

Dorchester Town Council

Community Implementation Plan

2023-2028

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“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about”

- Margaret J. Wheatley

Introduction

The United Nations defines Community Development as “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. It is a broad term given to the practices of activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of communities, typically aiming to build stronger and more resilient local communities”.

The Community Implementation Plan 2023-2028 has been developed following a Community Priorities Review. A description of this process can be found on the Dorchester Town Council website at:

www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/Services/Community+Development

The plan details how Dorchester Town Council will contribute to achieving the key aims laid out on page 4. It is a live document that may be periodically updated to respond to the changing the needs and aspirations of our local Dorchester community.

To discuss any element of the plan or to get involved, please contact Emma Scott at e.scott@dorchester-tc.gov.uk or phone 01305 819463 / 07956 896114.

The future of every community lies in capturing the passion, imagination, and resources of its people.

- Ernesto Sirolli



Community Implementation Plan

2023-2028



Community Implementation Plan

Key Aims

1 Culture, Heritage, Tourism & Leisure

We want to live in a town that:

1. Provides good opportunities for recreation and leisure.
2. Communicates well about events, activities and opportunities to get involved.
3. Capitalises on our tourism and heritage offer.

2 Transport & Access

We want to live in a town that:

1. Promotes active travel.
2. Makes sustainable travel easier, safer and more accessible.

3 Good Health, Wellbeing & Safety

We want to live in a town that:

1. Makes more use of green open spaces and nature for health and wellbeing.
2. Fosters a community that is safe and welcoming for all
3. Seeks to improve links between health and social care & community providers.
4. Wants to improve health for different communities.

4 Democracy & Local Voice

We want to live in a town that:

1. Seeks to strengthen local democracy
2. Works to increase community cohesiveness & resilience

5 Housing

We want to live in a town that:

1. Provides for local housing needs.
2. Supports people most at risk of homelessness.
3. Ensures that housing developments are fit for the future.

6 Economy, Training, Education & Volunteering

We want to live in a town that:

1. Supports the local economy and collaborates with local businesses to facilitate economic growth and job creation.
2. Provides opportunities for life-long learning & training.
3. Gives everyone increased opportunities to get involved in civic life.
4. Supports people of lower incomes

7 Climate & Environment

We want to live in a town that:

1. Actively engages to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices.
2. Helps to protect the natural environment.
3. Helps to mitigate or prepare for effects of climate change.

Culture, Heritage, Tourism & Leisure

Priorities:

- 1 Improved opportunities for recreation and leisure
- 2 Improved communication about events, activities, and opportunities to get involved
- 3 Capitalise on tourism and heritage offer



Priority 1 Improved opportunities for recreation and leisure

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Improve range of activities for locals and visitors of all ages</p> | <p>Tourism Partnership Heritage Committee Dorchester BID Community organisations Commercial/business partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to support development of new activities - providing advice, funding and help to promote joint working • Continue to develop summer offer in Borough Gardens • Promote opportunities for activities in other open spaces in town such as Salisbury Field and Maumbury Rings • Develop a 'how to put on events' guide • Develop programme of town centre events, especially during summer |
| <p>Ensure leisure needs of diverse groups are catered for including young people, older people, and groups at risk of discrimination</p> | <p>Tourism Partnership Community organisations Commercial/business partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on needs of older people – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Identifying new social spaces ◦ Support to develop IT skills ◦ Support for projects which help to reduce isolation • Focus on needs of younger people – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Support for Youth Council led events ◦ Continued support of Dorchester Youth & Community Centre (DYCC) offer ◦ Developing more youth led projects and events ◦ Identifying safe spaces for young people to meet & socialise • Support activities and events which celebrate diversity and inclusion |
| <p>Support and develop opportunities for under-represented leisure opportunities</p> | <p>Community organisations Commercial/business partners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to establish a visual arts centre in town • Help to develop more creative based activities such as craft workshops • Look to develop The Linney's at Dorchester Market as a potential arts hub area |

Priority 2 Improved communication about events, activities and opportunities to get involved

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Effectively utilise all communication streams available | Tourism Partnership Dorchester BID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote Discover Dorchester website and app • Improve or replace existing rotunda for displaying posters • Install more community noticeboards • Develop new Dorchester Town Council website – to include directory of local community organisations • Make effective use of existing Town Council social media channels |

Priority 3 Capitalise on tourism and heritage offer

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---|--|
| Continue to develop arts, heritage & tourism offer | Tourism Partnership Heritage Committee Dorset Museum Shire Hall Museum Keep Military Museum Dorchester Civic Society Dorchester Arts Other arts organisations Community organisations Dorchester BID | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support continued collaboration and joint working • Ensure projects and events are well evaluated • Seek investment for local organisations |
| Make Dorchester a more accessible destination and promote to a wider audience | Dorchester Access Group Tourism Partnership Community organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure built environment is accessible as it can be in town • Aim to include information about all businesses accessibility on Discover Dorchester website and use this to launch project to promote Dorchester nationally as an access friendly town |

Transport and Access

Priorities:

- 1 Promote active travel
- 2 Make sustainable travel easier, safer and more accessible



Priority 1 Promote active travel

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Support initiatives which promote active travel & reduce reliance on cars</p> | <p>Dorchester Transport Action Group Dorset Council</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with partners to develop projects and schemes that support active travel which might include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Creating new cycle routes – around town and to local parishes◦ Building confidence in cycling – for all ages◦ Enhancing the walking experience in town, particularly to support people with reduced mobility – for instance ensuring, where possible, benches are placed along main pedestrian routes and walking surfaces are maintained and levelled◦ Continuing to improve wayfinding throughout the town◦ Aiding projects such as Streets Alive promoting active travel especially to younger people◦ Introducing a car sharing scheme◦ Developing an e-bike hire scheme◦ Promoting community car share and lift share schemes |

Priority 2 Make sustainable travel easier, safer and more accessible

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---|---|
| Safer travel | <p>Dorset Council Dorchester Transport Action Group Dorchester Access Group</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce '20's Plenty' scheme across town • Continue to map need for dropped kerbs • Identify highways issues and flag to Dorset Highways team |
| Better, & more joined up transport solutions informed by local need | <p>Dorchester Transport Action Group Dorset Council Network Rail South Western Railway Great Western Railway Purbeck CRP South Wessex CRP Local Bus Companies Friends of Dorchester West Station Friends of Dorchester South Station Tourism Partnership Dorchester Access Group</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Dorset Bus Service Improvement Plan which aims to significantly grow the number of people using local buses • Support improvements to rail stations, especially Dorchester South Station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Work with partners to help deliver Access for All project plans and other schemes at Dorchester South Station including enhanced access and waiting facilities and better tourist information • Support Friends of Groups to enhance appearance of local stations at both Dorchester West and Dorchester South stations • Champion initiatives to improve connectivity in town and with surrounding villages such as Demand Responsive Transport schemes |

Good Health, Wellbeing and Safety

Priorities:

- 1 Make more use of green open spaces and nature for health and wellbeing
- 2 Improve links between health and social care & community providers
- 3 Improve health for different communities
- 4 Foster a community that is safe and welcoming for all



Priority 1 Make more use of green open spaces and nature for health and wellbeing

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Capitalise on increased affinity for nature as source of health & wellbeing (especially post pandemic)</p> | <p>Statutory health providers Health and Nature Dorset Dorset Local Nature Partnership Active Dorset Community organisations supporting health and wellbeing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote local groups such as Strollers • Support eco-therapy schemes • Promote outdoor exercise and events • Support local sports groups and events • Support the development of more outdoor sport resources/activities potentially including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Pump track ◦ Parkour park ◦ Climbing/bouldering area ◦ Permanent orienteering course ◦ Climbing wall ◦ Pushchair/buggy walks • Encourage people to volunteer for local nature-based groups helping to care for our environment |

Priority 2 Improve links between health and social care & community providers

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Better signposting to existing services</p> | <p>Help and Kindness Statutory health providers Community organisations supporting health and wellbeing Keep 106 Radio</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local social prescribers • Support schemes to train community connectors/health champions to signpost family, friends and neighbours to services • Map health assets in the community through new Town Council website – will also help to identify gaps • Develop events like Picnic in the Park designed to connect services and local communities |

Priority 3 Improve health for different communities

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Focus on priority health & wellbeing needs of different communities</p> | <p>Help and Kindness Statutory health providers Community organisations supporting health and wellbeing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Integrated Care Board, the Primary Care Network, Public Health Dorset, Healthwatch & other health & wellbeing partnerships • Stimulate new support where there are gaps in provision for instance through advice or seed funding • Work with partners on initiatives to support people who need extra support including people who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Have mental health issues – especially considering needs of young people ◦ Are obese &/or have diabetes ◦ Are at risk of isolation and loneliness ◦ Have dementia ◦ Have cancer ◦ Are carers ◦ Face health inequalities – for instance through poverty or digital exclusion |

Priority 4 Foster a community that is safe and welcoming for all

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Maintain low levels of crime and reduce anti-social behaviour</p> | <p>Dorset Police Dorchester Locality Housing Associations Residents Associations Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support projects which address domestic violence and abuse, prioritising support for girls and women who are considerably more likely to experience repeated and the most severe forms of abuse • Ensure people experiencing hate crime receive support and information & are encouraged to report incidents • Work with communities experiencing ASB to find creative solutions • Reduce fear of crime – e.g. via initiatives such as intergenerational projects and highlighting positive contribution of younger people. |

Democracy and Local Voice

Priorities:

- 1 Strengthen local democracy
- 2 Increase community cohesiveness & resilience



Priority 1 Strengthen local democracy

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|--|
| Young people represented and other less heard from groups | Dorset Council Community organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Dorchester Youth Council • Involve & collaborate with young people at earliest stages of decision making and planning • Run annual Democracy Day for young people • Conduct meaningful consultation & engagement work 'where people are already' |
| Provide opportunities for local people to have a meaningful voice in local decision making | Dorset Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively campaign to encourage more (diverse) people to stand as councillors • Foster open and transparent communication channels between the Town Council and residents – via social media, website, and through Councillor Surgeries and other events such as Annual Town Meeting |

Priority 2 Increase community cohesiveness & resilience

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|--|---|
| Develop projects to enhance pride in place – local neighbourhood hubs | Southampton University Local resident associations & place-based groups Local Housing Associations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners such as Southampton University, local resident associations and place-based groups to strengthen local pride & develop responses to hyper-local need • Hold place-based events which celebrate neighbourhoods strengths |
| Help to stimulate increased local community resilience | Dorset Council Environment Agency Local community groups Local Community Champions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate information to promote local preparedness and resilience • Support partners to run events for instance to increase awareness about flood risk and proactive measures local people can take • Work with partners and local champions on range of projects that increase resilience e.g., improving food security and digital inclusion |

Housing

Priorities:

- 1 Provide for local housing needs
- 2 Support people most at risk of homelessness
- 3 Ensure housing developments are fit for the future



Priority 1 Provide for local housing needs

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---|--|
| Support initiatives that deliver affordable housing – particularly for younger people | Dorset Council DACLT Local Housing Associations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with DACLT to complete existing Tennis Court project and develop other schemes in the town • Facilitate joint working between developers, lettings agents, housing associations, local councillors & other partners & explore how to increase available and affordable stock |
| Help safeguard housing for local residents and workers | Dorset Council Local Housing Associations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support schemes to reduce number of empty/second homes – for instance by increasing Council Tax |
| Utilise existing potential for housing development and protect green spaces | Dorset Council DACLT STAND | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project to try to unlock empty town centre properties above ground floors • Support campaign to revoke Dor13 |

Priority 2 Support people most at risk of homelessness

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|---|
| Ensure early intervention to prevent homelessness in the first place | Dorset Council Community organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for more tenancy security • Promote use of existing advice and information services through Dorset Council, Citizens Advice, Housing Associations and First Point |
| Support people who are experiencing homelessness | Dorset Council Julian House Community organisations Local churches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to ensure services are aware of local rough sleepers & that they are receiving support • Create and maintain leaflet of homelessness support services • Promote use of Streetlink to wider community |

Priority 3 Ensure housing developments are fit for the future

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Promote sustainable building schemes | Dorset Council Dorset Climate Action Network Community organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support initiatives promoting high levels of sustainability – for instance thermal/solar heating, high quality insulation, and grey water systems • Explore options such as co-housing and sustainable self-build projects & promote opportunities to local residents |

Economy, Training, Education & Volunteering

Priorities:

- 1 Support the local economy and collaborate with local businesses to facilitate economic growth and job creation
- 2 Provide opportunities for life-long learning & training
- 3 Give everyone increased opportunities to get involved in civic life
- 4 Support people on lower incomes



Priority 1 Support the local economy and collaborate with local businesses to facilitate economic growth and job creation

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Foster a vibrant town centre that attracts local residents and appeals to visitors – especially addressing issue of closed shops</p> | <p>Tourism Partnership Dorchester BID Chamber for Business Brewery Square Local businesses Dorset Council Totally Locally Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress plans to develop Cornhill Market area • Create town-wide events that local businesses can participate in & support • Look at schemes to continue to improve visual appearance of town centre & retail areas • Look at new opportunities for themed and specialist markets – especially look to develop Dorchester food and drink offer • Support Town Centre Working Group to include Dorset Council, local business representatives, land-owners, letting agents, DBID, Chamber and others |
| <p>Support new and emerging business and entrepreneurs</p> | <p>Dorset Council Tourism Partnership Dorchester BID Chamber for Business Local businesses Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support creation of a new community interest company to provide opportunities for micro-businesses to set up & develop • Work with partners to ensure new and emerging businesses receive mentoring and support they need |

Priority 2 Provide opportunities for life-long learning & training

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Support provision of high-quality education, childcare + access to family support services</p> | <p>Dorset Council Local Schools Local childcare providers Dorchester Locality Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help identify funding opportunities for schools and childcare providers plus organisations offering family support • Support projects to improve children’s readiness for school • Support initiatives to improve digital inclusion of all school age children • Provide opportunities for local schools and childcare providers to link to wider community and be regularly involved in events |
| <p>More support, guidance and opportunities for young people - especially in school</p> | <p>Dorset Council Dorset Carers Hub Thomas Hardy School Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support THS with careers and guidance events • Encourage community partners to offer volunteer roles to young people • Link organisations and help establish projects to mentor and support young people – particularly with mental well-being, attendance, and future planning |
| <p>Offer training and development opportunities</p> | <p>Dorset Council Skills and Learning Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote existing learning opportunities widely • Help to identify gaps in learning provision and work with partners to offer extended courses • Promote Digital Inclusion schemes including Digital Champions |

Priority 3 Give everyone increased opportunities to get involved in civic life

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|--|--|
| Promote community and voluntary sector activity and offer | Dorset Council Volunteer Centre Dorset Help and Kindness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate range of support available – using variety of marketing • Signpost individuals to partners offering support • Hold Dorchester volunteer award event/s |
| Help to strengthen voluntary sector organisations | Dorset Council Volunteer Centre Dorset Help and Kindness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to advise organisations about fundraising, governance and sustainability • Provide opportunities for groups to network and build partnerships – such as community lunches • Hold volunteer group training & skills sharing sessions re fundraising & other topics |

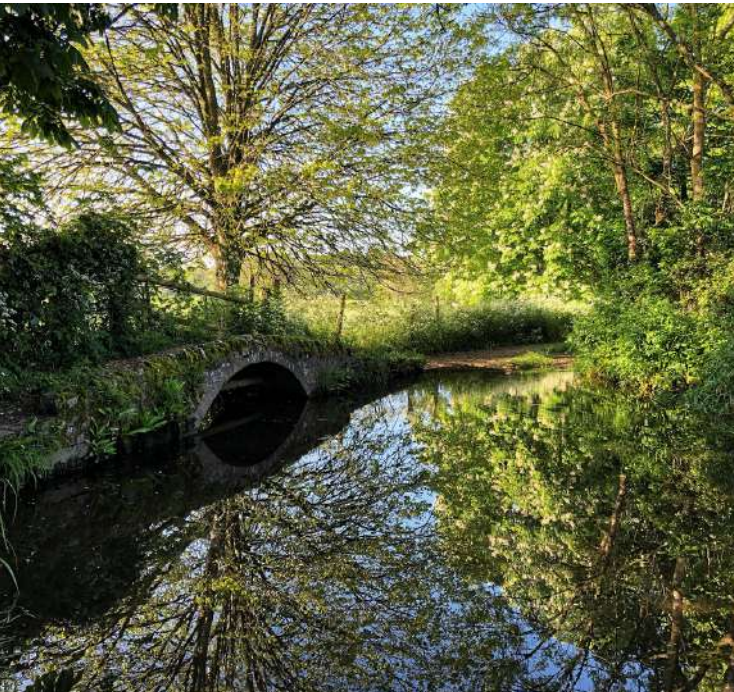
Priority 4 Support people on lower incomes

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|--|
| Ensure people on lower incomes have good access to support | Dorset Council Citizens Advice Central Dorset Community organisations Housing Associations Local churches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share advice and help available for people on lower incomes • Provide access to high quality free events • Support local food banks and poverty action projects • Promote initiatives to help people in fuel poverty especially Ridgewater Energy |

Climate and Environment

Priorities:

- 1 Actively engage to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices
- 2 Help to protect the natural environment
- 3 Help mitigate or prepare for effects of climate change



Priority 1 Actively engage to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Invest in renewable energy and encourage energy efficient practices</p> | <p>Dorset Council Dorset Climate Action Network Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review DTC Climate Emergency action plan • Support or hold own events to disseminate opportunities for low-cost solutions to cut energy use, reduce waste and address climate emergency – such as ReThink Fashion Dorchester • Encourage local individuals and communities to get involved in Climate Emergency conversations and design ways to effect changes locally • Encourage partners to recognise the climate and ecological emergency and how the actions they are working on could contribute to mitigation/awareness work on this • Support local groups to share good practice and develop own climate emergency responses |
| <p>Promote local food resilience</p> | <p>Dorset Council Dorset Climate Action Network Community organisations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a directory of local food projects and suppliers and help them to network • Promote land share & garden share schemes • Work closely with allotment holders to develop more shared food schemes & promote community allotment activities |

Priority 2 Help to protect and improve the natural environment

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|--|--|
| Promote behaviour change to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling | Dorset Council Waste Services Litter Free Dorset | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run own regular litter picks • Work with partners such as LFD to deliver events and projects • Continue to promote Dorchester as plastic free town – encouraging partners to bypass single use plastics for events |
| Improve local air and water quality and biodiversity of our green spaces | Dorset Council Wessex Water Litter Free Dorset Dorset Local Nature Partnership Community organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote use of public transport and active travel • Encourage local residents to maintain cleanliness of local town and waterways by collecting litter – where 80% of plastic pollution in the sea is a result of commercial and household waste from land • Encourage activities and schemes to promote biodiversity - for example, through planting for pollinators, installing bird boxes, planting trees, and leaving areas wilder |

Priority 3 Help mitigate or prepare for effects of climate change

| Aim | Lead Organisations & Partners | Suggested action: How will Dorchester Town Council contribute |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Help communities manage effects of climate change | Dorset Council Environment Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a Community Resilience Plan and regularly review actions • Support the Environment Agency on flood protection projects |

Glossary

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Dorchester BID | Dorchester Business Improvement District |
| DACLT | Dorchester Area Community Land Trust |
| DTC | Dorchester Town Council |
| DTAG | Dorchester Transport Action Group |
| DYCC | Dorchester Youth and Community Centre |
| DYC | Dorchester Youth Council |
| LFD | Litter Free Dorset |
| Purbeck CRP | Purbeck Community Rail Partnership |
| South Wessex CRP | South Wessex Community Rail Partnership |
| STAND | Campaign against DOR 13 housing proposal |
| VCS | Voluntary and Community Sector |