

<p>What is being reviewed?</p>	<p>Highcliffe & Walkford Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>A report is being taken to Cabinet on 26 October 2022 in which a decision will be made on whether it can be approved to move forward to local referendum for residents to vote within the Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council area, on 15 December 2022.</p>
<p>What changes are being made?</p>	<p>This will be a new Neighbourhood Plan for the Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council area. There are more than 13,500 residents in the Highcliffe & Walkford area (2019 mid-year estimates).</p> <p>The Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council undertook a series of informal consultation events including an initial workshop in December 2019, a household survey in February 2020 with 162 surveys being complete, and a further round of consultation in November 2020 with 395 surveys being returned.</p> <p>Draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>The H&W Parish Council published their pre-submission plan for consultation between January – March 2021 and invited comments from residents and key stakeholders. BCP Council is a statutory consultee and provided a comprehensive response to the published pre-submission plan. All responses were assessed by the Parish Council and a consultation report dated June 2021 details how the responses have been considered and what action was taken. The Parish Council’s Consultation report dated June 2021 can be found here.</p> <p>In terms of equalities issues, the following are relevant to the neighbourhood plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Having good accessibility to green spaces to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing. ➤ Maintain wooded areas to preserve wildlife habitat and encourage people to engage with the natural environment, encourage informal interaction and to improve community cohesion. ➤ Revitalising the High Street to improve the condition of pavements and roads to reduce accidents, improve visibility for users including parents, young children and people with age related conditions. ➤ Improvements to the public realm in shopping areas to increase opportunities for the community to interact, reducing loneliness and improving wellbeing. ➤ Encourage night-time economy in the High Street, more outdoor seating to cafés, renovate, clean and paint shop fronts to improve community cohesion, reduce crime and fear of crime. ➤ Encourage people to walk by providing improved access for older users or those with limited mobility or a visual impairment, parents with children in buggies by providing smoother paths, better surfaces on slopes to the beach, benches and dropped kerbs. ➤ Safe well thought out cycling infrastructure to encourage a healthy commuting lifestyle, improve health and fitness, address obesity, reduce social inequalities and improve local air quality for those with life-limiting health conditions. ➤ New housing development to be designed to have higher accessibility standards, be adaptable to residents as they get older and their needs change, due to age and/or reduced mobility. ➤ New development to attain national space standards, include potential for study or homeworking spaces to reduce social inequality and improve outcomes for children. ➤ Safe and attractive public amenity spaces within housing areas to encourage children to play outside and interact informally with other children to improve self-esteem and build resilience. ➤ Resisting the loss of community buildings including community venues with cultural, healthcare, educational and learning facilities to retain and meet the needs of people with a particular faith or belief, young people, and those in social groups to maintain mental wellbeing, reduce isolation and improve community cohesion.

	<p>Draft Submission Plan</p> <p>Following the Parish Council's consultation activities, the draft submission plan and supporting documents were formally submitted to BCP Council in September 2021 for independent examination. BCP Council ran a six-week public consultation between 1 October – 12 November 2021. This involved notifying around 2,800 stakeholders on the planning policy database of their opportunity to have their say on the plan. The documents were uploaded onto the website, posters were produced and erected in public places around the Highcliffe & Walkford area. Hard copies of a questionnaire, the plan and supporting documentation were deposited in local libraries in Highcliffe & Christchurch Town centre.</p> <p>All key stakeholders on our planning policy database (which included residents, local organisations, including equalities groups, and statutory and non-statutory bodies) were consulted. Responses to this consultation were passed to an independent examiner who was procured by us to carry out an examination of the Neighbourhood Plan to determine whether it meets basic conditions and legal requirements including whether it is compatible with and does not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law).</p> <p>The responses received by BCP Council were passed directly to the examiner for consideration and for the purposes of examination only. They formed part of the examiner's decision-making and led to an examiner's report being issued in July 2022. This found that consultation activities were well managed and sufficiently thorough and that all relevant requirements for consultation set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 had been met.</p>
<p>Service Unit:</p>	<p>Planning Services – Planning Policy</p>
<p>Participants in the conversation:</p>	<p>Rebecca Landman Vicky Edmonds</p>
<p>Conversation date/s:</p>	<p>27 July 2022 and 10 August 2022</p>
<p>Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?</p>	<p>Yes, our planning policy database is comprehensive. Our adopted Statement of Community Involvement 2020 (SCI) sets out how BCP Council as the local planning authority will involve and engage with the community and other key stakeholders in the preparation of the Local Plan and other relevant planning documents, including neighbourhood plans. This is because planning policies will shape the future of the BCP area and determine where people live, work, shop, spend their leisure time, and how they travel around the area.</p> <p>The SCI sets out a wide range of specific consultation bodies and general consultation bodies, that the LPA must consult with, as required by the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. In addition, interested parties, residents and other groups and organisations can request to be added to our planning policy database to be kept informed of planning policy consultations. The database contains several equalities groups to ensure we notify a wide range of organisations or bodies representing those with protected characteristics. The database includes: Beaumont Society, Dorset Mental Health Forum, Bourne Free, Disability Wessex, Stonewall, Body Positive, Race Equality Council, DOTSS Disability, Diverse Abilities, Break Free Intercom Trust, Fawcett Society, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Pro-Disability, Help and Care, Care South, Bournemouth Interpreters Group and Access Dorset.</p>

Do different groups have different needs or experiences?

Yes, the groups with protected characteristics within the parish council and wider area will have different needs and experiences in terms of how future development proposals in the Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council area may impact them.

Using the Measurement Framework for Equality and Human Rights (2017) and the six areas of life or 'domains' some examples from the neighbourhood plan are provided to show how different groups' needs may be met:

Education – community facilities include schools and places of learning and participation in cultural activities/hobbies. Such local facilities at Highcliffe Library, Greystones Community Centre and Highcliffe Castle are highly valued by residents with over 45 groups meeting locally. This includes **youth groups including cubs, scouts and brownies, and societies, groups for women and men** aimed at teaching and improving their of skills. This will be able to continue as the neighbourhood plan policy HWNP9 seeks to resist the loss of community facilities as well as and improve existing community buildings. This will promote fulfillment in **educational achievement for young people** and improve social and employability skills in the longer term. For other groups with protected characteristics, community facilities can help meet needs for those in **maternity and postpartum to meet and learn in a similar social group**. Such facilities can enable a supportive environment and activities for those with **neurological or development conditions such as ADHD or learning disability**. Community facilities can also help people with **different sexual orientations or those actively going through gender reassignment** to get support in a safe place. Community facilities help those from **faith groups or older people's support groups including men-only groups**, to take part in inclusive activities suitable to their needs which in turn helps to relieve feelings of loneliness or isolation they may experience at home or in public places.

Work – improvements in transport infrastructure improves accessibility to places of work for local residents and this is supported by Policy HWNP7 which will see safe and accessible footpaths and cycleways provided. This will help increase choices made by **working age** residents to adopt a healthy lifestyle and/or choose a convenient commuting route either by walking or cycling. One of the impacts of a stand-alone policy which requires development to improve connectivity between places can help those with protected characteristics feel safe **particularly people of different faiths, and women**. If routes are direct, with plenty of natural surveillance, this can reduce crime and fear of crime and improve social inequality by providing affordable coherent, overlooked routes for people with protected characteristics.

Living standards – access to adequate flexible space and light at home has a direct effect on **all groups with protected characteristics – older people or disabled people** may be housebound and have no choice than to be at home for extended periods of time. **Newly formed families** may be burdened with debt and the high cost of living, people going through gender reassignment surgery or other medical procedures, other parts of community that rely on the sanctity of home to feel safe will benefit from Policy HWNP10, a design policy which requires national internal space standards, accessibility and adaptability in excess of standard building regulations, carbon reduction and energy efficient development. The policy also requires flexible spaces to enjoy hobbies or study, outdoor space, and development to be signed to enable places where residents can interact with neighbours.

Health – access to open space helps people connect with nature and affects physical and mental wellbeing. **Younger age groups** may have different expectations on how BCP develops compared to **older people**, for example having safe and accessible greenspaces to play in, safer walking and cycling routes to schools and other leisure facilities to allow for outdoor sports and leisure to become part of the routine of everyday life. Policies HWNP4, HWNP5, HWNP6 together recognise the important green spaces in the parish council area and protect them against inappropriate development. The health spectrum covers both flora, fauna, marine life, and **human health**. Strengthening biodiversity makes the environment more resilient to climate change which impacts on all species and the local community. Measures to improve adaptation to the changing climate are necessary to keep a community healthy. Heat affects residents differently depending on their stage of life and if they cannot regulate their body temperature including the **very young** and the **very old** . It could also affect those who are weakened by life limiting illness, **disability** or those with **certain religions** who are required to dress according to

	<p>their faith.</p> <p>justice and personal security – see below.</p> <p>participation. The High Street policies HWNP1 and HWNP2 and HWNP3 focus on helping local residents within all protected characteristic groups stay connected to their local environment. Shopping, eating out or going for a coffee can have a positive impact on reducing isolation for people living alone or for those with caring responsibilities or mobility issues. Increasing participation in everyday activities in a high quality and well cared for public place has a positive impact on mental health and can impart a stronger sense of belonging and care for that place and improve mental health. This may lead to more informal social interaction in shops, restaurants, cafes, and pubs and break down barriers and prejudice between different equalities groups including those of different genders, age, and mobility. Retaining the vitality of local centres will help to meet shopping needs locally and reduce car usage. Policies 1, 2 and 3 seek to protect and improve the vitality and viability of the local shopping environment including essential services and facilities held to reduce car journeys for all groups with protected characteristics including pregnancy, and parents/carers with new babies and toddlers.</p>
<p>Will this change affect any service users?</p>	<p>If Cabinet agrees to approve the Neighbourhood Plan with the examiner's recommended modifications and it proceeds to referendum and is adopted by the Council, service users will see policies in the plan used for making planning decisions in the Highcliffe & Walkford Neighbourhood area.</p>
<p>What are the benefits or positive impacts of the change on current or potential users?</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan will impact positively across the six areas 'domains' of life. The policies will provide a stronger local focus on revitalising the High Street and encouraging better range of shops and services, encouraging walking and cycling through provision of safe and improved routes, retaining community facilities, encouraging high quality, energy efficient new development and the designation of local green spaces. These measures would encourage more social interaction and improve health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Measurement Framework for Equality and Human Rights (2017) has been used to consider the benefits of the <u>neighbourhood plan policies</u> on current or potential users.</p> <p>Education – <u>Policy HWNP9 Locally Important Community Facilities</u> seeks to retain, modernize and continue to meet needs for education for early years groups, primary and secondary schools. This will benefit children in of all ages and genders, reduce social inequality, address poverty in the parish area. Other community venues are valued for their important role for older people to continue lifelong learning. There are no higher education facilities in the parish area however, the proximity of the railway station at Hinton Admiral just north of the parish, provides access for young adults to travel to nearby towns of Bournemouth and Bournemouth University and the Arts Institute, as well as direct travel to larger towns with higher educational facilities including London. <u>Policy HWNP2 High Street Uses</u> also encourages Class F1 Learning and non-residential uses in ground floor units within the High Street which will benefit residents of all ages, disabled people and with other protected characteristics.</p> <p>Work – <u>Policy HWNP2 High Street Uses</u> also encourages a mix of uses including Class E commercial and business uses, helping to widen local opportunities people of working age to gain active employment. This could benefit people of all ethnicities, gender, age, and disability. <u>Policy HWNP3 Local Centres</u> supports improvements to shops and facilities and will also enable places for those with different protected characteristics to work locally. <u>Policy HWNP7 Walking and Cycle Routes</u> will improve connectivity within the parish to public transport and to address social inequality of residents who choose to travel sustainably and addresses social inequality and younger age residents who do not have access to a car to get to work. <u>Policy HWNP10 Housing design for practical living</u> will require development to include flexible space within the layout of a new home that can be used for study and homeworking to enable people with protected characteristics, the opportunity to work from home. This will benefit maternity groups, those with caring responsibilities, or those of working age with disability and those who cannot afford to use private or public transport.</p> <p>Living standards – <u>Policy HWNP10 Housing design for practical living</u> sets out that housing</p>

development should attain high standards of accessibility, adaptability, and housing which is suitable for **wheelchair users and those with mobility issues**. This will benefit occupiers of all **ages, gender, ethnicity, faith, transgender, and sexual orientation** as development will be future proofed if their needs change. Development will be required to attain national space standards, have adequate natural light, and be physically connected with outdoor space and be designed to provide opportunities for social interaction. This will positively benefit all those groups with protected characteristics including **disability, age, gender and help reduce isolation associated with disability, age, gender, transgender**. The policy seeks to achieve carbon reduction and energy efficiency which will help address fuel poverty and **social inequality for all age groups** and in particular **young families and older people**.

Health – Policy HWNP1 The High Street Environment will benefit the health of residents of all **ages, disabilities, gender, ethnicity, and faith** by encouraging quality public realm in which to shop, dwell or meet friends. Policy HWNP3 Local centres also supports residents of all **ages and disabilities** to be able to shop locally for everyday items. Policy HWNP2 High Street Uses supports a mix of non-residential uses to enable a greater diversity of facilities to meet people's needs including access to healthcare which benefits all protected characteristic groups including **age, gender, disability, faith and ethnicity, transgender**. Policies HWNP4 Local Green spaces, HWNP5 Green corridors and HWNP6 Accessible green spaces may significantly contribute to mental and physical health of residents of **all ages, genders, faiths, ethnicities, sexual orientation** to access open space within walking distance of their home to walk or spend leisure time with or without friends and family.

Policy HWNP7 supports the existing and proposed network of cycling and walking routes to enable residents the opportunity to improve health and wellbeing. Off road routes will be accessible to all with benches provided, particularly **young families** with buggies and **less mobile residents with wheelchairs**. This policy would enable safe overlooked routes where crime or fear or crime is reduced particularly for **women, people of faith and different ethnicities, transgender groups, and people of all sexual orientations**. Policy HWNP9 Locally Important Community Facilities will benefit the health of residents of all ages by retaining and modernizing facilities to enable groups of all **age, disability, gender, faith, ethnicity, transgender, sexual orientation** to meet with others, engage in mindful, social, or learning activities which improve mental health, reduce isolation, and help to reduce discrimination against those with protected characteristics. Policy HWNP10 Housing design for practical living encourages new development to achieve national space standards reduce carbon, provide flexible space for hobbies, and encourage design features that would increase social interaction, these criteria will encourage mental wellbeing of residents of all **ages including young families** and people living alone. Policy HWNP11 encourages development to reflect and enhance local distinctiveness, which will benefit all groups enjoyment of the area they live in and contribute to good outcomes for health and wellbeing.

Justice and personal security – Many of the policies would benefit **women, those of different faiths and ethnicities, younger and older people who are not as socially mobile** as other groups. The High Street policies to encourage diversity in retail and business uses enable people with these protected characteristics gain access to local services in the area they live, reducing issues around security and safety. The community facilities policy would similarly benefit these groups by providing safe places to enjoy leisure and educational facilities within the community they live. The implementation of cycle and walking routes policy would enable movement by more sustainable means around the local area for residents including **women and young families, the elderly and those with mobility issues**, knowing that they are safe, overlooked, and accessible to these groups and with facilities such as benches to use to rest or sit and have a picnic. The policies to protect and enhance local green areas will also ensure that they will feel safe outdoors in an environment that is familiar.

Participation –

Policy HWNP10 Housing design for practical living would help improve family life through criteria requiring national space standards, good quality low carbon design and flexible and adaptable living space, ensuring natural surveillance whilst respecting privacy in the home. Policy HWNP9 Locally Important Community Facilities will help improve participation in social, leisure, cultural and sporting activities by supporting the valued and accessible places for people to get together. This can improve community cohesion amongst all **age groups, reduce social inequality and any barriers to discrimination against disability, neurodiversity, gender, and ethnicity**.

	<p>One of the main factors of participation is the ability to influence decisions in a local area. Over the period of the preparation of the neighbourhood plan, consultation with residents and stakeholders has taken place in the local community. The opportunity to vote in a referendum will give parish council residents the chance to decide whether the neighbourhood plan should be used to determine planning decisions. This would benefit a number of protected characteristic groups of voting age.</p>
<p>What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?</p>	<p>There are no identified negative impacts to current or potential users. Any new projects delivered as part of the neighbourhood plan will be subject to their own EIA.</p>
<p>Will the change affect employees?</p>	<p>This is not a corporate/internal plan and would not have any impact on employees specifically. However, it is recognised that there may be BCP Council employees with protected characteristics that are residents of the Highcliffe & Walkford area and therefore change may affect them. However, this EIA has shown that change would be beneficial in a number of ways to many of the protected characteristic groups.</p>
<p>Will the change affect the wider community?</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan was prepared to give local people a voice in planning decision making. As such, it has been prepared to set out planning policies which flow from its vision, aims and objectives. Achieving the vision will encourage people to continue to visit the area. As such, the plan will have a wider impact than just the Parish Council area.</p>
<p>What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?</p>	<p>No negative impacts were identified, and no mitigation actions have been identified. As projects in the plan come forward, each will be separately assessed for their impact(s) on groups with protected characteristics.</p>
<p>Summary of Equality Implications:</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan has a strong vision for the Highcliffe and Walkford to be successful, vibrant, safe, and attractive. From the network of accessible green spaces and cycling routes to the design of new development, it seeks to improve the sustainability and social equality of the area. The policies have a number of beneficial impacts on people with protected characteristics. The High Street and local centre policies will encourage a wide mix of businesses and facilities with an improvement in the quality of its public realm. This will benefit groups of all age, disability, gender, faith, ethnicity, transgender and sexual orientation by providing places to dwell, and meet others, in a safe and familiar place with natural surveillance, a range of opportunities to work and access to facilities including healthcare. The green spaces policies encourage access to protected open spaces which can help contribute to mental and physical health and wellbeing of people of all ages, disabilities, genders, faiths, ethnicities, sexual orientations where time can be spent outdoors with or without friends/family. The walking and cycle routes policy shows provides for both on and off-road routes which are direct, overlooked, safe and accessible to all. Through careful design, women, those managing pregnancy and postpartum, older people, people of faith and different ethnic groups or transgender groups can use these routes with confidence. The routes will be able to be accessible to young families with buggies and less mobile or visually impaired residents or wheelchair users. The Community facilities policy recognises the need to retain, modernize and continue to meet needs for education for early years groups, primary and secondary schools. This will benefit children in of all ages and genders, reduce social inequality, address poverty in the parish area. The housing design and local character policy will encourage new development to achieve national space standards, reduce carbon emissions, provide flexible space for hobbies and homeworking, and encourage design features that would increase social interaction, reducing loneliness and isolation with older people. It may improve community cohesion amongst residents of young families and people living alone, thereby</p>

	improving wellbeing and contributing to good outcomes for residents of Highcliffe & Walkford.
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