: A 14ha site that was previously tenanted by a farmer and is now grazed by cattle managed by the council. The site abuts the River Stour, north of Muscliff, close to the airport. 83 BNG units could be generated, including hedgerow and watercourse units. Because the council owns and manages the site, few issues are forecast with designing improvements and bringing forward this site as a BNG supply site as soon as council processes allow.
2. Millhams Mead: A 24ha Local Nature Reserve where significant habitat improvements are possible. 79 BNG units could be generated, including hedgerow and watercourse units. Because the council already manages the site we envision no issues with designing improvements and bringing forward this site as a BNG supply site as soon as council processes allow.
3. Solent Meads: This site is part of the overall green space area west of Hengistbury Head. The area being considered for BNG is 31ha. Part of the BNG area is currently leased to a golf operator offering a beginner course, driving range and café. Current rent is £39,213 paid to the council per annum by the operator. The lease is due for renewal in Nov 2026 and there is no option to allow the lease to roll over, a full procurement exercise will be needed should the council wish to retain an external golf operator.

There is no immediate closure of the golf facility, with a year remaining on the lease agreement. Should the whole site be made available for BNG it could generate 94 BNG units, including hedgerow units. However, options for future use of the site need to be considered so this is the estimated maximum figure and may be less depending on future recommendations.

BCP Council will engage local people in the future use of the Solent Meads green space in Spring 2026 as it seeks to make improvements to support nature recovery, as well as ensuring people can spend time in, and have contact with, nature. Potentially opening this site to a broader range of the public could help to relieve pressure on Hengistbury Head and other high visitor areas whilst also

making real improvements for wildlife. This could include some golf provision run in house or for the whole site to be incorporated within the existing nature reserve with improved facilities and cafe for visitors.

Residents will be asked how they want to use this area in the future, including the type of facilities, activities and potential opportunities. The area will remain as green space and all options for the future use for the land are based on supporting nature and providing access for people in a sustainable manner, not for building or urban development.



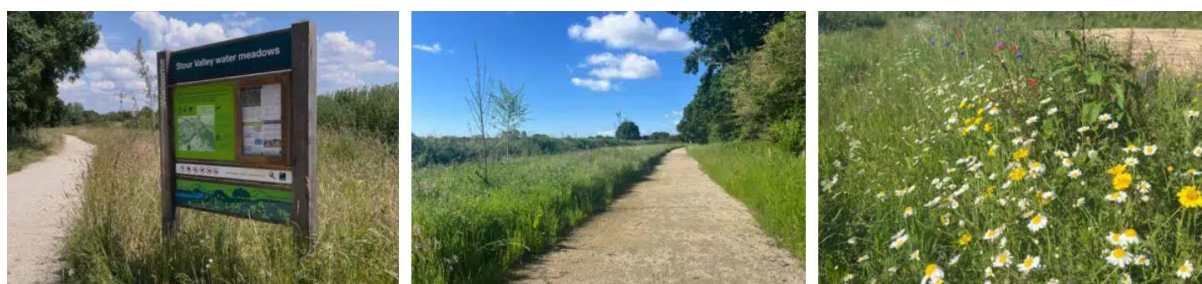
Other potential future opportunities, not currently in scope

Land at Upton Country Park and Merley Hall Farm (both owned by BCP Council) was also considered for supplying BNG units. Due to existing complications e.g. lease arrangements and strategic site management, these sites have not been considered for the purpose of presenting a viable investment case.

Another option is to consider purchasing land for the purpose of supplying BNG units. Also to explore the use of other sites the Council owns. Any future proposals would consider resident and stakeholder feedback and be taken through the appropriate democratic process.

Potential changes to BNG supply sites

Examples from Stour Valley water meadows showing signage/information boards, new pathways and improved grassland:



Examples from Upton Country Park showing soft landscaping such as shrub and tree planting:



Other examples:



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Appendix 5

Detailed risks, issues and benefits of each approach

	1. Arms-length	2. In-house	3. Stepped
General	<p>Can generate surplus funds for additional improvements to BCP's green infrastructure.</p> <p>Greater commercial flexibility and credibility with private actors.</p> <p>Off balance sheet operations (being on the balance sheet of the SPV, not BCP itself) reduce risk.</p> <p>Could raise private capital if desired.</p>	<p>Operated site by site.</p> <p>Risk for the council is low.</p> <p>Costs are relatively low.</p> <p>Direct council control over all decisions.</p>	<p>BCP able to immediately begin habitat creation at a selected site.</p> <p>Allows habitat investment within BCP's LPA area to support planning applications, while continuing to explore an arms-length approach and learning from the in-house BNG supply site.</p>
Financial risk before revenue income becomes fully realised	<p>Higher upfront setup costs and ongoing operational costs until revenue streams established.</p> <p>Financial risk is fully limited to BCP's investment only.</p>	<p>Lower financial exposure as costs committed site-by-site based on confirmed demand.</p> <p>Risk sits on BCP Council's balance sheet.</p>	<p>Minimal initial risk exposure while building market understanding and operational capability.</p> <p>As complexity builds, option to move this off-balance sheet.</p>
Commercial activity	<p>External organisation can conduct all relevant trading activity.</p> <p>Corporation tax payable on any profits generated.</p>	<p>BCP Council must demonstrate that it is acting in alignment to the Localism Act 4(2) which restricts local authority trading when not through a company.</p> <p>The vehicle must regularly review pricing to ensure it neither undercuts the market, nor charges beyond its reasonable cost base (to not generate a surplus). There are means to mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>Surplus restrictions can be managed, mitigating some of the challenges faced through annual price and cost reviews by a sufficiently equipped consultant.</p> <p>Over time the arms-length approach provides a means to pursue wider revenue models for BCP and its nature recovery.</p>

Resource and experience needed	Requires input from legal and finance teams at point of establishment. If a decision is made to stop operating, legal involvement will be required to address legal requirements of the conservation covenant. Very comparable staff needs over time to the in-house approach, although some greater flexibility	Lower specialist resource requirement initially. Over time, very similar staffing arrangements to the arms-length approach.	Allows gradual capability building through pilot experience before full-scale operation. Allows for testing before embarking on the arms-length approach.
Potential conflict of interest	Separation from LPA reduces perceived conflicts of interest in the BNG market. Basic conflict management procedures required.	Material conflict with council acting as both LPA and BNG provider. Conflict management can be achieved but additional steps required to manage this (e.g. external pricing / marketing and audit / additional transparency measures).	Initial conflict of interest will need to be carefully managed, in line with option 2. This is then resolved once an arms-length organisation is established, operating as an independent entity.
Managing risks and project liability	Risk can be transferred to the separate entity with appropriate insurance and governance. Off balance sheet approach captures long term risk - liabilities / assets of the SPV not being on the balance sheet of the Council (only the investment in the SPV itself).	All risk sits with council. Ecological delivery failure impacts council directly. Mitigated by the relatively small scale of each site and total capital expense.	Limited risk exposure (due to scale) initially. Allows for learning before scaling up risk profile.
Internal / external control	Control through shareholding. Council must appoint directors (typically members of council staff).	Direct council control over habitat design, delivery, maintenance and unit sales through existing structures.	Council maintains direct control initially while building expertise for potential future arms-length approach, where directors will be appointed.
Ringfencing funds	Natural ringfencing as separate entity with dedicated purpose. Surplus protected for nature maintenance costs over project life.	Additional steps required to ringfence within council structures. Unable to operate on a commercial basis, likely reducing total funds in any case.	Phased approach allows access to ringfencing structure of an arms-length organisation after in-house phase.

Governance flexibility	More flexible governance allowing rapid commercial decisions and market responsiveness required to respond to BNG market demand.	Council must delegate responsibility to allow rapid commercial decision making by officers against pre agreed frameworks. Frameworks to be established.	Provides more direct insight in the short term that, with confidence, can be moved to an arms-length strategy over time.
Speed of delivery	Slower initial setup due to entity creation, legal structures, governance arrangements, bank accounts etc.	Faster initial delivery using existing council structures and approved CIL funding.	Fastest route to market - can commence immediately with approved CIL funding. Further investment in arms-length establishment contingent on success of the in-house arrangement.

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Appendix 6

Overview of delivery models in-house and arms-length

In-house

Governance

This will define what departments (or contractors) will lead the different aspects of BNG delivery and confirm procedures for oversight and decision making. This will include:

- 1) **Internal project board design and set up.** With responsibility for the habitat bank this is the core governance arrangement. This will need to include:
 - a. Who sits on the board
 - b. What decisions are delegated to the board / held at BCP Council level. (e.g. agreeing the sales of units, key thresholds, pricing, identifying new sites etc)
 - c. What decisions the board delegates down to officers
 - d. What decisions / actions will be outsourced to contractors
 - e. Roles within the board, frequency of meeting and relationships with other key stakeholders across the council
 - f. Frequency of reporting to Operations Directorate Management Team and / or Corporate Management Board
 - g. This process may also include setting an outline business plan to be signed off from time to time at a governance / council level
- 2) **Internal council financial governance.** This is needed to define how / what “financing” will be provided, and how cashflows will be managed. This will need to support / interact with the internal project board and in practice at least one representative may span both groups. Once the procedures have been established it may be dissolved and delivered by the main board and officers. This board will review all financial analysis and make ultimate decisions on how to proceed.
- 3) **Governance other**
 - a. Tax advice – to support tax teams on the receipt of BNG and to ensure this is clear for the council to deliver
 - b. Conflicts management policy
 - c. Ensure that BNG delivery remains in line with cost recovery as required by the Localism Act 2011

Operational

- 1) Identification and assessment of potential sites
 - a. Assess council-owned landholdings for suitability
 - b. Carry out baseline habitat surveys
 - c. Intervention mapping and detailed costings
 - d. Comparative assessment and shortlisting / selection
- 2) Financial planning and risk management
 - a. Suitable market research to support decision making (e.g. demand mapping)
 - b. Develop a suitable financial model for project economics: capital costs, long term management costs and pricing of units
 - c. Carry out a financial risk assessment
 - d. Seek financial sign off to proceed

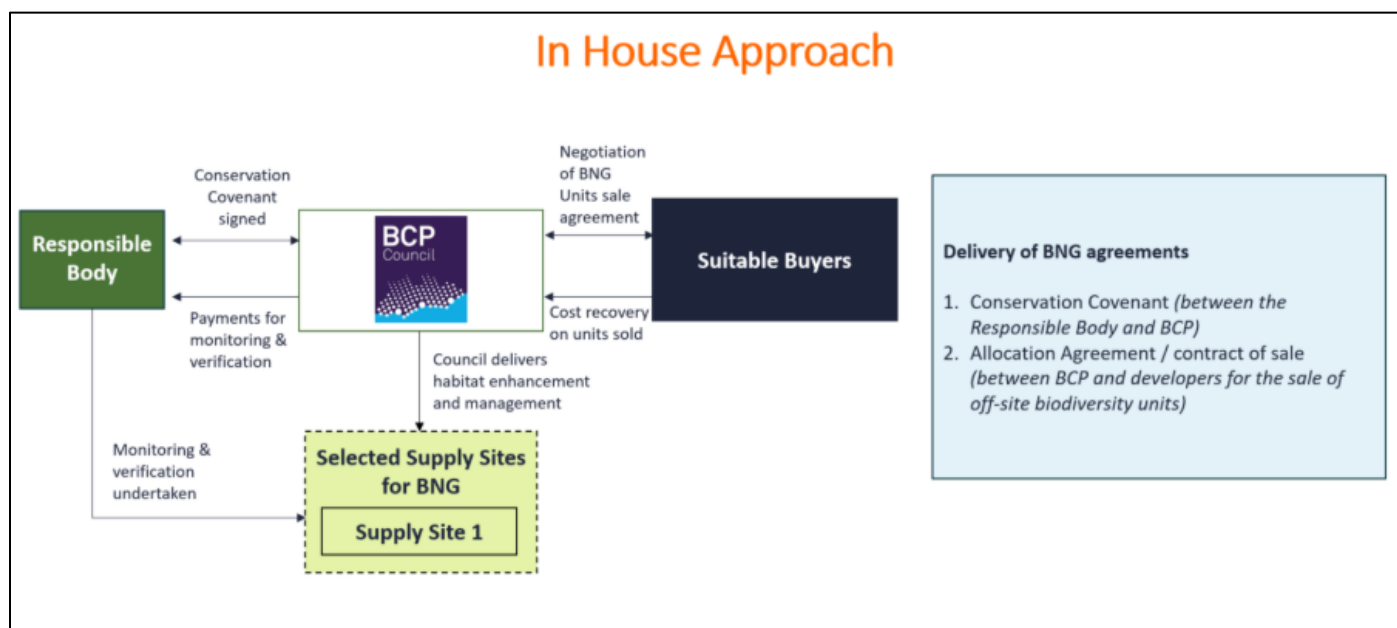
- 3) Preparation of Suitable Sites
 - a. Commission the creation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)
 - b. Identify a Responsible Body to partner with to deliver a conservation covenant
 - c. Final sign off on documentation prior to commitment
- 4) Confirm long term treatment of biodiversity units with board
 - a. Including a treasury management function
- 5) Final council Approval
- 6) Establish a Conversation Covenant
- 7) Register the site on Biodiversity Gain Site Register
- 8) Allocate units to target developments

Additional

Every year it will be required that a step is taken to review and audit costs and potentially revise the unit price to include inflation.

Illustration of an in-house approach produced by Finance Earth

This outlines how habitat restoration and sale of BNG units can be undertaken without the use of an SPV.



Arms-length

Governance

- 1) SPV design
 - a. Confirm SPV legal and corporate structure (options may include Company Limited by Guarantee, Company Limited by Shares etc)
 - b. Confirm key legal agreements and contracts required for establishment
 - c. Confirm tax implications for the new company
 - d. Confirm whether key legal, finance and accounting services will be outsourced or undertaken by council teams
 - e. Confirm insurances required such as, D&O insurances
 - f. Confirm key Director memberships
 - g. Review costs of set up and management
 - h. Appoint legal and tax advisors as and if required
- 2) SPV establishment
 - a. Appoint directors drawn from officers and/or members
 - b. Adopt Articles of Association and a Member Agreement defining purpose, delegations, and reinvestment policy
 - c. Register with Companies House
 - d. Set up an operationalise company bank account
 - e. Secure initial council seed funding to deliver first habitat projects before unit sales commence.
 - f. Register with HMRC – VAT and corporation tax
- 3) Board and oversight
 - a. Appoint the board with ecological, finance, and governance expertise
 - b. Define reserved matters for council approval and clear reporting to BCP Council
 - c. Approve an initial business plan
- 4) Financial governance
 - a. Maintain separate accounts and a ring-fenced maintenance account for 30-year management obligations
 - b. Reinvest any surpluses into local nature recovery and climate-resilience projects

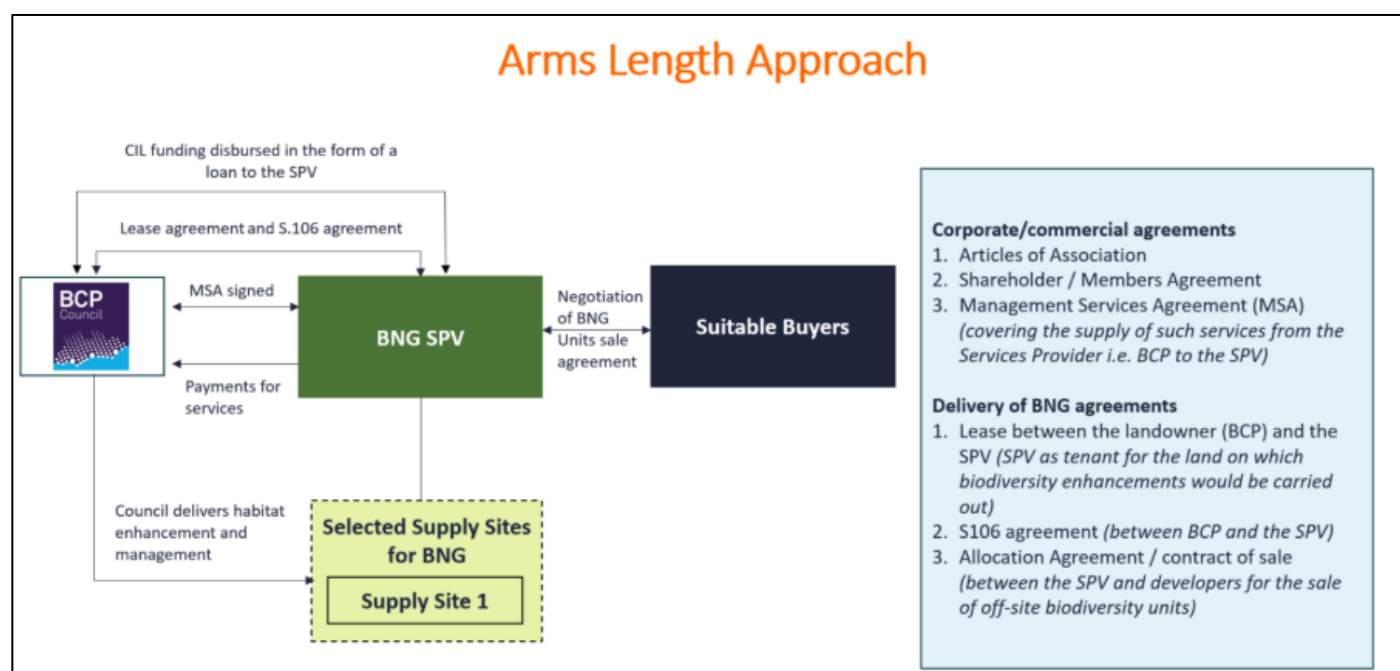
Operational

- 1) Identification and assessment of potential sites
 - a. Assess council-owned landholdings for suitability
 - b. Conduct baseline habitat surveys
 - c. Intervention mapping and detailed costings
 - d. Comparative assessment and shortlisting / selection
- 2) Financial planning and risk management
 - a. Suitable market research to support decision making (e.g. demand mapping)
 - b. Develop a suitable financial model for project economics: capital costs, long term management costs and pricing of units
 - c. Conduct a financial risk assessment
 - d. Seek financial sign off to proceed
- 3) Preparation of suitable sites
 - a. Commission the creation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)
 - b. Final sign off on documentation prior to commitment
- 4) Prepare key draft legal agreements

- a. Management services agreement between the council and the arms-length company to conduct habitat restoration and maintenance activities on the sites
 - b. Lease agreement between the council and arms-length company
 - c. S106 Agreement between the council and arms-length company
 - d. Sales and transaction agreement between the buyer and HBV
- 5) Final council approval
 - a. Publish public notice
 - 6) Enter into key legal agreements
 - 7) Register the site on biodiversity gain sites register
 - 8) Allocate units to target developments
 - 9) Review
 - a. Hold regular board meetings to review the company business plan, financial risk, forward-looking strategy

Illustration of an arms-Length approach produced by Finance Earth

This outlines how an arms-length HBV may be structured to manage habitat banks on council-owned land.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Date: 03 December 2025
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
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Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Martin,

Consultation on BCP approach to statutory Biodiversity Net Gain(BNG) provision

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

It is not within Natural England's remit to advise on the Councils financial arrangements although I observe these are well set out in the reports.

There are significant benefits to local residents, biodiversity enhancement and local developers in making provision for BNG credits within the Council area.

Local residents will realise directly an uplift in biodiversity and the development community will gain more rapid planning permissions as appropriate local credits can be secured directly through BCP as a supplier and of course a lower credit price.

I am familiar with the three local sites, Solent meads, Erlin farm and Millhams Mead and can confirm that they will each benefit from the approach you have outlined. Solent Mead in particular will provide opportunities for the functional restoration of floodplain meadow habitat which will support Christchurch Harbour SSSI as well as spreading the visitor load on Hengistbury Head.

Bringing these areas into positive management for biodiversity is fully in accordance with national and local nature recovery aims and for a constrained authority such as BCP is consistent with the Councils Nature Towns commitment.

The proposal is timely in respect of the outcomes set out in Natural England's newly launched Strategy. In particular the following outcomes : *Recovering nature*, *Building better places* and *Improving health and wellbeing*.

These three initial locations are well located across BCP both for sustainable public access and to encourage better understanding of amongst local residents of the effects of climate change on the natural environment and the direct local actions they can take to support climate adaptation through urban greening.

Natural England advise the Council that in bringing forward this proposal it will be need to be mindful of the need to have clearly set out land use functions if it brings forwards

proposals to layer BNG with other mitigation schemes to ensure the delivery of all aspects funded.

I trust this advice will be of assistance to the Council.

Yours sincerely

Nick Squirrell
Senior Officer Conservation and Planning
Dorset Team
Wessex Area Team
Natural England
Mob: 07766 133697
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CABINET



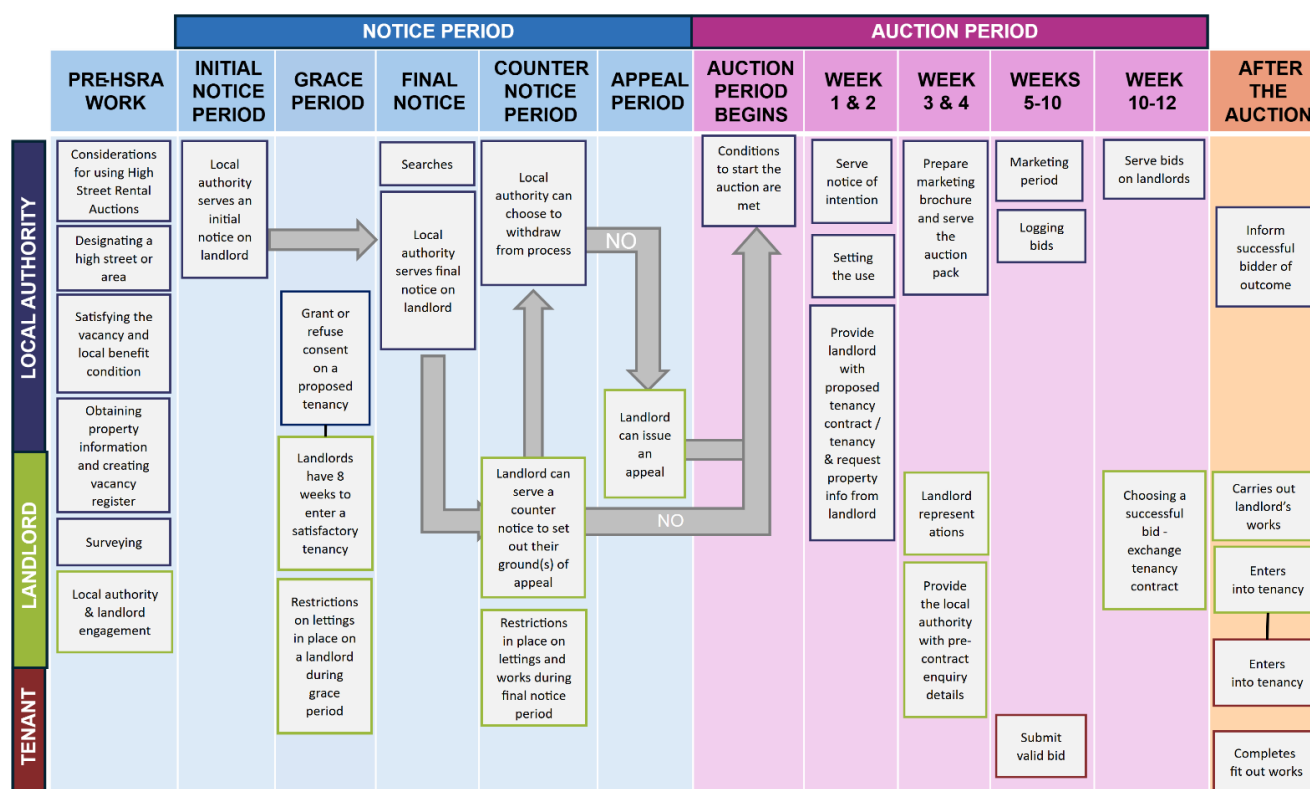
Report subject	Designation of High Street Rental Auction area for Bournemouth town centre
Meeting date	17 December 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>High Street Rental Auctions, as part of new government legislation, will enhance the council's ability to bring long-term vacant properties on the high-street back in to use via an auction process.</p> <p>The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 gives the Authority the power to go ahead with the High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) a new permissive power. As per the guidance, once the Authority has designated specific streets or areas as HSRA areas (following a mandatory 28 day consultation) which satisfy the test that the area is important to the local economy due to a concentration of high street uses. The designation is registered as a local land charge.</p> <p>The Authority can then only use the powers in that area designated. This does not stop more areas being designated later provided they also meet the test and can be funded.</p> <p>BCP Council undertook a public consultation to gauge opinions from key stakeholders over the required period of 28 days during the summer of 2025. The results highlighted a 75% approval for the programme. There is clearly a local desire for HSRAs to be implemented and bring new life to the high street.</p> <p>The next step in the process is for Cabinet to designate the high streets within Bournemouth town centre. Without this, the power of HSRAs cannot be implemented.</p> <p>It should be noted that the HSRA process is multi-stage and may take several months from designation to the first auction, due to statutory notice periods and preparatory work.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Cabinet approves the designation of the HSRA area for Bournemouth town centre (see map in paragraph 4). (b) Cabinet agrees to delegate approval to the Chief Operations Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial

	<p>Operations to consider future designated areas or HSRAs subject to adhering to the consultation requirements.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Pre-HSRA work as defined by MHCLG requires the Local Authority to designate the high street before any auction notice can be served. (b) The recent HSRA public consultation on the proposed designated area resulted in an overall favourability of 75% when asked 'Do you agree or disagree with the proposed area, shown in the map.'? (c) The HSRA programme supports the council's Corporate Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revitalising and reinventing high streets and local centres (d) The HSRA programme supports the council's High Street and District Centre Strategy: (e) Reimagining High Streets (f) Encouraging local investment (g) Transforming empty buildings (h) Improving the public realm (i) Celebrating pride in local communities (j) Supporting high street businesses (k) Although the vacancy rate by unit in Bournemouth town centre is roughly in line with national averages at 20%, there is clearly a great potential for HSRAs to engage landlords to fill those vacant units. (l) Bournemouth town centre continues to generate positive headlines, with examples including the successful openings of The Ivy and The Botanist, the collaborative Citizens' Panel, and the ongoing transformation of Bobby's, among other initiatives. Introducing HSRAs will build on this momentum and further revitalise the area.

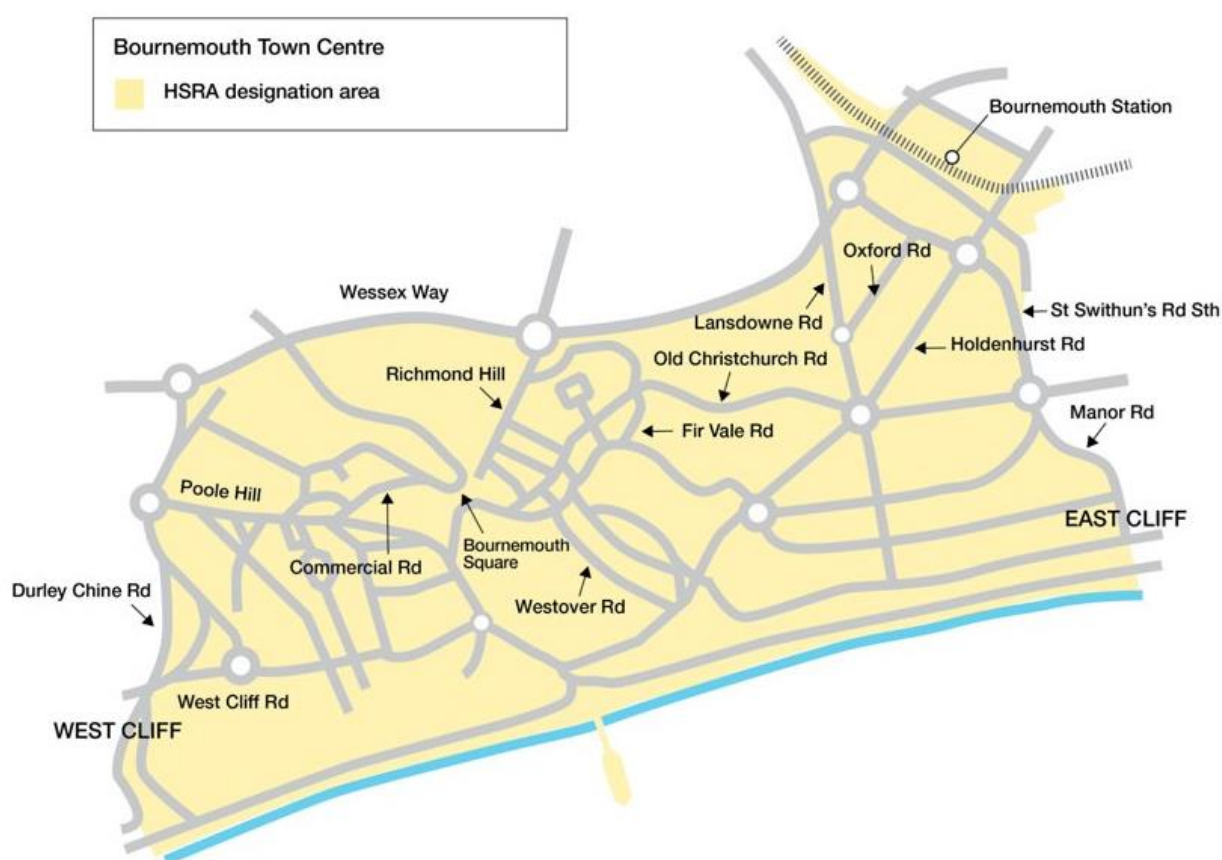
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Herrett, Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Charles Fynn, Economic Development Officer for Bournemouth
Wards	Bournemouth Central;
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. HSRAs were introduced in December 2024 as part of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 as a tool to see local authorities working proactively with landlords to encourage vibrant and successful high streets.
2. BCP Council is one of the first councils to engage with the Government to be an early adopter of the HSRA legislation. Early adopters can act as champions to encourage greater take up of HSRAs by other local authorities. They can also perform an advisory role to help shape the guidance to improve the way in which the HSRAs can be delivered going forward. By joining the HSRA Programme, BCP Council is acting in an advisory role as a critical friend and will continue to support the government to refine the HSRA process.
3. The process flow chart as is as follows. This Cabinet Report concerns the Pre-HSRA Work section, specifically: **Designating a high street or area.**



4. Funding for a Vacancy Register has been secured from MHCLG following the procurement of an external consultant. The purpose of the Vacancy Register is to understand the extent of vacant units in the proposed designated area of Bournemouth town centre.
5. Properties eligible for HSRAs must have been vacant for at least 12 months (or 366 days within 24 months) with no substantial, sustained occupation, and be deemed by BCP Council to provide a positive economic, social, or environmental benefit if occupied for a suitable high-street use. The Vacancy Register will identify the properties fitting these criteria in the town centre.
6. Following ODR approval, consultation for the high street designation opened on 15 July 2025 and closed on 12 August 2025. Below is a copy of the map used in the consultation.



7. HSRAs are not limited to Bournemouth town centre. There is potential for this to be rolled out to any town and district centre across BCP. Bournemouth is serving as a Pilot for the council's HSR programme.

Options Appraisal

8. Designate the area in Bournemouth town centre and delegate authority for future designations, including variations to existing designations. This is the preferred option as it is a requirement of the pre-HSRA work before any notices can be served on landlords. Delegating authority will allow an efficient rollout of the legislation to other areas across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole if required. As with

Bournemouth, an Officer Decision Record will be required to begin the consultation phase for any other location that is considered.

9. Refuse to designate the area of Bournemouth town centre could result in reputational damage to BCP Council and negative publicity if it is not seen to be taking advantage of the opportunity to revitalise the high street and committing to its Corporate and High Street & District Centre strategies.
10. Refusal to delegate authority for future designations, including variations to existing designations would significantly slow down the process of rolling out the programme to other areas in BCP and in responding to the situation on the ground in any existing designated areas and would require more officer and council resourcing by needing to go through a more lengthy process to seek the necessary approvals.

Summary of financial implications

11. The establishment of the vacancy register is wholly funded from the grant received from MHCLG. There is, therefore, no immediate financial impact of designating the area for High Street Rental Auctions (HSRA).
12. Council resourcing to manage the process of the HSRA programme is an ongoing financial implication and one which will include various teams including Economic Development, Planning, Legal, Estates and Facilities Management. The resourcing will likely include stakeholder meetings, landlord engagement, serving auction notices, surveying properties (if required), and holding the auction itself (either in-house or outsourcing). The extent of the resourcing and costs is entirely at the council's discretion and are not an obligation or required commitment as a result of this decision.
13. For every high street rental auction undertaken, a non-ringfenced revenue grant of up to £5,223 is available under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 to cover costs such as administering and managing the auction, marketing, issuing legal notices, and gaining property access. These funds are otherwise known as the 'new burdens payments' - the deadline of which to apply is 14 January 2028.
14. Whilst there are financial implications (detailed above), the guidance for HSRAs recommends engaging with landlords informally wherever possible. This is very much part of the day-to-day officer workload and not something that requires significant resourcing. These engagements will be strengthened following the designation of the area. It sends a clear message that BCP Council has the power to use the full scope of the legislation should it become necessary.

Summary of legal implications

15. Part 10 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 set out the statutory framework to end the rental auction of vacant high-street premises. The Act and other non-statutory guidance sets out the process to be followed by the Council for the rental auction of vacant units.
16. Section 191 of the Act gives the Council the authority to designate high streets and town centres to which these powers should apply. The area within a town centre may be designated if the built environment of the area is characterised principally by a network of streets and the Council considers that the area is important to the local economy because of a concentration of high-street uses of premises in the area.

17. Section 191(6) of the Act requires that such a designation shall be entered as a Local Land Charge, putting any potential purchasers of a property within the designated area on notice of the designation.
18. There are legal implications in relation to the preparation of legal documentation for the auction and the letting of the properties which will fall on the Council. MHCLG has produced a toolkit of document templates to aid this process.
19. It should be noted that Section 204 of the Act provides that, whilst the Council has the power to enter into lease agreements using this process, this has the effect of binding the owner of the property (as landlord) to the lease agreement rather than the Council itself.

Summary of human resources implications

20. There are no direct HR implications arising from this decision. The project will be delivered using existing council resources and day-to-day operational support within current staffing levels. No additional recruitment or changes to employment terms will be required. All staff involved in the delivery of the project will be appropriately briefed by lead officer to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities.

Summary of sustainability impact

21. In line with the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency, declared in 2019, reuse of vacant buildings over the construction of new buildings is favourable due to the associated carbon emissions and potential loss of green areas (in some cases) of construction. Bringing vacant buildings back into use also offers the opportunity for updates to be made to the heating and cooling installations and energy efficiency measures, which should further reduce associated emissions from implemented technology. The reuse of vacant buildings will also contribute towards a sense of community within the town centre, encouraging more social cohesion and discouraging antisocial behaviour, which will have long term sustainable impacts for the area. This final point could be further enhanced by the support of new sustainable businesses to use these premises.

Summary of public health implications

22. Bringing vacant buildings back in to use has a significant benefit to public wellbeing as well as the local economy and job creation. The public will benefit from enhanced perception of Bournemouth town centre and the availability of retail, hospitality and leisure. A reduction in vacant properties can also serve as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour.

Summary of equality implications

23. The decision to designate the area for High Street Rental Auctions is an enabling measure only. It does not in itself alter service delivery or impact individuals with protected characteristics. There are wider discussions and suitability checks that will take place at the next stage of the process when engaging with landlords, at which point a comprehensive EIA will be completed. See appendix for the current draft of the EIA Conversation Screening Tool.

24. HSRAs may present an opportunity to encourage more diverse business variety (e.g. charity shops, community organisations and business start ups) to bid for vacant units in Bournemouth town centre.

Summary of risk assessment

25. By designating the area of Bournemouth town centre, there is a risk of public expectation of BCP Council to immediately begin serving notices on landlords and filling empty units with new tenants. The reality is that this is a complex process, which is likely to take some time – beginning with landlord engagement to first assess their willingness to find a tenant for their property. These risks can be mitigated through council communications about the HSRA programme. Longer term, however, the public will expect to see results of its commitment to HSRAs.
26. Perception of favouritism for Bournemouth town centre is a potential risk considering there may be similar requirements in Christchurch and Poole. Council communications can mitigate this by making it clear that the programme can be implemented anywhere across BCP however as this is new legislation it would be sensible to assess its impact on Bournemouth town centre before looking elsewhere.
27. There is a general risk of worsening relationships with local landlords as some have already expressed the view that this legislation is not welcome. This risk will be mitigated by beginning with informal landlord engagements to better understand the circumstances behind their vacant unit and offer support to find a tenant. The process of an auction should be seen as the option of last resort if there is an unwillingness to work with the council to resolve the situation.

Background papers

- HSRA BCP Consultation - final report
- Published works
- Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

Appendices

- None

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CABINET FORWARD PLAN – 1 JANUARY 2026 TO 30 APRIL 2026

(PUBLICATION DATE – 09 December 2025)



What is the subject?	What is the purpose of the issue?	Is this a Key Decision?	Decision Maker and Due Date	Wards	Who are the key stakeholders to be consulted before the decision is made?	What is the consultation process and period	Officer writing the report	Is the report likely to be considered in private (i.e., it contains confidential or exempt information)?
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update		No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025				Adam Richens	
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Expenditure Forecast	To seek approval for the overspend on the DSG for 2025/26	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the high needs block issue at the November 2025 meeting.	n/a	Nicola Webb	Open
Corporate Performance Report - Q2	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open

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Waste Strategy for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	To approve the ambitions, principles and a delivery framework to manage waste produced from homes and businesses across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole for the next 10 years.	Yes	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 19 Nov 2025 Cabinet 17 Dec 2025 Council 24 Feb 2026	All Wards	Residents, businesses, special interest groups,		Georgina Fry	Open
Statutory Duty to Biodiversity	To report on our statutory duty to biodiversity and approve an action plan to support nature recovery	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Martin Whitchurch	Open
Improving biodiversity in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	To recommend options for improving nature through use of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	All Wards			Ruth Wharton, Martin Whitchurch	Open

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Designation of High Street Rental Auction area for Bournemouth town centre	To seek approval from Cabinet to designate the area in Bournemouth town centre for the High Street Rental Auction (HSRA) Programme.	No	Cabinet 17 Dec 2025	Bournemouth Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher Education – BU, AUB, BPC, HSU - Agents - Bournemouth Property Association - Poole Property Club - Developers - Landlords - BIDs – TC, Coastal, Christchurch, Poole - DMB and BAHA - Bournemouth Chamber - Dorset Chamber - BH Live - Police/PCC 	EHQ webpage and an online form asking agreement with the proposed area and any comments on the area. Respondent type was also collected, together with equalities questions. The consultation stage is now complete. The period opened on 15 July 2025 and closed on 12 August 2025.	Charles Fynn	Open

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Council Tax Base	To consider the Council Tax Base report		Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards			Adam Richens	Open
Housing and Property Compliance Update (Housing Revenue Account)	To provide information on how the council is meeting its responsibilities in ensuring that all council housing is managed to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.	No	Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and residents panels.	Matti Raudsepp	Open
Regeneration Progress Report	This report advises Cabinet on progress on the Holes Bay, Poole Dolphin Leisure Centre, Bournemouth International Centre and Towns Fund projects.	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 5 Jan 2026 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Hamworthy; Poole Town			Emily Cockle	Open

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Investment & Development Directorate - Regeneration Programme	To provide a bi-annual update on the progress of the Council's regeneration programme	No	Overview and Scrutiny Board 5 Jan 2026 Cabinet 14 Jan 2026	All Wards			Amena Matin, Jonathan Thornton	Open
Budget Monitoring 2025-26 at Quarter three	To update Cabinet on the financial position of the council.	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	N/a	N/a	Adam Richens	Open
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget setting 2026-27	To seek approval for rent and other charges to tenants and leaseholders for 2026-27 and proposed expenditure on the repair and maintenance of council homes.	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings and panels	Kelly Deane	Open

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BCP Homes Performance	To provide quarterly performance to Cabinet to provide assurance that the management of council homes is effective	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Council tenants and leaseholders BCP Homes Advisory Board	Through established meetings	Kelly Deane	Open
Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy 2025 to 2035	To introduce the Supported & Specialist Housing Strategy for the next 10 years	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Experts by experience, Adults Social Care, Childrens Social Care, Adults Commissioning, Childrens Commissioning, NHS Dorset, Dorset Healthcare, Local Registered Providers	Workshops and meetings Autumn 2025	m	Open

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Bournemouth Development Company: Winter Gardens Site Development Plan	To present Cabinet with a new Site Development Plan for the Winter Gardens.	Yes	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	Bournemouth Central			Rob Dunford	Open
Revised Local Validation Checklist	To provide an update the clear list of required documents and plans required to validate a planning application	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026		agents/ developers and officers	28 days. now completed.	Katie Herrington	Open

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Bus Subsidy Review	To consider the outcome of a full network review of the council's subsidised local bus services and to recommend changes to Council to support budget setting for 2026/27 as well as informing the Medium Term Financial Plan.	Yes	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026 Council 24 Feb 2026	All Wards	Bus Passengers Bus Passenger Representative Organisations (including groups representing older people and people with disabilities) Schools Bus Operators Neighbouring authorities	Public consultation 16 June to 27 July 2025. On-line plus on-bus paper surveys.	John McVey, Richard Pincroft	Open
School Admissions Arrangements 2027/28	Determination of the arrangements and proposed reduction of PAN for Burton Primary School following consultation.	No	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 Jan 2026 Cabinet 4 Feb 2026	All Wards	Public consultation	The proposal is detailed publicly from Monday 10 November 2025 until Monday 22 December 2025	Tanya Smith	Open

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Christchurch Business Improvement District	To consider the report	No	Cabinet 4 Feb 2026					Fully Exempt
Corporate Performance Report - Q3	Progress update on performance against key measures in the Corporate Strategy.	No	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards	n/a	n/a	Isla Reynolds	Open
The development of a framework of registered housing providers (RPs) to deliver affordable housing using BCP sites		Yes	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards			Kerry-Marie Ruff	

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Water Safety Framework	The Water Safety framework's aim is to provide a clear approach to water safety for the prevention of drowning across the BCP Council conurbation	No	Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards			Amanda Barrie, Helen Wildman	Open
Children's Services Capital Strategy Report 2026-2028	The purpose is to update members of capital spend in the 2025/26 financial year and set out capital spending priorities for the next 3 years.	No	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 Jan 2026 Cabinet 4 Mar 2026	All Wards			Jason Moors	Open
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031	To inform on the impact of the Strategy since 2021, propose new Strategy and agree the related Delivery Plan	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25 Feb 2026 Cabinet 1 Apr 2026	All Wards			Rachel Stewart	Open

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Housing Strategy Review	To provide an annual update about the delivery of the BCP Housing Strategy 2021-2027	No	Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20 May 2026 Cabinet 24 Jun 2026	All Wards			Rachel Stewart	Open
Special School Funding	It is recommended to: - Note the contents of this report - Agree for this piece of work to proceed as noted and be further considered with financial modelling available	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards				Open

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DfE SEND review next steps	To consider the DfE review next steps	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed				Rachel Gravett, Shirley McGillick, Sharon Muldoon	Fully exempt
Children's Services Early Help Offer	Summary of findings and recommendations from an ongoing review of our current Early Help services	No	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards			Zafer Yilkan	Open
BCP Council Domestic Abuse Strategies	To gain agreement by Cabinet to publish the Prevention of Domestic Abuse Strategy, Safe Accommodation Strategy and the Perpetrator Strategy including delivery plans.	Yes	Cabinet Date to be confirmed	All Wards	People with lived experience, Health, Social Care, Police, third sector specialist organisations, Local Providers have all been consulted prior to the Public consultation.	Public consultation 09-03-25 to 28-04-25 O&S Safe Accommodation Working Group.	m	Open

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