

Charmouth Parish Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2035



May 2021 Submission Draft

Prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on
behalf of Charmouth Parish Council

Executive Summary

What this Plan does...

This Neighbourhood Plan sets out planning policies for Charmouth Parish. It will be used by Dorset Council when making decisions on planning applications. It doesn't cover every issue that could occur as a planning consideration, but it does strengthen the approach taken in the Local Plan by providing more detail of specific issues in some key areas that will make the planning system work better for Charmouth.

This Plan reflects the responses received from consultation which we have used to develop and shape the policies.

We thought it would be useful to summarise, very briefly, what some of the main policies are and where we expect our Neighbourhood Plan to make a real difference...

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Vision and Objectives for the Plan, on which the policies have been developed, include the development of small scale housing; protecting the village's unique characteristics; supporting local businesses and amenities; continuing to attract tourists and visitors and enhancing, where possible, the quality of life for residents. In short, the Plan reflects a balance between encouraging moderate growth and development whilst protecting the uniqueness of our village and its natural environment. *See Table 2.1 for more information*

We have also identified a range of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

See Table 2.2 for more information

HERITAGE AND HISTORY

The Parish has many historical buildings many of which are Listed, and there is a sizeable Conservation Area. There are however a number of structures/assets that are valuable, either as historic value or local heritage that do not have planning protection in their own right. These structures/assets have been identified and a policy included for their protection. *See Policy HH1 for more information.*

ASSETS AND AMENITIES

Feedback from residents and businesses reflect how well served the Parish is regarding facilities, amenities and community activities and how much these are valued. It is considered that this is a significant factor in making Charmouth so special, providing essential social fabric and cohesion. Important Community assets and amenities have been identified that contribute to the well-being of the village and a policy protecting them has been included. *See Policy AA1 for more information.*

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Plan details specific areas where protection of the environment is required if and when development is carried out, and the measures to be taken to avoid adverse impact. Our overall aim is to protect and maintain the special nature of these areas including their geological, palaeontological and environmental assets. This includes habitats regulations assessment for European wild life sites. This chapter includes policies on the Habitats Regulations, landscape, views and vistas, biodiversity and natural habitats, local green spaces, lighting and pollution, land instability and geology. *See Policies HRA1, NE1-NE7 for more information.*

LOCAL ECONOMY

The local economy is heavily dependent on tourism and residents. Residents value the local shops, businesses and services and these facilities provide social cohesion, an essential part of which help makes Charmouth such a great place to live. The Plan looks to protect, wherever possible, commercial properties in the 'retail hub' and also encourage small-scale growth for new businesses including re-use of rural buildings. The opportunities are limited but considered worthwhile. *See Policies BET1-BET3 for more information.*

HOUSING

This Plan increases the potential for moderate housing growth but only in ways that we believe are supported by the local community. The Plan supports the development of small scale housing sites but does not identify specific building plots for development. It does however set out the design parameters for high quality housing at suitable sites.

New housing development includes the provision of rural exception sites for affordable housing. The make-up of affordable housing is specified.

The stock of smaller housing in Charmouth is considered low and there remains a need to have for new 1-3 bed homes that would help first time buyers to get onto the property ladder and others to downsize to a smaller property. A provision has been included to protect the stock of new small houses (on rural exception sites) or affordable homes within the Development Boundary by limiting the size of future extensions.

Also included in the Plan is a policy on principal residency for new homes which requires residents to occupy their home the majority of the time. This has been included to restrict the growth of second homes to maintain a balance in the community. *See Policies H1 – H5 for more information.*

GETTING AROUND

The Plan recognises the benefit of the existing pedestrian routes and the need to protect them along with the creation of new routes from new housing developments; encouraging people to walk, enjoying the surrounding countryside and giving good access to local facilities.

Parking has been a particular concern of local residents. The Plan tries to make sure that the problems are not made worse, by protecting existing parking spaces due to future development. *See Policy GA1 and GA2 for more information.*

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND COASTAL CHANGE

This Plan recognises the impact climate change will have on rising sea levels, coastal change and flooding. The impact of failing coastal defences as anticipated in the medium to long term presents a significant risk. The Plan encourages engineering developments to improve existing defences, prioritising these works over the relocation of premises or services. Such changes will have an impact on the future economy, buildings and homes of the village. Climate change alleviation through energy efficiency proposals are included. *See Policies CC1 and CC2 for more information.*

VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

In response to issues and ideas that have arisen from the Village Survey, a number of possible Village Improvement Projects (VIP) has been identified. See Appendix G of the Plan. These projects do not form part of the Plan itself but are additional actions, which if implemented, could make a real difference to the village. However it will require the community to take these forward as the NP Steering Group will no longer function when and if the Plan is 'made' i.e. approved.

The above is a summary only so please read the full document!

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1. Foreword...How this Plan came to be

1.1 It's been a long journey which started in summer 2015 when the *Parish Council* decided to commission the development of a *Neighbourhood Plan* (this Plan). The Parish Council initiated the process by designating the neighbourhood *plan area*, which followed the civil parish boundaries; this was approved by West Dorset Planning Authority.

1.2 A village consultation was initially held in the Village Hall on 21st June 2015 to gauge support and encourage involvement from local residents and people who work in the area. This was initially led by the Parish Council. A start-up meeting was held on the 7th December 2015, with interested parties, to form an independent *Steering Group* and appoint a chair and secretary.

1.3 The Steering Group held its first meeting on 18th January 2016 and have held regular meetings since, normally every 4-6 weeks. In March 2016, the Terms of Reference was agreed with the Parish Council which set out the remit for the Steering Group. As part of the Steering Group, working parties were established to consider various aspects of the vision and main themes of this Plan.

1.4 In August 2016, street interviews were held to gain views on the draft vision and identify issues within the village that residents felt strongly about.

1.5 The first *Open Forum* event, with interested parties, was held on the 25th February 2017 to explain the purpose of this Plan and its importance to the village. The Forum was also used to inform residents of a forthcoming *Village Survey*, in which we were seeking their views on a number of issues, the results of which would be used in formulating this Plan.

1.6 On 27th February 2017, a comprehensive Village Survey, comprising of 7 sections, was delivered to every household and business seeking views on: the draft vision, natural environment, tourism, transport, *community facilities*, housing and employment in the *parish*; 38 questions in total.



1.7 There were 255 completed surveys representing 497 people who live or work in Charmouth. This represents a return rate of about 30% and was considered to be a very good response. Initial feedback (i.e. numerical information) on the survey was given to residents on 9th September 2017.

1.8 There were 2690 comments and it took a further 6 months to complete the qualitative analysis of these responses, which were set out in 29 detailed reports.



The summary of these reports and general update was given at the Open Forum in March 2018, where about 60 people attended.

The information gained from the Village Survey has been invaluable in formulating the vision, objectives and *policies* of this Plan.

1.9 In October 2017, AECOM consultancy was commissioned by the Steering Group to carry out a *Housing Needs Assessment*, the results of which were issued in March 2018. This is a demand-led study of the amount and type of housing Charmouth might need but doesn't take into account some of the constraints to development. Information from this Report has been used as evidence in the formulation of the housing policies.

1.10 A *Strategic Environmental Assessment* was submitted by the *Local Planning Authority* to statutory consultees during September - October 2018. The Report concluded that the Plan was unlikely to result in significant environmental impacts, largely due to the Plan not allocating land for additional housing and the environmental protection provided by the existing policy in the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland *Local Plan*.

255 completed Surveys
with 2690 comments

31st March 2017



Open Forum Event – initial
feedback

September 2017

**Housing
Needs
Assessment**

Oct 2017 to
March 2018



Open Forum Event –
feedback on final reports

March 2018



Draft Housing Policies
Consultation

July 2018



Service Provider Questionnaire

Aug-Sept 2018

**SEA
Screening
Consultation**

Sept 2018 to
Oct 2018



Submission Draft – May 2021

Note: 1. Words or phrases shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). 2. Abbreviations frequently mentioned are defined in the Abbreviations table (Appendix B).

1.11 In summer 2018, the Steering Group considered it would be useful to gain more information from local service providers about the needs of their businesses so a *Service Provider Questionnaire* was issued and results compiled; a summary of the findings has been used to inform policies on business and employment.

1.12 The first draft policies, 19 in all, were produced and presented at an Open Forum on the 5th January 2019.



About 50 people attended and there was an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the draft policies as well as potential *village improvement projects* and *local green spaces*, which were all displayed on the wall for viewing. There were over 90 comments made, with the vast majority supporting the policies.

1.13 Following updates to policy documents a meeting was held with Dorset Council in June 2019 to review the policies and draft *Basic Conditions*.

1.14 Following consultation with Dorset Council and the Parish Council, further updates were made to the policies and the Basic Conditions.

1.15 Letters to land owners, who may be affected by proposed policies, were sent in January and February 2020 inviting comments on the proposals.

1.16 A draft Plan was intended for consultation in April but due to the COVID-19 outbreak this was postponed.

1.17 The pre-submission consultation was rearranged for Friday 31st July to 11th September i.e. a 6 week period.

Open Forum Event – Draft Policies consultation

Jan 2019



Draft Basic Conditions & Policies Consultation

June 2019



Habitats Regulations Assessment
Dec 2019 to Jan 2020

Notification to Land Owners

January/February 2020



Draft Plan Consultation

31st July – 11th September 2020

Submission Draft – May 2021

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1.18 Responses received from the consultation on the draft Plan have been reviewed and policy wording and text has been amended, where appropriate. A summary of the comments can be seen in the Consultation Statement, see Appendix E. The submission of the Plan to Dorset Council was delayed due to the three COVID-19 lockdowns from March 2020 into 2021.

Before the Plan was submitted to Dorset Council the Parish Council reviewed the revised Plan and Consultation Statement to gain their approval. Following submission of the Plan to Dorset Council a further six-week public consultation will be held followed by examination by an Independent Examiner. The Examiner will review this Plan and supporting evidence. Once the plan passes examination it will then go to *referendum* and if accepted will be formally '*made*' (approved) by Dorset Council.

1.19 Throughout the compilation of this Plan, specialist help has been obtained from Jo Witherden, Dorset Planning consultant, who has provided technical advice on various aspects of the Plan including the production of the Basic Conditions Statement.

1.20 A number of meetings has also been held with the Parish Council, keeping them informed of progress and seeking their views on various aspects of the Plan including policies.

Meetings have also been held with West Dorset District Council (now Dorset Council), in particular, seeking their views on planning policies and guidance on compliance issues.

1.21 The minutes of all Steering Group meetings, various presentations and important documents have been published on the Parish website,

<https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/charmouth-nhp>

Paper copies of all relevant documents are also in the library. There have also been regular updates in the Village's Shoreline magazine.

1.22 A summary of the main activities timeline for community engagement and consultation can be seen in Appendix D.

1.23 This Plan is the culmination of all the hard work that has taken place over the past 5 years and has been drawn up by local people (volunteers), to reflect the wishes of the people who live and work here. Once it is finalised and is put to a local referendum, it will then be used when determining planning applications within the *Neighbourhood Plan* area.



The Neighbourhood Plan has been a long time in the making!

1.24 The formation of this Plan could not have happened without the dedication and support of the members of the Steering Group. Some members have ‘come and gone’ whilst others have stayed the duration; all are appreciated for the significant effort they have put in.

We would also like to thank residents and businesses and others who have given their views at various meetings and through surveys, all of which has helped to inform this Plan. Our thanks also go to the Parish Council who has provided valuable support and encouragement in the compilation of this Plan.

So a big ‘thank you’ to everyone who has been involved, in particular, members of the Steering Group who have given an enormous amount of their time, they include:- Eden Thomson, Sarah Edwards, Tim Sheward, Simon Leech, Jo Seaman, Teresa Noel and Andy Bateman.

We are thankful for Ros Cole and Charlotte Farmer for reviewing this Plan and providing editorial suggestions and John Kennedy for his professional advice on the design and layout of the Plan. Our thanks also go to Bill Burn, Richard Phillips, Eden Thomson and Andy Bateman for providing the photographs.

And finally, we also remember Carol Girling, who was Chair of the Steering Group from December 2015 to November 2017 when sadly and unexpectedly she passed away. Her passion and enthusiasm for the *Neighbourhood Plan* will particularly be remembered.

2. WHAT A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DOES AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR CHARMOUTH

Its Purpose...

2.1 The main purpose of Charmouth's *Neighbourhood Plan* is to help decide planning applications for Charmouth *parish*. Apart from some smaller developments which have *permitted development rights*, other developments require planning approval by Dorset Council. 'Development' can include building something new, a major change to a building (e.g. an extension), a change of use of a building/plot of land or some engineering operations. Any development that results in material change of use of land and buildings requires the developer to submit a planning application to Dorset Council which local people and the *Parish Council* can then comment on.

Decisions on planning applications are based on whether the proposed development meets the requirements of planning policies and there exists a hierarchy:

- national: *National Planning Policy Framework* (2019)
- district: West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland *Local Plan* (2015)
- neighbourhood: Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan (once approved)

Policies in these plans are aligned and each level adds extra detail to reflect local characteristics, needs, opportunities and constraints so our neighbourhood plan gives the community the opportunity to agree how it wishes to see the future of Charmouth develop.

2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, it is a powerful tool to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place but protects the natural environment.

The Plan also says what *community facilities*, buildings, places, etc. should be protected and why.

2.3 When deciding planning applications, all relevant policies including those in the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered by Dorset Council and the pros and cons of the development weighed up in reaching a decision. Therefore, it is important not to read a single neighbourhood plan policy in isolation and conclude that an application should get approved or rejected; it will be considered in the round with other pertinent policies. Therefore the Plan should be considered as a whole; that is all policies in the Plan should be read in conjunction with each other along with the Local Plan policies.

2.4 Although the law requires that the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan must be in general conformity they can say slightly different things. Neighbourhood Plan policies gives the opportunity to agree local priorities that are more detailed and this then carries weight in making planning decisions. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into force, the policies it

contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a Local Plan covering the *neighbourhood area*, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

2.5 Neighbourhood planning is supported by central government through the ‘Localism Act 2011’ and is governed by its own statutory regulations.

The Plan covers the period 2021 to 2035. The Plan and its policies reflect our area’s own characteristics while recognising that it has a lot in common with other parts of the Dorset *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* (AONB).

2.6 This Plan has been drafted in the knowledge that there are many types of different planning proposals will be considered against the policies it contains. This Plan becomes approved by Dorset Council as part of the statutory *Development Plan*, so planning decisions should be made in accordance with the policies in this Plan and the adopted Local Plan, unless material considerations are so significant as to justify a departure.

Reading the Plan

2.7 The Plan contains the overall vision and objectives for Charmouth, developed following feedback from residents and businesses. See 2.11. The objectives cover each of the following themes: Heritage and History, Assets and Amenities, Natural Environment, Local Economy, Housing, Getting Around and Energy Efficiency and Coastal Change. The detailed policies that follow in the Plan, for each of these themes, underpin these objectives and are supported by relevant context and justification, taking account of consultation feedback and drawing on other research and evidence.

‘Should’ and ‘Will’

2.8 The words ‘should’ and ‘will’ throughout the Plan have specific meanings and are defined as follows:-

- The word “should” does not imply that the policy is optional or simply something the Parish Council desires if offered.
- Where the word “should” is used, this is because it was thought conceivable that a proposal may not be able to fully comply with that policy’s requirements, but that if it aligned with the policy intention as far as possible, it may still on balance be found to be acceptable (depending on the reasons why complying wholly was not possible, and the extent to which the proposal aligned with that policy and the development plan as a whole). Therefore, where the word “should” is used, and an applicant considers that there are good reasons why their proposal cannot meet the policy requirements, they should explain this as part of their application, and show how they have aligned with that policy’s intention as far as possible.
- Where the word “will” has been used to set out a requirement in a policy, failure to comply with the policy is not envisaged as acceptable under any circumstance, and this failure should be given significant weight in the decision.

Glossary and Abbreviations

2.9 Words or phrases that are shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are fully defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). *Italics* also denote a Latin name of species/genus.

2.10 Key abbreviations, when they first appear in text, will be given its full name in brackets but subsequently shown as an abbreviation. Abbreviations that are frequently mentioned are defined in an Abbreviation Table (Appendix B).

The Vision and Objectives for our Neighbourhood Plan

2.11 The vision and objectives, on which policies have been developed, are listed below in Table 2.1. These vision statements and objectives have been consulted with residents and are reflected in the policies.

TABLE 2.1 Vision and Objectives

Vision No.1:

To keep Charmouth's village feel but encourage a small *affordable housing* development, particularly for families.

Objective:

Housing:

- Support the development of small scale housing site(s) that provide high quality, affordable housing that meets local needs.
- Support the building of, and limit future extensions of, new 1-3 bedroom homes to enable young people to stay, existing residents to downsize and to attract young families into the village.
- Restrict the growth of *second homes* to maintain a balanced community.
- Ensure new housing is designed to complement its surroundings

Vision No.2:

To protect its unique qualities, including its natural beauty, local history and *Jurassic coastline*

Objective:

Natural Environment:

- Ensure that the unique beauty, views, local landscape character, and the community 'feel' for the parish, are safeguarded for the future.
- Ensure that the value of all aspects of the natural environment are given due weight when development applications are considered, while minimising *pollution* and over-commercialisation in accordance with the strong views expressed in the *Village Survey*
- Ensure the future of local *biodiversity* by protecting and providing *habitats* such as green corridors, *local green spaces*, *ecological networks*, and providing new homes for wildlife.

Heritage and History:

- Protect the unique mixture of heritage and history of the village, ensuring recognition of its mediaeval origins.

- Ensure that any proposed alterations to the existing built environment are done in a manner sympathetic to nearby buildings and structures, and will enhance the built environment.

Energy Efficiency and Coastal Change:

- Support engineering developments to improve existing defences, prioritising these works over the relocation of premises or services.
- Support development which improves energy efficiency and delivers low carbon emissions to mitigate climate change.

Assets and Amenities:

- To protect important *community assets and amenities*.

Vision No.3:

To maintain its ability to be self-sustaining by supporting retail units, local businesses and amenities in the village

Objective:

Economy:

- Restrict housing development that causes the loss of an existing commercial property within Charmouth's high street but give support to the change of use of upstairs rooms from business to residential use.
- To support the creation and/or expansion of premises for small-scale Class E type business.
- To support the reuse of farm and rural buildings outside the DDB, for small business purposes.

Vision No.4:

To continue to attract tourists and visitors and offer good facilities but avoid being over-commercial

Objective:

Economy:

- As above objectives Vision No.3), bullet points 1 and 2

Getting Around:

- To protect the existing car parks and large parking areas to avoid increase in traffic congestion in the village centre and enable the public to have good access to the beach and foreshore.

Vision No.5:

To further enhance Charmouth as a friendly, vibrant community and to meet the everyday needs of our residents.

Objective:

Heritage and History:

- Support the quality of social life and community spirit by protecting community facilities such as the village halls, *Heritage Coast* Centre, church, library, school, pubs, village shops and green areas

Assets and Amenities:

- To protect important community assets and amenities.

Getting Around:

- To protect and enhance the network of existing pedestrian routes and support the building of new footpaths and cycle routes including routes from new housing development/s to encourage people to walk and use the local community facilities easily and safely.

Note: The heading(s) under each Objective (e.g. Natural Environment) denote the theme and chapter(s) in the Plan to which they relate and have associated policies.

SWOT Analysis

2.12 The future prospects of fully implementing the vision and objectives of this Plan were considered as part of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and are documented below. Where possible and practical, these issues have been addressed in the policies themselves and/or in VIP (*Village Improvement Projects*).

Table 2.2 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support by Parish Council for affordable homes • Attractive built and natural environment • Highly designated with protections from AONB, WHS, SSSI, SAC, National Trust • Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre – world renowned, brings in huge numbers of visitors • World renowned fossil beach • Historical connections – important historical persons connected to Charmouth • Welcoming and friendly community • Strong village community – proud of specific identity • Thriving community facilities for this size of population: doctor, shops, library, post-office facility, pubs etc. • Active community groups for all ages • Strong volunteer ethos • Active events committee - events throughout the year • Shoreline magazine outstanding + award-winning • Geographical location – far enough away from urban areas but not too far • Closeness of the A35; with advantage of village bypass • Strong regional and national identity – fossils and clean, safe, beautiful beach • Good beach for families • Bus service and bus link to rail station • Four holiday parks (3 in parish, one on parish boundary) and other accommodation for visitors • Low crime rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited land on which to build • Lack of affordable housing • High number of second/vacant homes/holiday-lets • Lack of business/workshop space • Geographical location – far away from wider employment possibilities and other facilities (e.g. major hospitals) • Few employment possibilities locally • Being at edge of county can mean parish falls between cracks e.g. with County Council; distance to hospitals etc. • Limited facilities for disabled people • Unbalanced demographic – more older than younger people • Certain types of social facilities scarce in local area, especially for young people e.g. cinema • Tourism partly/largely responsible for village shops' survival • Land instability • <i>South West Coast Path</i> is diverted to roads • Footbridge only access point to East Beach • Beach changes on an almost daily basis from sand to stones, levels at access points can fall and rise considerably. • Access to beach difficult for disabled / buggies • Beach facilities/toilets not up to the standard needed for a place of international renown • No pier/landing stage/jetty/ramp for boat launching • Traffic congestion esp. summer • Insufficient parking on-street and in carparks esp. summer
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having more affordable homes will help retain and attract younger families • Limiting <i>second homes</i> (ditto) • As/when we do get development, can make it complementary to village • Encouraging the right sort of development will create opportunities • Can promote an environmentally-friendly village by protecting green areas and requiring environmentally sympathetic development • Reinstatement of <i>South West Coast Path/England Coast Path</i> off-road in 2020 • Possible National Park • Improve pedestrian routes • Encouraging use of local shops and businesses by visitors will improve business viability • Community Infrastructure Levy on new development will bring in extra money for Village Improvement Projects when this Plan is approved • CNP will become part of the statutory Development Plan which enables the Parish Council to make specific, local policy-based observations on planning applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change - rising sea levels and possibly more erratic weather leading to storm surges. Some flooding up-river likely. • (National) <i>Shoreline Management Plan</i> will provide no maintenance, repair, or improvements to <i>coastal defences</i> after 2025. Possible destruction of foreshore buildings and parking areas, resulting in major loss to tourism/village economy. • Damage to or destruction of footbridge would remove all legal access to east beach / make east beach inaccessible • CNP could be outweighed by other national/district policy considerations • Lack of 5 year housing supply means national planning policy takes precedence which could lead to inappropriate development e.g. on the edge of village • Parish possibly has insufficient councillors which might reduce breadth of experience to support Neighbourhood Plan. • Landowners/developers may not be willing to take on affordable housing • Affordable housing not necessarily affordable • Recent large extensions could set precedent • Increase in second homes and <i>holiday lets</i> • Over-commercialisation could affect village character • Too much 'improvement' would spoil natural environment and character of Charmouth village and shore • If part of National Park would have new planning authority • Loss of some businesses – e.g. butcher, full-time Post Office • Seasonal fluctuations for businesses • Too many tourists at certain times puts strain e.g. on traffic and parking • Increasingly unbalanced demographics • Lack of resources (funding and people) to take forward Village Projects

Village Improvement Projects

2.13 This Plan refers to a number of possible VIPs. Whilst these projects are not technically part of the Plan, the ideas that have arisen from the issues and comments put forward by local people could, if taken forward, make a real difference. See Appendix G. Some, such as forming a Community Land Trust, could help bring forward the proposals in this Plan. It is up to the community to take these projects forward, as the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will no longer function once this Plan is adopted by Dorset Council.

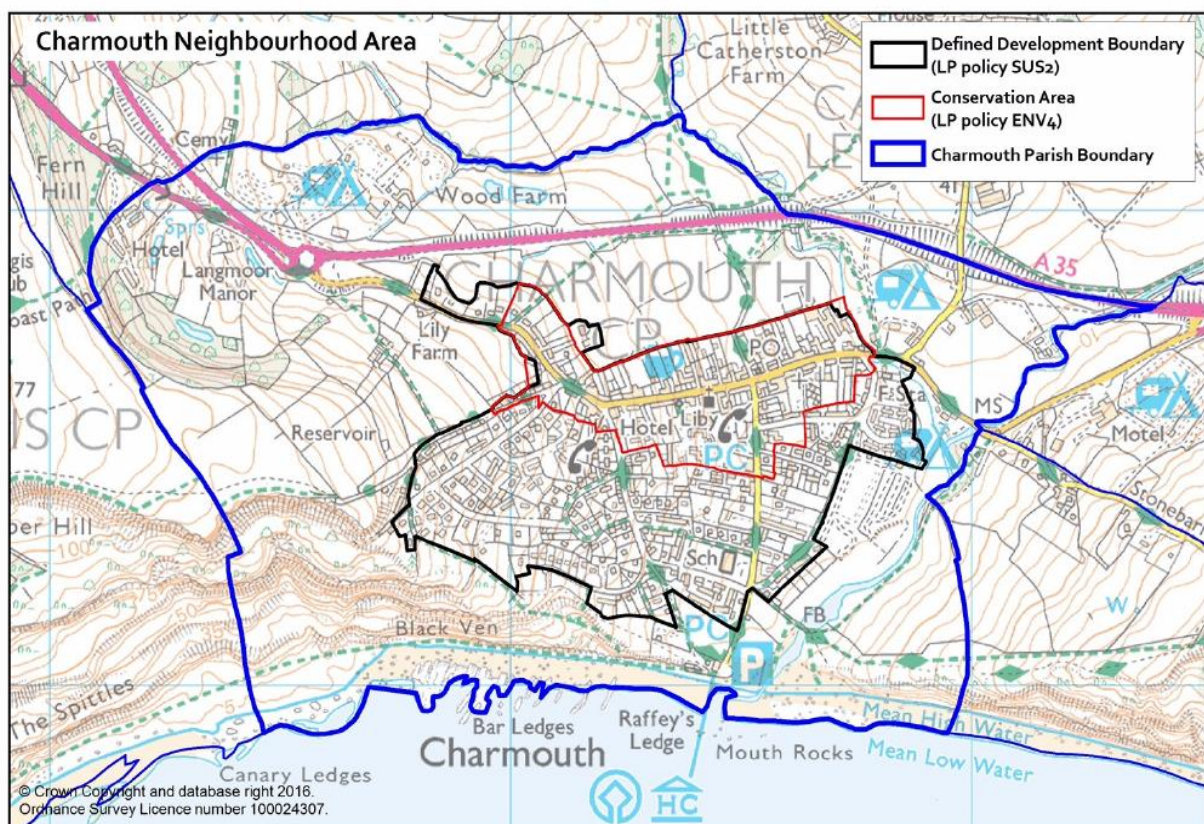
3. OVERVIEW

Location and description of Charmouth Parish and Neighbourhood Plan area

3.1 Charmouth is a coastal village and civil *parish* in West Dorset, South West England, located at the mouth of the River Char and forming part of the popular Lyme Bay coast. It is situated along the *Jurassic Coast*, a *World Heritage Site* extending over 95 miles across Dorset and Devon. It lies between the town of Lyme Regis, two miles to the south west, and the coastal area of Seatown to the east, creating an extended coastal area in West Dorset of international geological importance, and a local source of tourism income for the area. To the north is the Marshwood Vale. Due to its significant and historic coastal features, Charmouth is located within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The main road through the area is the A35 which bypasses the village immediately to the north. The *South West Coast Path* and the long distance Monarch's Way pass through the village.

The Charmouth Parish boundary has been defined as the boundary for the *Neighbourhood Plan* which covers an area of approximately 221.1 hectares.

MAP 3.1 Charmouth Parish Boundary, Defined Development Boundary and Conservation Area



1352 people 681 households

52% aged 60 years and over 26.5% holiday and second homes

Good local facilities

Regular bus service Community library

Pubs, cafes and shops Primary

Surgery and pharmacy school

family friendly holidays

AONB Village halls
Jurassic Coast

conservation area Fossils

Local history society Beach

33 listed buildings Heritage Coast Centre

Coast path and monarch's way

river Char

Page 14

Summary of key environment, social and economic characteristics

3.2 At the time of the 2011 Census, Charmouth had 681 households and a population of 1352. There has been a steady growth in the population of Charmouth over the last sixty years. See Table 3.1. The 2011 census showed that 52% of the village is aged 60 years and over which is noticeably higher than the national average (England and Wales 22.5%). See Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.1 Charmouth Population census

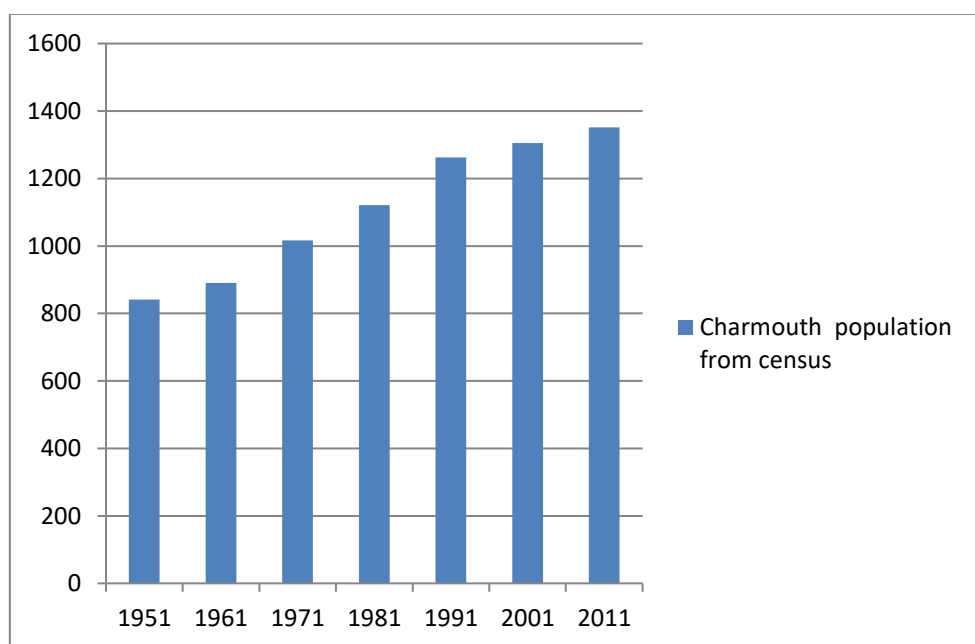
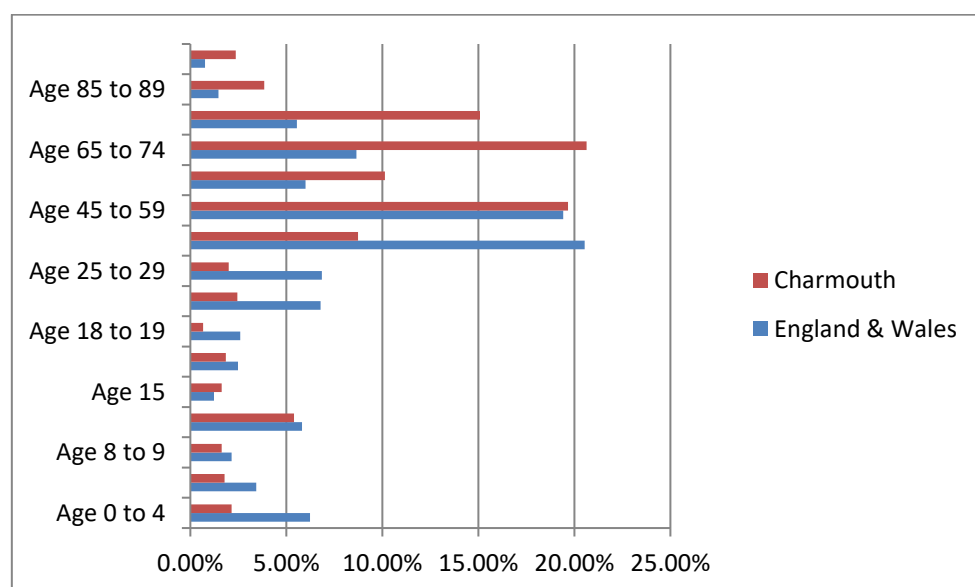


TABLE 3.2 Charmouth Age structure from 2011 census

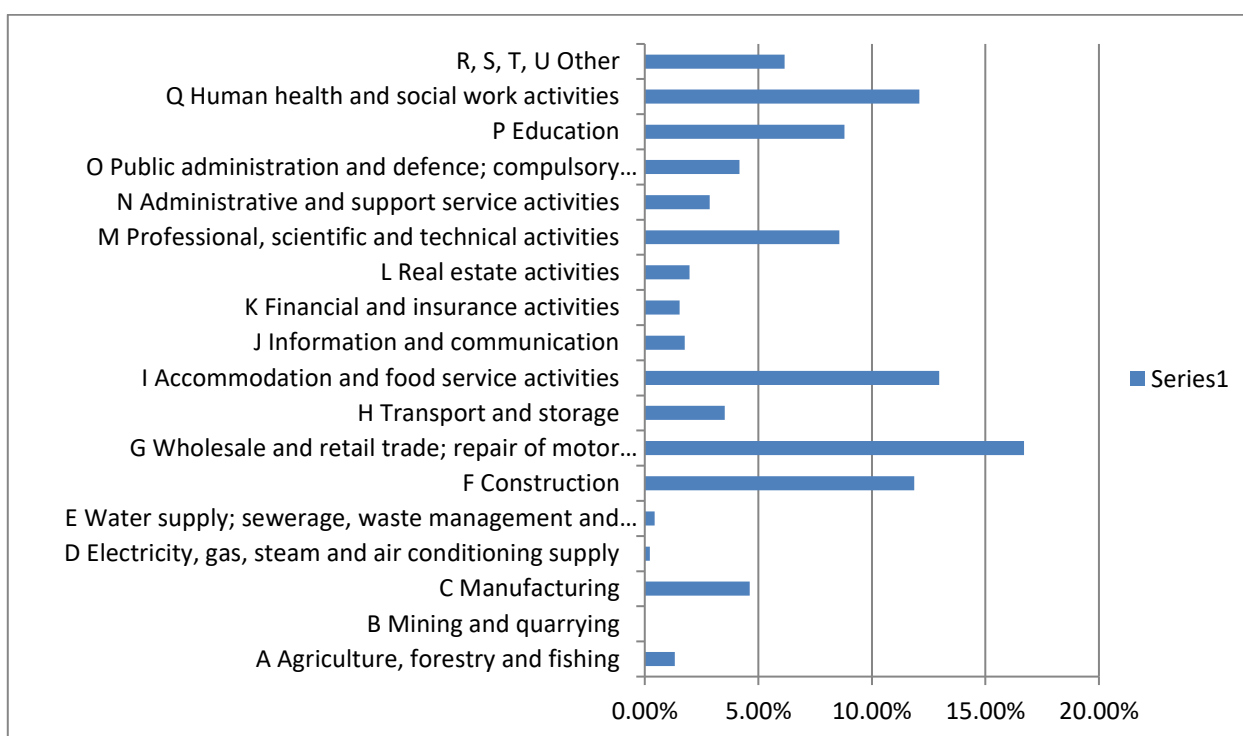


3.3 The Village is well served with a parish church, primary school, doctors' surgery, pharmacy, community managed library, an on-call Firestation, two public houses, shops and many other facilities. There is a regular bus service linking Charmouth to Axminster in the west with its mainline station and Dorchester, the county town, to the east.

3.4 The 2011 census shows that employment in the village is diverse with the most important sectors being: wholesale and retail trade; accommodation and food services; construction; health and social care.

In addition, tourism plays a significant role in the area with a good choice of two small hotels, B&Bs, *holiday lets*, holiday parks with caravan and camping pitches as well as static caravans and lodges. This, and the activities associated with tourism, increases trade for many businesses particularly in the summer months when the village population increases significantly.

TABLE 3.3 Economic activities of those aged 16 to 74 years old from 2011 Census





Various Businesses in Charmouth

3.5 Charmouth is a socially active and inclusive community, with numerous clubs and societies for all ages and interests and various halls and meeting rooms. There is a strong sense of community with the village coming together to prevent the closure of the library in 2013 and more recently through the Changing Spaces group. This group formed to raise funds towards the restoration of the parish church, St Andrew's, and enable it to become a community venue. *Charmouth Traders* and the Events Committee are very active organising and supporting community events throughout the year. The village magazine, 'Shoreline', is published three times a year both in hard copy and online. The village has a traditional village notice board near the shops and others throughout the village. There is also an online Charmouth Notice Board on Facebook and a comprehensive community website www.charmouth.org both providing information about local events etc.

Historical background, evolution of the village and Conservation area

3.6 The village has a rich history going back to the Iron Age when a settlement was first founded. It is listed in the Domesday Book as having 22 households. By the late 13th century Charmouth was

an agricultural settlement arranged on both sides of the main road between Lyme Regis and Bridport, with a stone bridge over the Char. It is one of the few new towns founded at the end of the 13th or early 14th century, one of the last in the great period of English town foundation.

3.7 In about 1503 the church was completely rebuilt perhaps indicating a population increase or an increase in prosperity in the 16th century, but following this the next 200 years were a time largely of stagnation in Charmouth. There is little evidence for growth and Charmouth remained largely dependent on agriculture and fishing. Its position on one of the major routes through Dorset means that probably it relied to a certain degree on passing trade from travellers along this road. Its strategic location historically on the main road from London to Exeter has resulted in many important visitors over the years, one being King Charles II who stayed in the village during his escape to France.

3.8 The nineteenth century saw Charmouth become a minor watering-place and holiday resort, which promoted some revival in its fortunes. This encouraged the building of villas in the town in the 1830s and 1840s. The church was rebuilt and enlarged in 1836. The Independent Chapel, now a private residence, was rebuilt in 1815.

3.9 Most people only visited for the summer season, but there was also some influx of permanent inhabitants. The population of the town increased from 369 in 1801 to 601 in 1851, but this growth was not sustained and in the second half of the 19th century the population of the town actually fell, to 560 in 1901. This decline in the late 19th and early 20th century is mirrored in many towns in Dorset, partly as a result of the general agricultural depression.

The period saw a shift away from agriculture and fishing to tourism as the primary economic activity of the town. Charmouth village became a noted resort, with visitors including the novelist Jane Austen. A major attempt at industry in Charmouth was the rather short lived cement factory built to exploit the use of limestone rocks eroding out of the cliffs. The factory was established in the 1850s, but appears to have stopped operating by 1867.

Several inns and guest houses were opened to cater for visitors. There were also a number of shops and the usual range of small industries and crafts found in towns, such as blacksmith, wheelwright, carpenter, baker, shoe and boot maker, etc.

3.10 The 20th century was a period of suburban expansion for Charmouth. The sale of the former manor lands in the beginning of the 20th century enabled the gradual development of much of the area between the historic core and the coast, as well as expansion along the Axminster Road. The population rose during this period from 575 in 1911 to 719 in 1931, 890 in 1951 and to 1320 in 2005. The rate of population increase was greatest in the 1920s, but has been climbing steadily during the second half of the 20th century.

The 1920s and 1930s saw the building of council housing on Higher Sea Lane and Nutcombe Terrace. To the south, a number of new local access roads were created after World War 2, some

along the lines of existing tracks or paths, to serve the suburban expansion. New suburban housing and modern *infill* housing was built behind the frontage of The Street. Charmouth benefited from the 1967 Housing Subsidies Act when, in 1969, a housing subsidy was given to build 14 dwellings on Bridge Road. In 1976 the Village Plan identified sites for development: to build a new school; for lower cost medium density housing suitable for first time buyers on the old school site (Wesley Close); for low density housing behind St Andrew's Drive. Modern infill housing continued to be built in the 1990s – 2000s e.g. Double Common, Hammonds Mead and Barney's Close in the 1990's and Queens Walk 2002.

Charmouth remained a seaside resort and holiday destination throughout the 20th century with the main economic focus being tourism.

It also became an attractive retirement destination and functions as a dormitory settlement for Lyme Regis and Bridport.

Communications

3.11 The 20th century saw some changes made to the road layout. The Street and Old Lyme Hill is considered to be an old roman road, which formed part of the Ackling Dyke from Dorchester to Exeter. In 1924, the existing road to Lyme Regis via Old Lyme Road was closed and the present route via Fernhill was created. The bridge next to the former mill was replaced by a new one in 1957. In 1990, a new bypass was constructed to the north of the town alleviating much of the through flow of traffic along The Street. This links to Bridport and the County Town of Dorchester to the east and Axminster, Honiton and the city of Exeter to the west. Exeter airport can be reached in less than 30 minutes by road. Axminster, only 10 mins away, provides an important mainline rail link to London.

As part of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy for Dorset 2015, Charmouth has benefitted from the arrival of Superfast broadband.

Conservation Area

3.12 The Charmouth *Conservation Area*, designated in 1972, incorporates a number of local historic and *heritage assets* for preservation, enhancement and protection. A detailed conservation area appraisal for Charmouth was published in 2009, outlining and assessing historically important and valued areas and buildings within the conservation area boundary. Some key points highlighted in the appraisal are the landscape *setting* adjacent to a *World Heritage coastline* and within the Dorset AONB, with high hills, sea cliffs, woodland and deep, treed watercourses; mature trees and tree groups within the village that add to the quality of views in and out of the village; a substantially intact mediaeval planned layout; 33 *listed building* entries; about 48 unlisted buildings of quality and character, complementing listed buildings and

forming parts of several coherent groups of particular interest; distinctive local building materials, notably chert and Blue Lias limestone, render and thatch that, combined with building traditions, give a strong sense of place.



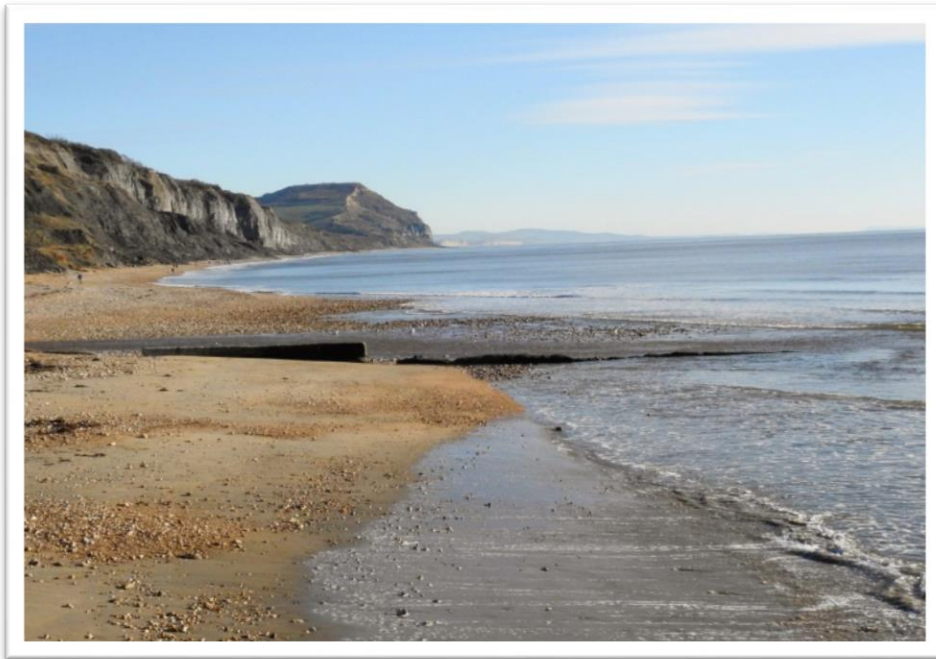
The Street – part of the Conservation Area

AONB and the Jurassic Coast

3.13 Charmouth is situated within the Dorset AONB. The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape, with two secondary aims: meeting the need for quiet enjoyment of the *countryside* and having regard for the interests of those who live and work there.

To the west of Charmouth are the two large masses of Fern Hill, rising to 172m and, forming a large area of unstable cliff, Black Ven and The Spittles, which extend to Lyme Regis. To the east is the impressive mass of Stonebarrow Hill, an unstable cliff, rising more steeply from the shore to over 120m.

3.14 Charmouth is best known for its beach. It is within the West Dorset *Heritage Coast* and the East Devon and Dorset Jurassic Coast which is recognised by UNESCO as a *World Heritage Site*. The local coastline provides a unique insight into hundreds of millions of years of geological history and evolution, and of course is best known as the Jurassic Coast due to the large number of fossils that can be found on the beaches.



Charmouth's Jurassic coastline

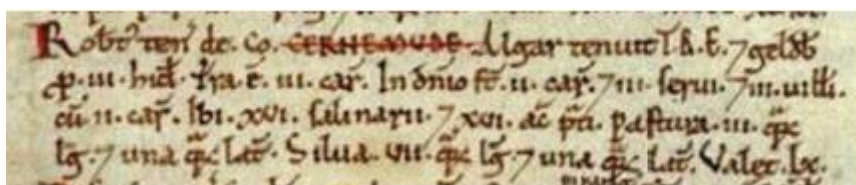
3.15 The Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre was set up in 1985 by local residents, in response to concerns about damage being done to the cliffs by fossil hunters. It is located in the upstairs floor of a long-disused cement factory on the foreshore and provides information on fossils, fossil hunting and the local coastal and marine wildlife. Facilities at the centre include interactive computers, hands-on displays, marine tanks and a video microscope. Professional wardens and volunteers are available to give advice. In 2016 the Friends of the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre was honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK. Its popularity has further increased following a BBC documentary called 'Attenborough and the Sea Dragon' in 2018 in which Sir David Attenborough helped to uncover the story of an Ichthyosaur fossil discovered in cliffs near to Charmouth. The fossil is on display in the Centre.

The Heritage Coast Centre has up to 150,000 visitors per annum in recent years.

4. PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Context

4.1 Some form of settlement has existed in Charmouth since the Iron Age. Records exist of a battle sometime between 830 and 833 where the invading Danes with 15,000 to 17,500 men, eventually overcame the local populace led by the Saxon king Egbert. The Domesday Book (1086) records that the village, which was then called Cerne Munde (Stony River), consisted of 22 households, 3 ploughlands and 16 acres (6.5 ha) of meadow, and a salt pan industry with 16 workers. The road now named Old Lyme Hill used to be the east/west Roman Road and was the main road to Lyme Regis for centuries. The origins of the village that we all know today probably date from the late 13th century, with the 'town' being created by the Cistercian monks.



4.2 The Dorset Historical Towns' Survey (DHTS) states:

“The town of Charmouth was a deliberate foundation by the Cistercian abbot of Forde at the very end of the 13th or early 14th century, which makes it very unusual, as Cistercian houses tended not to establish new towns on their lands and only a very small number are known in England. There is some indication of prosperity in the 16th century, but the town does not appear to have expanded beyond its original limits. Charmouth has a linear plan form arranged along a single main street with regular long narrow plots along both sides. Many of the original planned mediaeval burgage plots survive. There is a series of large stone walls which define the northern limit of the town and many of the burgage plot boundaries.”

Further: “Charmouth’s local distinctiveness is derived from the relationship between its plan layout, plot structure, historic buildings and its landscape setting. The layout and extent of the original planned medieval town can be traced on the ground today, and has had a strong influence on the development of individual plots in the town, particularly in its northern part.”

See overhead photo following paragraph 8.6.

4.3 Historically therefore, Charmouth is unusual, having a Cistercian foundation and also one of the last planned mediaeval villages. It is particularly unusual in that not only is it surrounded by a wall

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Note: 1. Words or phrases shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). 2. Abbreviations frequently mentioned are defined in the Abbreviations table (Appendix B).

on the 13thC mediaeval boundary but the wall and therefore the boundary, is substantially still intact and visible, and still surrounds nearly all the village: very little has been built outside the wall. This wall is known locally as The Old Priory Wall or The Abbey Wall. Research has identified very few similar villages with boundary walls from the 13th/14th centuries: the actual number is difficult to ascertain but taking into consideration date and number of village residents, there would appear to be fewer than 10 similar villages of this age within the UK. 'Castles of Communities: Medieval Town Defences in England, Wales and Gascony', by Prof Oliver Creighton, 2006, lists over 200 town defences but the vast majority are for towns and cities rather than villages or areas as small as Charmouth. Such walls for smaller communities like Charmouth are rare and this Plan should therefore protect this key aspect of the history and character of the village. See also NE6.32 and 6.33.

The Wall runs along the north side of the village from near the river, right up to near the corner of The Street and Old Lyme Hill, there is then a gap across the road, then the Wall continues along the back of the houses on the north side of Old Lyme Hill. The Wall forms most of the *Defined Development Boundary (DDB)* for Charmouth to the north other than an area to the north-west around Axminster Road. It is why there is such a straight edge to the DDB along the northern edge. See Map 4.1 and 4.22 and the photo following 8.6.

Map 4.1 Tithe Map of 1841 showing the North Wall



4.4 In 1901, with a population of 560, the village comprised houses on either side of The Street, some cottages on either side of Old Lyme Hill, a few buildings adjacent to what is now Lower Sea Lane, and little else. This has largely become the *Conservation Area*.

4.5 The frontages of the main street up through the village are mainly of period buildings, with some more recent replacements, *infilling* and additions. Photographs of the village from the mid-1800s show street views which are still very largely recognisable, with many buildings little altered.



Photos merging 'then' and 'now' showing the village little changed over time.



4.6 Charmouth has an active Local History Society formed in 1999. Talks are regularly given in the village and are always very well attended.

Listed Buildings

4.7 There are nearly three dozen *Listed Buildings*, the majority of these fronting on to The Street, and these form the core of the Charmouth Conservation Area. All the Listed Buildings are Grade II apart from The Abbots House (formerly the Queen's Armes Hotel) which is Grade II* and has had royal visitors: Catherine of Aragon (first wife of Henry VIII) stayed in 1501, and Charles II in 1651.

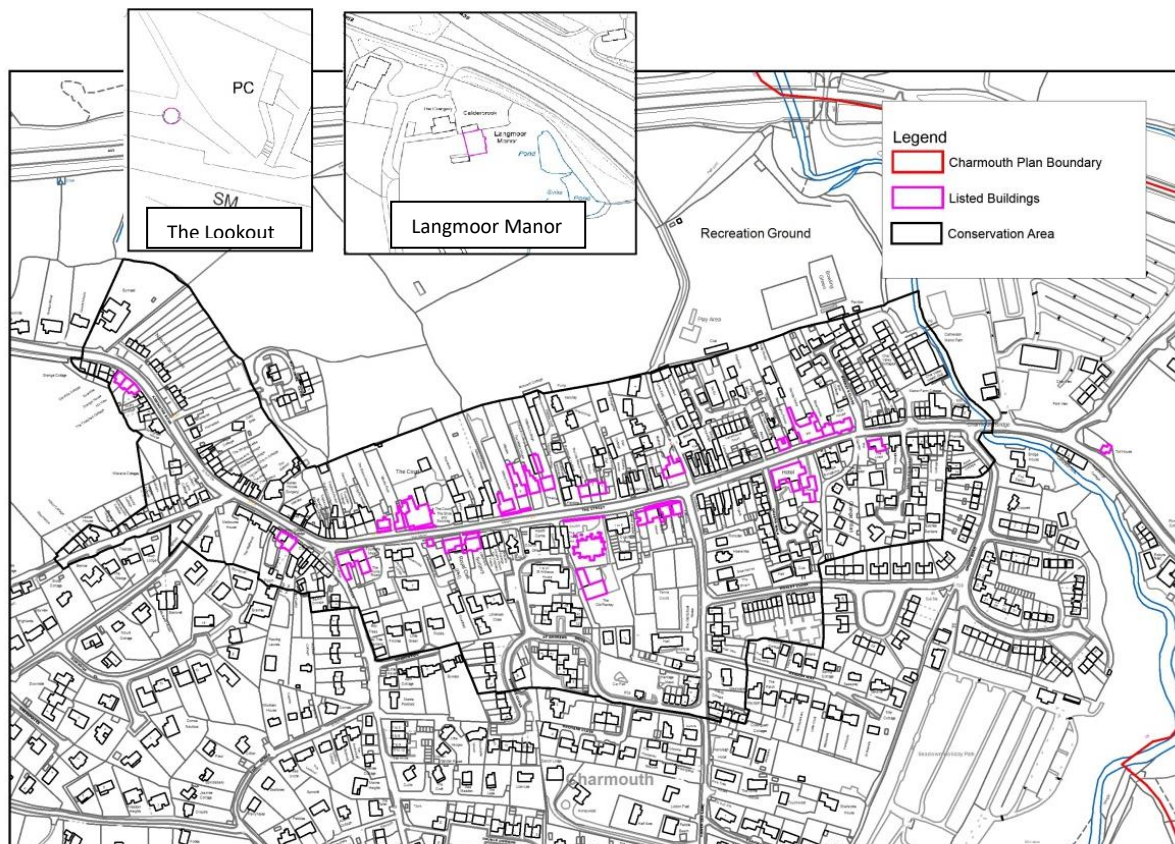
See Appendix F for list of Listed Buildings.

There are two other *Listed Structures* which are not Buildings, both Grade II Listed:

- On The Lookout Green is a small octagonal building known as The Lookout which is one of only six such grade 2 listed buildings in the country. It was constructed about 1804 during the Napoleonic wars as a coastal look-out station, and later became an observation post for the Customs and Excise. It has been used as a beach hut, but is now a Lookout Station for the National Coastwatch Institution
- The War Memorial erected c.1920 is situated on the south side of The Street, just uphill from the Royal Oak Public House.

MAP 4.2 Location of Listed Buildings in the Parish

Inserts show The Lookout and Langmoor Manor. The Toll House, at the east of the village, is the only other Listed Building outside the Conservation Area.



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Conservation Area

4.8 The Charmouth Conservation Area broadly comprises tranches of land on either side of The Street, part of Axminster Road, part of Old Lyme Hill, part of Barrs Lane, some of Lower Sea Lane, some of Bridge Road and the bridge at the bottom of the hill. It includes the rear gardens of properties on the north side of The Street – many of which are the historic 'burgage' plots of the settlement in earlier times. The northern edge of the Conservation Area is largely delineated by the mediaeval boundary and its wall. (See also 3.6 to 3.7 and NE6.27 to 6.29)

In addition, there are a number of buildings identified in the The Charmouth, Chideock and Seatown Conservation Area Appraisal (CCSCAA) (pp 19-25) as 'Important Local Buildings' including the 'burgage walls' whose location within the Conservation Area is considered to offer adequate protection so they have not been added to Non-Designated Heritage Assets in Table 4.1.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

4.9 There are a number of structures in Charmouth which have been identified as important in their own right, whether for their historic value or their contribution to the local heritage character of the village. These are identified in Table 4.1 as Important Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Table 4.1 is not exhaustive as previously unknown structures of significance may be identified through the planning process or through further research, for example, Dorset Historic Environment Record has recognised two locations of potential historic importance: a post-mediaeval quarry to the north of Nutcombe Terrace / south of the A35 (MDO29552); and the turnpike of Old Lyme Hill (MWX78), neither of which is now readily recognisable on the ground.

In the *Village Survey*, when asked about the CNP Vision, the most dominant theme from residents was that

- "Many people strongly appreciate the natural and unspoilt 'charm of Charmouth' and want to keep it predominantly as it is and not to over-commercialise it."
- "We have a priceless village and it is our duty to defend it"

Table 4.1 Important Non-Designated Heritage Assets

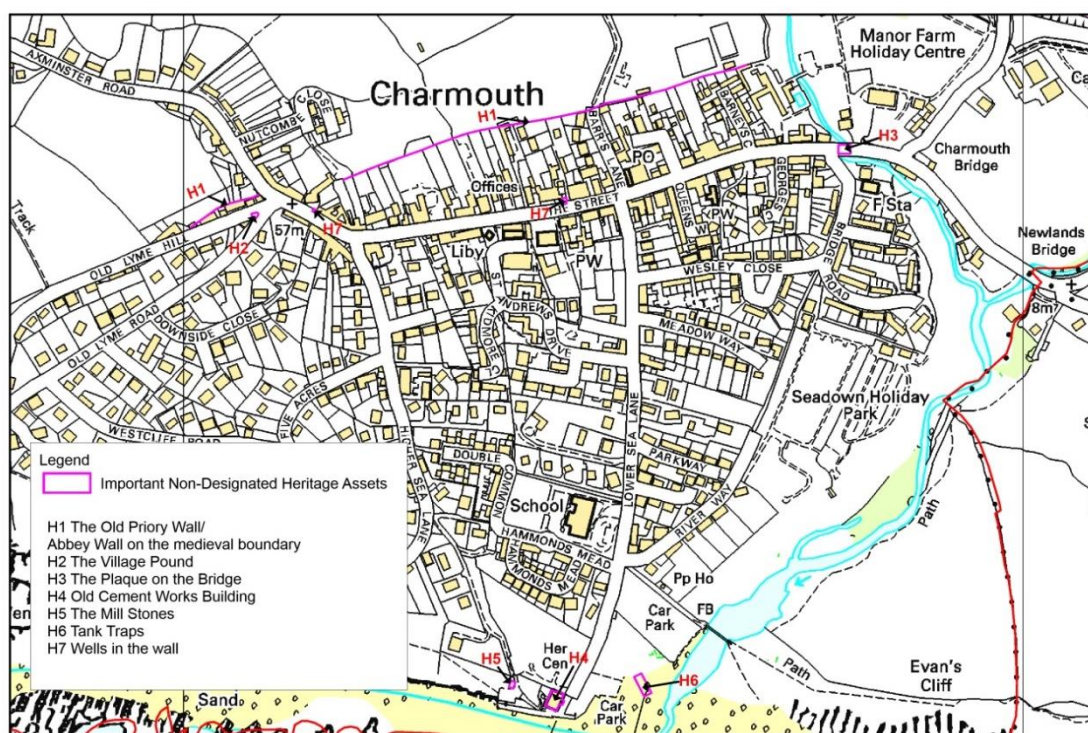
Ref	Asset	Description
H1	The stone wall on the mediaeval boundary, known as The Old Priory Wall	Largely forming the boundary delineating the northern edge of what was the Cistercian settlement, the Wall runs behind houses on the Street and the lower part of Old Lyme Hill; it borders former burgage plots, and there are also walled divisions between the burgage plots. The boundary and parts of this Wall date from the 13 th or 14 th Century. The historic importance of the Wall and the boundary cannot be overestimated it is irreplaceable (Map 4.1). Discussed in 4.2-4.3 and 6.27-6.29. In addition to the protection of the Wall itself, protection of views of the Wall is recognised in Policy NE2. Fragmented sections of the Wall may also be found elsewhere in the village, as possibly also some remains of the original earthen bank.

H2	The Village Pound	The Pound is situated at the corner of Old Lyme Road and Old Lyme Hill. It was the site of the stocks from 1866 when they were moved from their previous location by the Church. Also LGS3, NE6.63 to 6.71
H3	Transportation Plate	The plaque from the narrow hump-backed bridge built over River Char in 1824 has been built into the parapet of the current bridge. The historic message refers to potential “transportation for life”.
H4	Old Cement Works Building (including the site of the Lime Kiln)	Cement from local limestone was used to make tiles and similar articles from 1850. The building was finished by 1863, but only operated for a few years as transport was difficult because Charmouth had no harbour. Later uses included fishermen’s stores, Scout ‘hut’, miniature rifle range. Nowadays CHCC occupies all the first floor; with café, fossil shop, beach goods shop, craft and gift shop, and Beach Attendants’ Office on the ground floor. CHCC is listed as Asset A1 in Table 5.1. The site of the old Lime Kiln is located just behind the building. <i>In the CNP Village Survey 85% thought something should be done to protect the foreshore buildings.</i>
H5	Millstones	Part of the former cement workings. The millstones have been moved to The Lookout Green just west of the old cement works building.
H6	Tank traps	Dating from early in World War II, these are of the ‘anti-tank cube’ design which is unusual though not rare. Originally the ‘cubes’ were mounted on plinths to hinder being toppled. Some have been sited to mark the car park, but many have become buried under the beach, disappearing and reappearing when the beach level changes. Charmouth was an extension of the Taunton Stop Line.
H7	Wells in the walls	Piped water arrived in Charmouth in 1810. Public standpipes were installed in certain walls by The Street and the sites of some of these are still to be seen in the form of brick inserts.



Photos of Non-Designated Heritage Assets listed in Table 4.1

MAP 4.3 Non-Designated Heritage Assets listed in Table 4.1



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Consideration of development with respect to the above

4.10 LP-2.1 Strategic Approach: “High priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the area’s *heritage assets* – including its Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, and other features with local historic or cultural associations, particularly where they contribute to the area’s local distinctiveness.” “Development should be of high quality design to help achieve sustainable, safe and inclusive communities, enhancing quality of life for residents and visitors, and designed in keeping with or to positively contribute towards the local identity of the area.”

4.11 Listed Buildings, Important Local Buildings, Conservation Area buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets all contribute significantly to the character of the area. Their demolition would adversely impact on this local character, as could changes to their appearance or development on adjacent sites. It is therefore important that these structures of local value, as well as their *settings*, are protected, retained and respected in any new development.

4.12 The Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area evaluation on page 44 of DHTS comments on sensitivity to large scale development “The area has a high sensitivity to major change. The scale and shape of the long narrow historic burgage plots reflect a planned layout of considerable time depth, which gives this part of Charmouth its character and any further erosion of the plot pattern would have a detrimental effect on the historic character.”

4.13 LP-ENV4(i) “The impact of development on a designated or non-designated heritage asset and its setting must be thoroughly assessed against the significance of the asset.” (iv) “Any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset must be justified.” See also LP-2.3 which provides further details.

4.14 Any proposal which could adversely affect any Heritage Asset, whether Designated or Non-Designated, or its setting, will require justification proportionate to the extent of the harm to its significance bearing in mind that any loss, damage or removal can never be reversed. Once lost or damaged the asset is gone forever.

The intent of Policy HH1 is therefore to ensure that while the village will continue to evolve, its special nature and important community heritage will be maintained appropriately.

POLICY HH1: Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- Applications for development directly or indirectly affecting any *heritage asset* must be accompanied by an assessment of their *significance*, including any contribution made by their *settings*. The assessment should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate that the *significance* of all affected *heritage assets* has been fully understood and for impacts to be properly assessed. This includes currently identified *Non-Designated Heritage Assets* as listed in Table 4.1 and shown on Map 4.3.
- Any development proposal which would directly or indirectly detract from the *significance* of locally important *heritage assets*, whether *designated or non-designated*, including any contribution made by their *setting*, will be resisted.

5. PROTECTING OUR ASSETS AND AMENITIES

Context

5.1 In the last century there were buildings and facilities that one would expect to find in a village of any size – a Church, a school, a village hall, a pub and a village shop. Depending on location, population size and circumstances you might also find things such as a Post Office, a garage, a doctor’s surgery or a library. Centralisation, changing lifestyles and other factors have meant that many villages have lost one or more of these assets. Charmouth is lucky to still retain most of these.

5.2 In the initial informal “street” interviews, carried out prior to framing the village survey, one of the recurring comments was that people felt that Charmouth was a friendly community, and was well served in terms of facilities and community activities.

5.3 There are approximately 80 clubs, societies and groups of all kinds (e.g. sports, history, crafts) in Charmouth, many of which are dependent on volunteers to function. A full list can be accessed in the Community Library.

5.4 Charmouth has a population of approximately 1,300. The 2011 Census showed that 26.5% of homes in the *parish* have “no usual residents” i.e. were *second homes* or holiday lets. The *Village Survey* indicated concern that any increase in non-residential homes would affect the ability of these volunteer-run facilities to survive. See also 8.22 and 8.23.

5.5 The *Local Plan* recognises the importance of local *community facilities* and services. LP-6.3.3: “The loss of valued local community facilities and services can significantly reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs and will also have an adverse impact on the social interaction and well-being of the community.”

5.6 According to the *Service Provider Questionnaire*, 44% of customers/users are from within the village. The extent to which the remaining 56% arises from the tourist trade varies, depending on the nature of the service/trade provided, and the effect of weather particularly in summer.

Service Providers provide local employment within the village, although this is limited, and there is no obvious scope for a significant increase in local employment.

Important Community Assets and Amenities

5.7 The following are recognised as important *community assets and amenities* by virtue of their contribution to the character of the village, the social fabric and cohesion of the village, and the amenity, enjoyment and security of the residents.

Table 5.1 Important Community Assets and Amenities

Note that information provided in the Table was correct up to March 2020. Covid-19 has affected several community assets and amenities, hopefully temporarily.

Policy AA1 is about safeguarding valuable community assets and amenities i.e. the activity/service/function. Inclusion in Table 5.1 is because of the community value of the activity, rather than the merits of the building occupied.

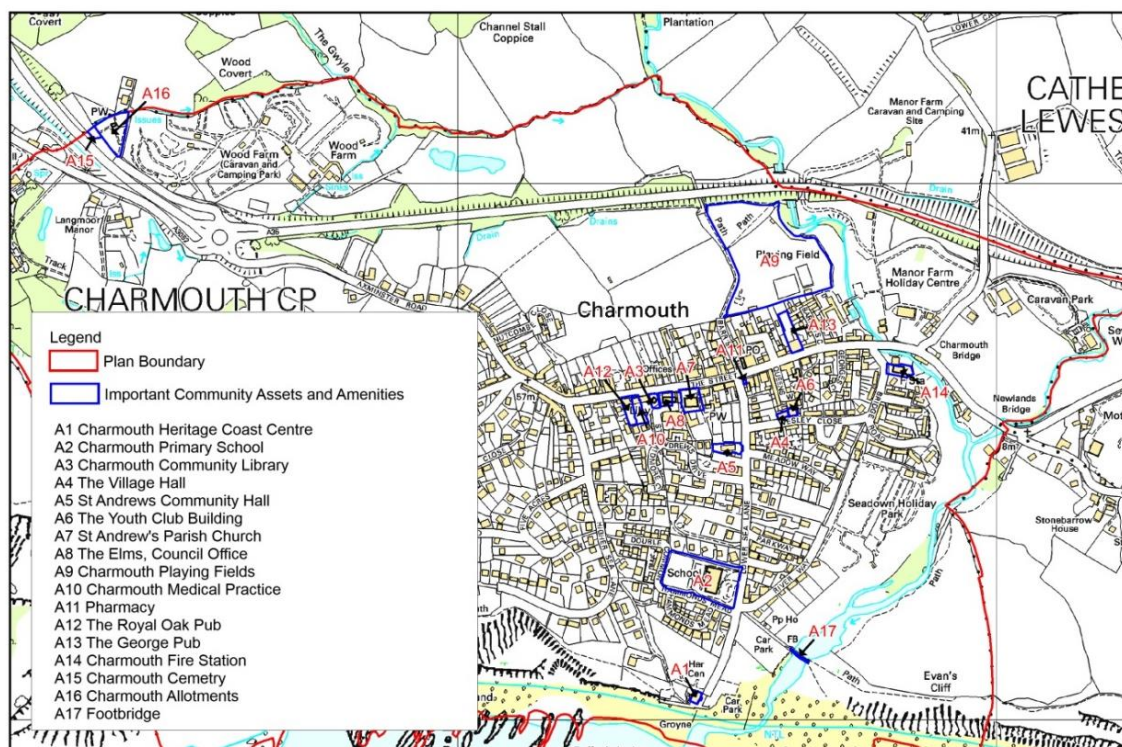
A1	<i>The Heritage Coast Centre</i>
Occupying the first floor of the Old Cement Factory, a building (see Table 4.1 asset H4) which is in itself an important part of the Charmouth foreshore, the Heritage Coast Centre is situated in the middle of the <i>Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site</i> . The Centre is a major draw for visitors ranging from local schools to international palaeontologists, with over 150,000 visits recorded in 2018. An independent charity, the Centre aims to advance the education of the public in the geology, palaeontology, marine life and natural history of the coast and local area. It is managed by a small staff and Trustees, with assistance from many volunteers. Entry is free. <i>In the CNP Survey 85% expressed satisfaction with the Heritage Coast Centre, with 11% expressing no strong views.</i>	
A2	<i>Charmouth Primary School</i>
The school is hugely important in terms of the social fabric of the village and surrounding areas, and vital in terms of maintaining a range of ages across the village population. It currently employs 20 staff. The number of pupils is 142, with a capacity of 170. The school operates with 5 classes, although it has the capacity for 7. In 2019 a pre-school/nursery for 3 and 4 year-olds was opened. <i>Although there were no questions in the CNP survey relating directly to the school, 66% thought that the village should attract families with young children by building additional houses for families.</i>	
A3	<i>Charmouth Community Library</i>
Volunteer-run but linked to Dorset Council, the library is open 6 half days per week, and the usual library services are provided. There is a café which can be booked for meetings, and local crafts and second-hand books are for sale. It is the official Tourist Information Point for Charmouth. Since July 2019 the library has hosted an Outreach Post Office Service one day per week. <i>In the CNP Survey 81% were happy with the Library (19% expressing no strong view).</i>	
A4	<i>The Village Hall</i>
Formerly the W.I. Hall, this building is a valuable village asset which is used for meetings, events and activities ranging from Gardeners' Society meetings to line dancing. It has a small stage and a kitchen and its heating and other facilities have been improved in fairly recent times. Since October 2020 it has hosted the Outreach Post Office Service one day per week.	
A5	<i>St. Andrew's Community Hall</i>
The building of the Hall commenced in 1909 and was funded by public subscription and gifted land. It has a high ceiling, a polished wood sprung floor, and a main stage suitable for theatre productions and concerts. A generous Lottery grant has funded disabled facilities, double glazing, heating and air-conditioning, making it an accessible and comfortable venue for all. The main hall has many uses. The Hall is equipped to cater for functions of up to 100 seated	

<p>dining guests or 150 audiences. There is a smaller Club Room and a large well-equipped kitchen. The Hall is a valuable asset to the community, being used for everything from wedding receptions to badminton, monthly film shows to bingo.</p> <p><i>The questions in the CNP Survey relating to Community Facilities: Social Amenities produced comments that the existing halls were well used, but with some adverse comments about “too many small halls”.</i></p>	
A6	<i>The Youth Club Building</i>
<p>Situated in Wesley Close, the Youth Club building is a modern, purpose-built facility, which was provided for the village in place of the old youth club building, as part of the Queen's Walk development. As well as its main purpose it is available for hire for events and activities. The Youth Club folded following the withdrawal of council funding; but it is hoped that it will re-open soon. At present the building is used for practice by a couple of bands of young local musicians, and activities such as table tennis, and Tai Chi classes.</p>	
A7	<i>St. Andrew's Parish Church</i>
<p>The present church of St Andrew was rebuilt in 1836, utilising some of the fabric and monuments saved from its predecessor on the same site. It is a <i>listed building</i>, but is on the At Risk Register, having like many other village churches seen its importance in the community reduced, and the cost of maintaining and repairing the fabric of the church become increasingly daunting. A recent grant from the Erskine Mutton Trust has enabled the completion of Phase One of a programme of repairs and refurbishment. (The village's other church, the United Reformed Church, also listed, was converted to a dwelling in 2019.)</p> <p><i>In the CNP Survey 44% were happy with the church(es) in the village. (At the time, there were two religious buildings and a religious service held in The Elms)</i></p>	
A8	<i>The Elms</i>
<p>The Elms, situated in The Street, is one of the oldest buildings in Charmouth. Now much larger than when it was the subject of a 2,000 year lease signed in 1575, it came into Charmouth <i>Parish Council</i> ownership in 1997. It houses the offices of CPC and the Mallory Hayter meeting room. The ground floor is currently available for rent as consulting rooms/offices/workshop. Part of the building comprises a flat which is let out by and brings in income for the Parish Council, as do offices situated upstairs. Until recently, the Pavey Room was located in The Elms.</p>	
A9	<i>Charmouth Playing Fields</i>
<p>The <i>Playing Fields</i> were bequeathed to the village in 1933, and enlarged more recently when the Parish Council purchased an adjacent field. They form a large <i>open space</i> next to the centre of the village and are a major asset: containing a children's playground, adult exercise equipment, picnic benches, football pitch, junior goals, Scout hut, bowling-green and pavilion. They are also the venue for 'Party In The Park' events, and Charmouth Fayre, when held. Hugely important to the character and 'life' of the village. (See LGS10 and LGS11)</p> <p><i>In the CNP Survey 60% were happy with the Playing Field facilities, and various suggestions for improvements and additional facilities were made, some of which have already been implemented.</i></p>	
A10	<i>Charmouth Medical Practice</i>
<p>With 51% of their registered patients living in the village and a further 39% living within a 5 mile radius, the practice is seen as being hugely important in the village. To cope with a full quota of patients, the practice now has three GPs, two practice nurses, a Practice Manager</p>	

and four reception staff. From 7 April 2021, Charmouth Medical Practice merged with Lyme Bay Medical Practice becoming one single practice known as Lyme Bay Medical Practice. The building is listed. <i>In the CNP Survey 99% were in favour of keeping the medical practice in Charmouth.</i>	
A11	<i>Charmouth Pharmacy</i>
A much-valued facility situated in the very centre of the village, with a qualified pharmacist who is able to provide advice as well as dispensing prescriptions. It is the site of a defibrillator on the wall adjacent to Lower Sea Lane. <i>In the CNP Survey 99% were satisfied or very satisfied with the 'service' shops, including Charmouth Pharmacy.</i>	
A12	<i>The Royal Oak</i>
The Royal Oak is one of the two public houses which have survived in Charmouth. Part of the social fabric of the village, hosting events such as quizzes and live music, as well as serving meals and having a large-screen T.V. for sports coverage.	
A13	<i>The George Inn</i>
The George Inn was built in the 16 th century, replacing a much older building on that site which had offered hospitality to travellers. It is one of the two public houses which has survived in Charmouth. It has a skittle alley with seven skittles teams, a pool table and a sizeable beer garden, and like the Royal Oak hosts events such as quizzes and live music, as well as serving meals and having a T.V. for sports coverage.	
A14	<i>Charmouth Fire Station</i>
Part of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service, Charmouth is an on-call station manned by trained and paid on-call firefighters who are local volunteers, many of whom are carrying on a family tradition. They have other jobs and obligations, but commit time to the Fire and Rescue Service throughout the week and respond to emergency calls when paged.	
A15	<i>Charmouth Cemetery</i>
Located at the west end of the village on the north side of the A35, this peaceful area includes a renovated chapel, which is available for intimate funeral services. The cemetery was extended in 2010 when it was envisaged that it would be able to meet the village's needs into the next century.	
A16	<i>Charmouth Allotments</i>
Only part of the Charmouth Allotment land at the western edge of Charmouth is within the Charmouth <i>Neighbourhood Plan</i> boundary. The land was originally purchased by the Charmouth Parish Council as a long-term extension of the Parish Council's cemetery and as such cannot be developed. However, following requests from Charmouth residents the land was leased to the Charmouth Allotment Society for use as allotments. Currently there is a waiting list for the allotments, which may indicate a need for more allotments elsewhere within Charmouth.	
A17	<i>The Footbridge</i>
Vital access to the east side of the river. Occasionally one can cross the river on foot but the river has to be low, and wellington boots are necessary. No other legal route exists other than by approaching along the beach from Seatown, which is dangerous as well as it being almost impossible to walk both ways during a single low tide. The bridge is an integral part of the South-West Coast Path / <i>England Coast Path</i> .	



Map 5.1 Important Community Assets and Amenities



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5.8 The *Habitats Regulations Assessment* identified that changes to the use of buildings within Sidmouth to West Bay SAC has the potential to increase threats to that SAC from human intrusion and disturbance and urbanisation. The mitigation for this effect is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations (see 6.15) and should be read in conjunction with Policy AA1 below.

5.9 The aim of Policy AA1 is to safeguard these valuable community assets, amenities and services, and to support and reinforce other *policies* in this Plan. Inclusion in Table 5.1 is because of the community value of the activity. For buildings see Chapter 4 and Policy HH1.

POLICY AA1: Important Community Assets and Amenities

- The important *community assets and amenities* listed in Table 5.1 above should be retained and allowed to modernise and adapt to enable the facilities they provide to meet the community's needs either in their current locations or through suitable alternative provision in the *Neighbourhood Plan area*. If no alternative within the *Neighbourhood Plan area* is available, relocation outside the *Neighbourhood Plan area* could be considered provided the new location is appropriate to its function and continues to serve the local community.
- The loss of important *community assets and amenities* will be strongly resisted unless it can be proved that there is no longer a need for them, or that they are not viable. Where there may be more than one building providing similar amenities locally, the loss or reduction may be off-set by improvements elsewhere.

6. PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



Context

6.1 The aim of this Plan is to maintain the special nature of this area, its geological, palaeontological and environmental assets, and the character and heritage of the village. Ensuring that the designations in place are fully considered is one way of achieving this, as is a strong presumption against development that fails to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of this *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty* (AONB), this being the primary purpose of that designation. Any development should protect the local landscape character and natural environmental assets, and enhance such local features, noting the internationally significant geology of the area. There is a need to protect the environment for residents, locals and visitors both national and international, for now and for future generations.

6.2 The *Local Plan* (LP) both in text and Policy LP-ENV1 supports that initial paragraph, noting the exceptional landscapes, views and sense of tranquillity. When referring to development, the LP refers to protection of the natural environment, requiring care to be taken of sensitive locations and recognition of potential adverse impact to landscape and ecology. National Environmental Policy direction is being framed within the Government's 25-year environment plan "A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment", published in 2018.

6.3 The 2015 report on Dorset's Environmental Economy looked at how Dorset residents value the environment, with clear findings including:

- Residents value the natural environment highly, make use of it frequently and regard the quality of the natural environment as one of the main reasons for living in Dorset.
- Residents place a high value of the contribution the environment makes to their well-being, and value highly the largely free and open access currently offered.

6.4 Charmouth Parish is small: 221.1 Hectares (2.211 sq kms) or 546.349 Acres (0.854 sq miles).

Natural areas within the parish are therefore considered very important to the residents.

Approximately one third of the parish is within the built-up area, with the remainder comprising fields and other open areas as described in Landscape Characteristics below, and listed in the Green Audit (see link in Appendix E). The River Char runs down through the Parish out to sea; The Gwyle is a major tributary which marks part of the northern Parish boundary.

Landscape

6.5 The special nature and importance of the Charmouth area and its environment has been recognised by a number of organisations and designations with the intention of providing protection for those assets.

6.6 Prior to being awarded World Heritage status by UNESCO in 2001, the area was already defined as the Dorset *Heritage Coast*, and even were *World Heritage Site* status to be lost for any reason, *Heritage Coast* status would continue. Heritage Coasts are protected through development control within the planning system.

Paragraph 173 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) and the supporting *National Planning Policy Guidance* (NPPG), provide the key protection for the WHS within the planning system. "Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within the one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 172 [which includes AONB]), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its *conservation*. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character."

6.7 NPPF emphasises that the presumption in favour of *sustainable development* should apply, "unless specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted." These 'specific policies' include those that refer to *designated heritage assets*. World Heritage Sites are defined as designated heritage assets in the NPPF and are therefore exempt from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.8 World Heritage Site (WHS): Charmouth is one of the gateways to the *Jurassic Coast*, England's first natural World Heritage Site, giving the area significant international recognition. In 2001, the undeveloped cliffs and beaches between Orcombe Point near Exmouth in East Devon, and Studland Bay near Poole in Dorset were inscribed on the World Heritage List by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. The Site was granted World Heritage Status under the criteria "Earth's

history and geological features” which indicates that its geology, palaeontology and geomorphology are of Outstanding Universal Value.

Management of this World Heritage Site is achieved through a partnership approach. The Jurassic Coast Trust is the body with delegated authority from UNESCO for the co-ordination and facilitation of Site management. Guidance from UNESCO describes the need to protect an area around a World Heritage Site, generally referred to as its setting.

Charmouth is situated about half way along the 95 mile World Heritage Site, and a key location for its Jurassic element: as such it attracts thousands of visitors every year, many of them from around the world.

(This is summarised in the ‘Jurassic Coast Trust Partnership Plan 2020-2025’.)

6.9 Of particular *significance* locally, conservation of the WHS is covered by the statutory Management Plan for the Dorset AONB (AONB MP). The special qualities of the AONB are important in understanding the setting of the WHS, and AONB policies provide some of the protection that negates the need for a buffer zone around the WHS.

6.10 Although the coast was not inscribed in the World Heritage list for its natural beauty, UNESCO recognises its value with respect to this creation as “nationally important”, justified further by the UK Government’s’ decades-long designation of the East Devon and Dorset Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which covers more than 80% of the WHS area.

The special qualities of the AONBs, such as tranquillity and undeveloped character of coast and seascapes, are important for helping to determine how people experience and enjoy the setting of the WHS.

6.11 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation: Charmouth lies within the Dorset AONB, which is a landscape of national and international significance for its natural and cultural heritage assets, in an area known for its outstanding environmental quality. AONBs are defined as areas not in a National Park but considered to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable to protect them. The Government has confirmed that the landscape qualities of National Parks and AONBs are equivalent and current guidance makes it clear that the practical application of the natural beauty criterion is identical for both National Parks and AONBs, as is their equivalent importance and protection. Dorset AONB was designated in 1959 and is the 5th largest AONB in the UK, covering 1,129 sq kms (435.9 sq miles,) approximately 42% of the county. *Geodiversity* underpins the natural beauty for which the AONB is designated.

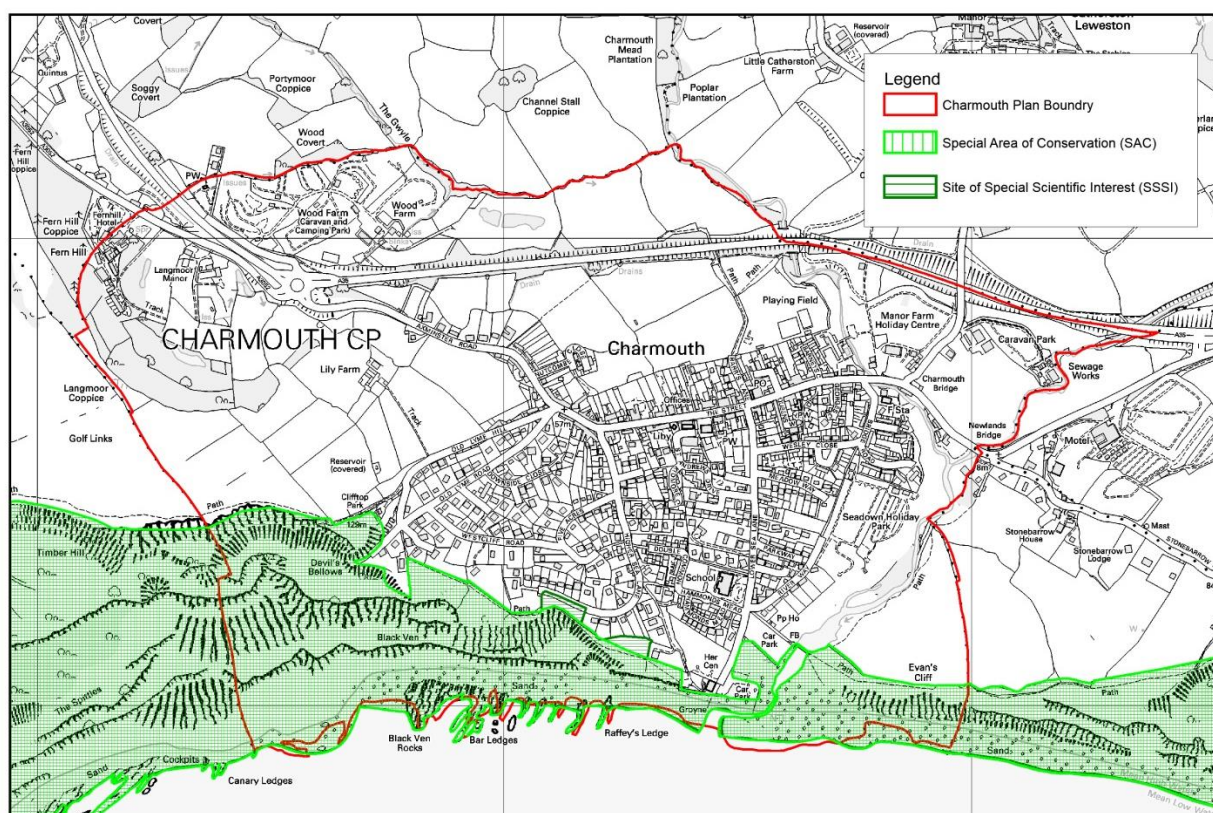
The ‘AONB MP’ states that “Local planning authorities have a statutory duty of regard for the primary purpose of the AONB to conserve and enhance natural beauty when making planning decisions.”

Paragraph 172 of NPPF states “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks ... and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks.”

6.12 A mark of the area’s importance is the proposal to Natural England that the area become a national park. This proposal embraces the Dorset and East Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural

Beauty (AONB) and is under serious consideration. A report written for Dorset County Council (March 2016) as part of the proposal valued the Dorset environment as worth some £1.5bn a year.

6.14 *Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation:* Charmouth is part of the Sidmouth to West Bay Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC UK00119864), a European designation. This area is an example of a highly unstable soft cliff coastline subject to mudslides and landslips. The principal rock types locally are soft mudstones, clays and silty limestones. It is subject to frequent mudslides in the waterlogged soft limestones and clays. Vegetation is very varied and includes pioneer communities on recent slips, calcareous grassland and extensive self-sown woodland dominated by ash and sycamore. The *Habitats Regulations Assessment* particularly notes the importance of SAC protection for Charmouth. See link to the HRA in Appendix E.



Habitats Regulations Assessment

6.15 A requirement of the *Basic Conditions Statement*, is for the *Neighbourhood Plan* to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, be compatible with EU obligations, and not likely to have a significant effect on a European wildlife site, (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007).

In order to assess the likely impact on European wildlife sites, a *Habitats Regulation Assessment* (HRA) has been carried out by Dorset Council on behalf of the *Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*. A link to the full HRA Report can be found in Appendix E.

6.16 An initial screening of possible European sites, within the immediate vicinity, that could be affected by the NP *policies* was considered. Certain sites were discounted from further consideration as no ‘pathways’ of impact were identified. Further evaluation of three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in Devon and Dorset were carried out. The result of the HRA screening concluded the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC was the only site that could be affected by this Plan.

6.17 The HRA Report stated that: “However, a likely significant effect [i.e. through development within Charmouth Parish] upon a European Site from the following three pathways could not be confidently ruled out”:

- *Pollution* to groundwater (point source and diffuse sources)
- Human intrusion and disturbances; and
- Urbanisation, industrial and similar activities

6.18 It was considered unlikely that the level of housing proposed in this Plan would result in a likely significant impact upon the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC.

However, proposed mitigations for these effects have been identified for the following draft policies: AA1, NE3, NE6, BET2, GA1, GA2 and CC2. These mitigations are contained in the following policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations.

POLICY HRA1: Habitats Regulations

Any development carried out must not adversely affect the integrity of ‘Sidmouth to West Bay *Special Area of Conservation*’ in particular:

- **developments associated with community assets as described in policy AA1 or buildings sited by the coast**
- ***European and international wildlife sites* and their safeguarding, as described in policy NE3**
- ***pollution* impact as described in policy NE6**
- **economic development as described in policy BET2**
- **enhancement of pedestrian routes as described in policy GA1**
- **development on public/visitor car parks as described in policy GA2**
- **development of *coastal defences* as described in policy CC2**

Landscape Characteristics

6.19 LP-ENV1 refers to “...the area’s exceptional landscapes and seascapes and geological interests”, which will be “protected, taking into account the objectives of the ‘Dorset AONB Management Plan’ and ‘World Heritage Site Management Plan’. Development which would harm the character, special qualities or natural beauty of the Dorset AONB or Heritage Coast, including their characteristic landscape quality and diversity, uninterrupted panoramic views, individual landmarks, and a sense of tranquillity and remoteness will not be permitted.”

6.20 In general terms, the ‘AONB Landscape Character Assessment 2019’ places Charmouth Parish predominantly within the Wootton Hills character area and partly within the Chideock Hills character area. These areas are of the same landscape type (evaluated by AONB as “strong”) and therefore share planning and management guidelines.

6.21 The ‘Charmouth Chideock and Seatown Conservation Area Appraisal’ (CCSCAA) adds more detail to the AONB character assessment: “The wider setting of Charmouth shows several characteristic elements, the proximity to a superb coastline of world fame, an inland landscape of riverside meadows and high hills capped and flanked with woodland and a more immediate context of fields and bypass to the north of the village. The historic core has a very obvious edge to the adjoining *countryside*, marked by a stone wall of unknown age and hedges, between back gardens, *infill* development and fields.”

6.22 Landscape Setting from ‘Dorset Historic Towns’ Survey’ (DHTS) says: “Charmouth lies on a steep east-facing slope running down to the edge of the River Char and its tributary to the east, The slopes become increasingly steep to the west. It lies just inland from the coast. The steep slopes dominate the setting.”

“The position of the town on a hillside exerts a strong visual influence on the town, adding variety to the visual experience of the town and providing good views over the town and surrounding landscape, particularly from higher up on the western side of Charmouth. Green spaces and trees form an important element in the urban fabric with many prominent trees mature trees within the centre of the town and many trees and mature planting in the suburban development to the south, obscuring much of the housing and softening the boundaries with the surrounding countryside.”

DHTS also notes: “The draft Historic Landscape Character mapping shows Charmouth sitting within an area of largely piecemeal enclosed fields and other regular enclosed fields, with open ground to the north around Hogchester and to the east around Stonebarrow. There are small areas of woodland on Timber Hill and Stonebarrow.”

6.23 In summary the landscape characteristics for the parish are listed in Table 6.1

Table 6.1 Distinctive Landscape Characteristics of Charmouth Parish

- Exceptional landscapes
- Unstable eroding cliffs and undercliffs, slumped cliffs and landslips
- Herb-rich grassland along the coast
- Wooded hills with steep slopes, the river, and riverside meadows
- Green spaces and trees amongst the urban fabric
- Fields mainly of pasture
- Some woods, *green corridors* such as hedgerows and verges
- Proximity to a superb coastline of world fame

Sourced from AONB, CCSCAA, DHTS, and 'Dorset Coast: Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment 2010'

6.24 Historically Charmouth and the landscape surrounding it have been considered outstanding. 'A Guide to All the Watering and Sea-Bathing Places' published in 1803 refers to "this delightful village", which "occupies an elevated situation, and consequently commands many vast and beautiful prospects both of sea and land." In 1803, on her visit to Charmouth, Jane Austen wrote "Charmouth, with its high grounds and extensive sweeps of country, and still more its sweet, retired bay, backed by dark cliffs, where fragments of low rock among the sands make it the happiest spot for watching the flow of tide, for sitting in unwearied contemplation."

6.25 Despite the above description, the character of the beach changes on almost a daily basis, from sand to shingle to stretches of boulders; with the underlying ledges appearing and disappearing; with rockfalls and mudslides which are gradually washed away. This combination of landscape and the ever-changing shoreline makes Charmouth a special place. Bathing water quality was graded as excellent in 2018 and in 2019. It should be noted that, unusually, the beach is owned by the *Parish Council*, as well as its immediate hinterland.

6.26 The intent of this policy is therefore to ensure that while the village continues to evolve, the special nature of its landscape character must be considered valuable. Development should be in harmony with, and where possible conserve or enhance, the local landscape character as described above.

POLICY NE1: Landscape

- **Development will not be permitted which would harm the natural and built environment of Charmouth *Parish*, its character and beauty. This includes its characteristic landscape quality and diversity, wildlife *habitats*, panoramic views, individual landmarks, and sense of tranquillity and remoteness as described in Table 6.1.**

Views and vistas

6.27 The village is closely bound between sea and land with rivers close to the east and north edges of the parish, and with land rising steeply both east and west of the village. The views and panoramas in all directions around Charmouth reflect its unique heritage of landscape and historical character. There are some excellent viewpoints from which to appreciate the village and its surrounds.



Views (a) from Stonebarrow looking west (b) from the top of Old Lyme Hill looking east

6.28 Much of ‘old Charmouth’ contains interesting historic buildings and provides picturesque views such as street views at local level. CCSCAA notes that “Key views and vistas are the progression of townscape experiences up and down The Street and Axminster Road; the wide views from the upper slopes of the higher ground to coast and countryside; the sudden transition on Barrs Lane to green space and the sight of the medieval boundaries of the burgage plots.” “There are odd landmarks like the Church tower and other visual focal points such as trees and there are glimpses up side passages and lanes as well as views of the wider countryside, adding up to a rich and complex sequence of spaces, views and other townscape experiences.” Chapter 4 provides more historical information.

6.29 There are many views within the old part of the village which are still recognisable from the earliest photographs of the mid-1800s.



Then and now: (a) looking up The Street from outside the Abbots House/Queen's Armes on the left (b) looking down The Street from opposite St Andrew's Church (on the right)

6.30 Some quotes from VS re views:

- Charmouth is a unique and friendly village and we are lucky to live in such a beautiful place
- Respect its history and natural beauty by restricting unsympathetic and over-development

6.31 DHTS charts the gradual process of development and infill from its earliest documented mention in the Domesday Book until the present day. The Charmouth Historic Urban Character Area evaluation from DHTS notes that much of the *Conservation Area* has a high sensitivity to major change. The scale and shape of the long narrow historic burgage plots reflect a planned layout of considerable time depth, which gives this part of Charmouth its character and any further erosion of the plot pattern would have a detrimental effect on the historic character.



View of village from Catherston Leweston

6.32 The Old Priory Wall on the mediaeval boundary (the history of which is given in 4.3) marking the northern edge of the village is important to the village's character and history. Good views of this Wall still exist and should be protected. Should any development take place close to the Wall not only would the Wall be hidden, but the concept of the village boundary Wall and its mediaeval roots would be lost. See Map 4.2.

6.33 Significantly, under the West Dorset District Plan of 2015, the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identified the area close to and outside the Wall as an area not to be built upon (WD/CHTH/002) and states: "Unacceptable impact on townscape and landscape as the site provides a soft edge to the village when viewed from the A35. Likely highway issues as there appears to be no suitable means of access. Likely impacts on the setting of the Conservation Area." The 2020 SHLAA confirmed the unsuitability of the area. See paragraph 8.6.

6.34 The LP refers to views only in a very general manner while recognising that Dorset is a very picturesque county, and that local distinctiveness be protected and enhanced.

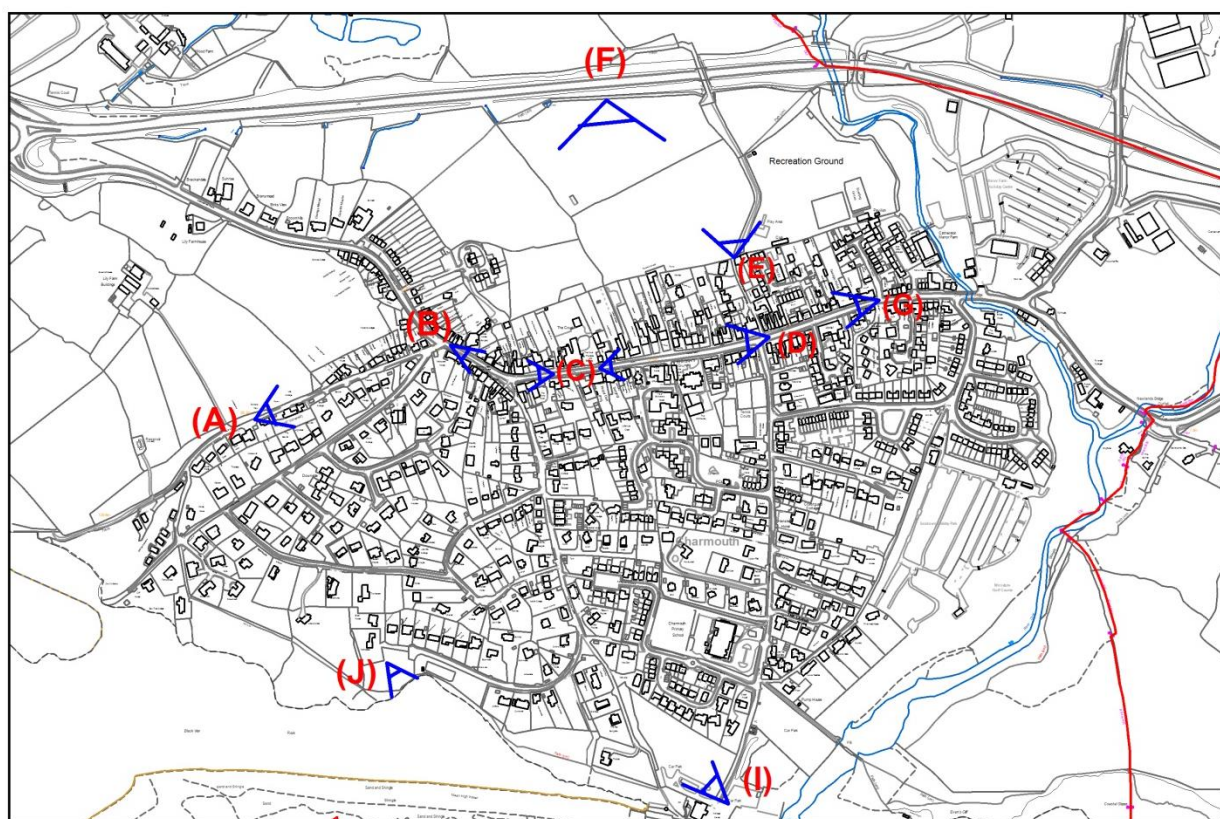
6.35 The 'AONB MP' states that "Development which has negative effects on the natural beauty of the AONB, its special qualities, ecosystem flows and natural processes is avoided." Further, it requires that the quality of views into, within and out of the AONB is protected; and that the pattern of landscape features, including settlements that underpin local identity must also be protected.

6.36 The parish has the good fortune to have wonderful views in all directions due to its hilly nature and coastal situation; long, panoramic views from the parish outwards in all directions; and views into the parish from neighbouring hills. These views across the countryside and seascape are available to everyone, contributing significantly both to the area's special character and to the quality of life enjoyed by residents and its many visitors.

The importance of such views is recognised by the fact that where built development is proposed within an identified view, then a *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (LVIA) including photomontages is required under 'Planning Application Requirements April 2019' to ensure the impact of the development is understood and that measures are identified to ensure the view is not diminished.

6.37 All wide views of and from the parish could be sensitive to the effects of development, with many views being altered little over the years. However the key views which this Plan aims to protect under this Plan have to be those local, more specific views where development would cause a negative impact. Holiday parks are visible in some wider views of the area, although some of these have taken care to plant trees and provide some screening.

MAP 6.2 Locally Important Views



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Table 6.2 Locally Important Views

	View from	View of = description/reason	Reference if exists
A	Upper western edge of Conservation Area on Old Lyme Hill	Looking down Old Lyme Hill. Also to hills in the distance.	
B	Corner of The Street, Old Lyme Hill and Old Lyme Road, near The Pound	View down The Street showing part of the 'old village', part of Conservation Area. The Pound is LGS3	
C	Knapp Green (corner The Street and Higher Sea Lane)	Conservation Area views up, and down The Street over Charmouth. Also long views eastwards to Stonebarrow, Ryall and farther. Knapp Green is LGS4	CCSCAA
D	Corner of Lower Sea Lane and The Street	View up The Street showing part of the 'old village', part of Conservation Area	CCSCAA
E	Barrs Lane gap in the wall on mediaeval boundary	Looking north across fields	CCSCAA

F	Barrs Lane, and from footpath beside A35, and from A35	Continuous view across to the Abbey Wall. See photos at 6.33	SHLAA WD/CHTH/002 See 6.33
G	Corner of Bridge Road and The Street	View up The Street showing the lower part of the 'old village', part of Conservation Area	CCSCAA
I	First view many tourists see get when they get out of their car near the shore.	View up towards village on hillside	
J	Turning circle at the top end of Higher Sea Lane	View eastwards across the lower part of the village, down to the sea and along the coast	



View A: Looking down Old Lyme Hill from the top of the Conservation Area



View B: View down The Street showing part of the 'old village' from the Corner of The Street, Old Lyme Hill and Old Lyme Road



View C: Two photos taken from The Knapp(i) looking down The Street (ii) looking up The Street. A historical view down The Street from The Knapp can be seen as the ‘then and now’ at paragraph 4.5.



View D: View up The Street showing part of the ‘old village’ from the Corner of Lower Sea Lane and The Street. A ‘then and now’ historical version of this view can be seen at 4.5.



View E: Looking north across fields from the Barrs Lane gap in the wall on mediaeval boundary



***Views F: Views of the Abbey Wall from (a) Catherston (b) near the foot of Nutcombe Terrace
(c) Barrs Lane***



View G: up The Street from near The George Inn



View I: The first view many tourists see when they get out of their car near the shore, looking up to the village.



View J: From the turning circle on Higher Sea Lane

6.38 Policy NE2 aims to protect those views and vistas which are available to all. There should be a presumption against any development which by its location or design would harm the appreciation of important views of or from the parish.

The design and layout of development should minimise adverse impacts on views from public rights of way over open countryside and preserve and enhance such views where possible.

Development that would adversely affect the rural setting of the village (whether by scale, massing, design or location) will not be supported. See also Policy H4.

POLICY NE2: Views and Vistas

- **Specific key local views will be protected as identified and listed in Table 6.2 and on Map 6.2.**
- **Development which would result in a negative effect on wide views and vistas, and/or local views (as shown on Map 6.2) which are available for appreciation by all, will be resisted.**
- **Development may be supported where it conserves and enhances local landscape characteristics and quality, and safeguards open *countryside* and cherished public views from inside and outside the *Parish*.**

Natural Habitats, Wildlife Corridors and Biodiversity

The Importance of Biodiversity

6.39 The varied landscape characteristics of Charmouth (6.19 to 6.26) give rise to a wide range of habitats for wildlife and thus good species biodiversity. The fields to the north and west of the village are largely used for pasture: cattle, sheep and meadow. A link to the Green Audit, listing all green areas within the Parish can be found in Appendix E.

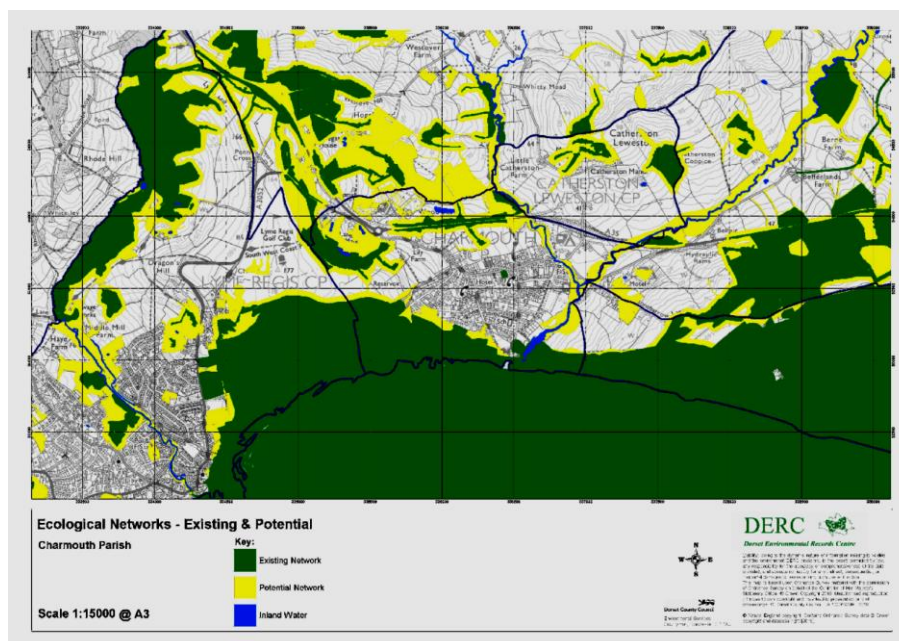
6.40 Through its Management Plan the Dorset AONB Partnership is helping deliver the aspirations of 'Biodiversity 2020', which is the Government's commitment to wildlife and ecosystems under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The mission for Biodiversity 2020 is "to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent *ecological networks*, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people". The AONB Management Plan further states that development should "... avoid and reduce the impacts of development on biodiversity."

6.41 LP-ENV2 states: "Proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported. Opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity in and around developments will be encouraged."

Green corridors and ecological networks

6.42 A green corridor is generally a strip of land that provides sufficient habitat to support wildlife, and allows the movement of wildlife along it; while an ecological network provides linkages between such corridors creating a whole *green infrastructure* of spaces and linkages valuable for their wildlife, geological, landscape or historic importance.

Map 6.3 Local Ecological Networks



6.43 NPPF paragraph 174 highlights the need “To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity” and gives detailed instructions about identifying, mapping and safeguarding habitats including ecological networks.

The Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC) has mapped the ecological networks for the Parish (Map 6.3). Areas include, as expected, the areas with SSSI and SAC protection, the internationally *designated area* of the World Heritage Site, National Trust land, the sea, the river and river valley and inland water sites, hedgerows, wooded areas, wide verges and the churchyard. Those areas already recognised by DERC as existing ecological networks are shown in green. DERC has also mapped potential network sites shown in yellow, both *wildlife corridors* and stepping stones. Little has been identified within the built boundary, but a substantial area of the rest of the Parish either is, or has the potential to be, part of that network.

6.44 The AONB MP (9.3.4) states that “Developments will be required to make a positive contribution to the overall green infrastructure and ecological networks. All aspects of green infrastructure, e.g. sustainable drainage, also require good design that respects local character and must also make an appropriate contribution to landscape ecology. The net result of these contributions should be landscape gain.”

6.45 Gardens should not be forgotten as they are an important part of the ecological network. Charmouth contains some relatively large gardens, important for wildlife and part of an unmapped green network. See also 6.61

6.46 Several of the Parish’s *Local Green Spaces* are important to *biodiversity* as *green corridors* and stepping stones See 6.63 to 6.71 and Table 6.5 particularly LGS7 and LGS9.

6.47 LP Policies ENV2(vi) and ENV3(ii) not only support the idea of green infrastructure networks, but make the point that opportunities should be taken not just to protect the natural environment but to improve such ecological spaces and their biodiversity.

6.48 The A35 verges are recognised as important green corridors in a 2018 report written by Highways England in collaboration with Dorset Wildlife Trust, following the initiative of a local resident and landowner. Highways England has a duty to manage and maintain its verges and has stated: “Highways England is keen to manage road verges to benefit wild flowers and other nature. Dorset Wildlife Trust have confirmed through a species survey that a strong species mix is already present in the A35 verges at Charmouth. Designation as a *Site of Nature Conservation Interest* (SNCI) is a possible consideration, and the local community at Charmouth have expressed a strong desire to see these verges managed to enhance the wild flower population.” (See letter listed in App E – CNP A35 Report). See also 6.52.

6.49 There are green corridors around the village which if damaged or broken through, would impinge on the wildlife benefit they currently provide. Examples of this are LGS7 (wilderness beside track from Higher Sea Lane to Lookout Green) and Green Audit B5 (woodland from roundabout up to Fernhill, both sides of A3052.) The River Char and its tributaries provide excellent green corridors through and bounding the parish.

6.50 It is important to maintain or improve the semi-rural character and appearance of the parish by ensuring the existence of open areas which have amenity, environmental or other value. This means protecting green areas: green corridors, hedges, trees and verges, and linking one green area to another. The importance of not impairing or damaging the enjoyment, health benefits and recreational value of green areas must be recognised. Many comments in the VS support these views, for example:

- “It is important to maintain wildlife corridors i.e. linked green space areas for wildlife to travel through the village to encourage biodiversity”

Species Biodiversity

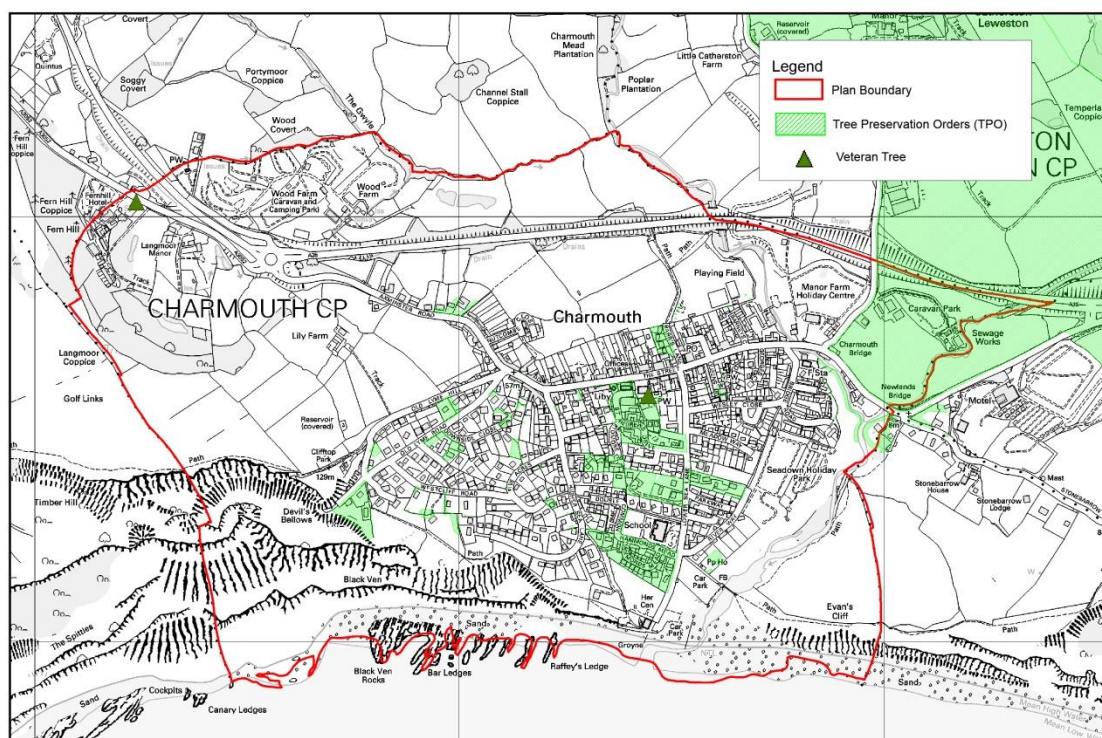
6.51 Within this area, the diverse underlying geology and geomorphology processes are intrinsic to ecosystems delivery, influencing soils and hydrology, wildlife habitats, landform, land use and architecture that make up the character and distinctiveness of the landscape and support the current diversity of flora and fauna.

6.52 Various surveys have been undertaken in Charmouth Parish and close by, as well as records being made by individuals, identifying an excellent range of species. Many of these are under threat, rare or protected (see the ‘List of species and habitats of principal importance for *biodiversity conservation*’ as monitored by Natural England), or have *Dorset Notable* recognition. It must be noted that wildlife does not recognise boundaries and many species can travel considerable distances, so records from nearby are as valid as those from within the parish provided the terrain is suitable or green networks exist.

The species’ records include four protected mammal species including otter; ten protected bird species; 16 *protected species* of moths, butterflies and beetles. Records also include the majority of UK bat species, and in early 2021 the Bat Conservation Trust gained funding to research the rare Grey long-eared bat (*Plecotus austriacus*) locally. A total of around 350 species of moths were identified in Charmouth in 2019 (source: local resident with over 50 years’ experience of identifying and studying moths). Yellow meadow ants (*Lasius flavus*) have formed dozens of ant-hills in grassland west of Lookout Green (LGS9 in Table 6.1).

The 2018 Dorset Wildlife Trust survey of A35 verges (see 6.48) identified over 50 distinct plant species with no less than twelve of them being ‘Dorset Notable’ (which it is believed would be better than most local SSSI sites could claim). A link to the A35 Report can be found in Appendix E. A surprisingly large number of trees and tree groupings within Charmouth have Tree Preservation Orders as can be seen on Map 6.4.

Map 6.4 Tree Preservation Orders and Veteran Trees



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Tree Preservation Order (TPO): A *Tree Preservation Order* is an order made by a *local planning authority* in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity.

Veteran Tree: A tree which, because of its great age, size or condition is of exceptional value for wildlife, in the landscape, or culturally.

6.53 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 transpose (*sic*) certain prohibitions against activities affecting European Protected Species. These include prohibitions against the deliberate capturing, killing or disturbance and against the damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

See Appendix E for links to the DERC list of protected species found in the Parish, and to the Dorset Wildlife Trust survey of the A35 verges.

6.54 It is clear from the comments in the *Village Survey* that many residents are very positive about Charmouth's environment. In particular, VS Reports Q1, Q4 and Q11, 14, 15 suggest a high level of support for protection of the natural environment.

And specifically with regard to development

6.55 The Wildlife Trusts say: “It’s possible to create nature-friendly housing by planting wildlife-rich community green spaces, walkways, gardens, verges, roofs, wetlands and other natural features. These gains for wildlife improve people’s health and quality of life too.” Their blueprint for new nature-friendly homes highlights the myriad of social, environmental and economic benefits of this approach.

Table 6.3 The Wildlife Trusts' Blueprint

Benefits for wildlife	Better protection for wildlife sites, more space for wildlife, improved connectivity and buildings that are more wildlife-friendly
Benefits for residents	Daily contact with nature, improved health, protection against climate extremes, safer transport routes, good sense of community
Benefits for the economy and wider society	Cost-effective environmental protection, employment, space to grow local food, healthier and happier communities putting less pressure on health and social services
Benefits for developers	Satisfied customers, market value, enhanced brand, improved recruitment, improved environmental ranking

6.56 The inclusion of wildlife assistance measures in any development would thus be appropriate in this context. Most of the suggestions in Table 6.4 can be incorporated at little or no additional cost (Dorset Wildlife Trust and others).

Table 6.4 Wildlife Assistance Measures

Bat boxes	Swift boxes/swift bricks	Plant native trees, shrubs, flowers
Owl boxes	Hedgehog homes	Create green roofs and walls to provide habitat, will also regulate pollution and excessive rainfall
Nest boxes for other birds	Leave areas or even corners, wild	
Insect hotels		Provide / leave verges
Retain or improve hedges and other green corridors		Where possible, retain existing trees, hedges, water, and integrate within new development
Leave hedgehog runs under fences (will also allow frogs and newts to move around)		Planting to be wildlife-friendly, using native species, suitable for bees and pollinators, butterflies and other insects
Include Sustainable Drainage Systems, would retain rainwater in storms		

6.57 LP-ENV2 states “In other locations, including locally identified wildlife sites and water-bodies, where significant harm to nature conservation interests cannot be avoided, it should be mitigated. Where it cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensation will result in the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity otherwise development will not be permitted. Features of nature

conservation interest should be safeguarded by development.” Mitigation rather than *conservation* should be seen as a last resort.

6.58 Development should make provision for the future retention and protection of trees, hedgerows, woodland, local wildlife areas and other features that contribute to the area’s landscape and *biodiversity* interest. See Table 6.1, Map 6.3 and Map 6.4. Only where retention of biodiversity features is not feasible should provision be made for suitable replacement.

6.59 Consideration of development applications must ensure that the value of the natural environment is given significant weight. A *Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan* (BMEP) is an ecological survey required for all development sites of 0.1ha or greater in size or where there are known protected species or important habitats/habitat features.

In 2019 Dorset Council produced a ‘Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol’ which is how Dorset Council assesses impacts on biodiversity arising from planning applications. The framework ensures that the Council meets its biodiversity duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, as well as obligations under other wildlife legislation and policy and includes guidance on the Dorset Compensation Framework. The main focus of this guidance is on areas over 0.1ha and on protected species.

However, as few development sites in Charmouth Parish will be as large as 0.1ha, this Plan requests that on sites below the standard threshold for a biodiversity appraisal, applicants must identify the possible ecological impact of their development. This is because in a small parish, the cumulative impact of several small developments may result in fragmentation of habitat and therefore a disproportionate impact on biodiversity.

6.60 Where there is sufficient space, compensatory measures in the locality may be feasible allowing for the element of time, but the last resort of financial compensation is unlikely to mitigate the harm done.

National policy includes the potential for compensatory measures* where harm cannot be avoided or mitigated.

*Compensatory Measures: Any administrative or legislative action, procedure or enactment designed to redress disruptions of ecological integrity or damage to the supply of natural resources. When implemented, the measures should balance the ecological damage, aiming for a 'no net loss' situation that benefits both habitats and their associated species.

6.61 Protecting gardens from infill is considered important to the village. In the VS 27% responses were strongly against infill; a further 37% tended to be against infill; while only 20% supported the infill of village gardens for building purposes; 16% had no strong views. It should be noted that within the NPPF gardens are explicitly excluded from the definition of *brownfield* land.

See also paragraphs 6.45 and 8.5.

Comments from VS:

- “Don’t over-manicure it. Don’t destroy the general character of the place”
- “Keep the village as natural as possible and not overdevelop”
- and many more in this vein

6.62 As a result of the *Habitats Regulations Assessment* (see link in Appendix E) it was identified that development could adversely affect the integrity of wildlife sites in and around Charmouth. The mitigation for these risks is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations and should be read in conjunction with Policy NE3.

A key aim must be to protect these aspects of the natural environment by ensuring that all development is sustainable. In this way Charmouth’s current diversity of fauna and flora will be maintained and improved in accordance with Biodiversity 2020, the national policy which, in defining sustainable development, acknowledges the diverse role of the environment, contributing to protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, habitats and species, and the reduction of pollution. NPPF also supports this view.

POLICY NE3: Biodiversity and Natural Habitats

- Development must retain and incorporate the natural assets such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, local wildlife areas and other features, all of which make a significant contribution to the *biodiversity* and character of the local landscape and enjoyment of it. See Table 6.1, Map 6.3 and Map 6.4.
- Only where retention of *biodiversity* features is not feasible should provision be made for suitable replacement or compensatory measures
- Development which interrupts the integrity and continuity of *green infrastructure, green corridors and ecological networks* is contrary to *biodiversity* aims and will be resisted, unless clearly outweighed by other benefits.
- Where significant harm to nature *conservation* interests cannot be avoided, it must be mitigated. Where it cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, development will not be permitted. Mitigation or compensatory measures rather than *conservation* should be seen as a last resort.
- Development proposals should consider the inclusion of wildlife assistance measures such as those listed in Table 6.4.
- On sites below the standard threshold for a *biodiversity* appraisal (i.e. for new development of a site less than 0.1ha) applicants must identify, within their application, the possible ecological impact of their development where the proposed development site includes or adjoins: a large mature garden; mature trees; woodland; field or roadside hedgerows; river floodplain; meadow; species-rich grassland.
- Any *Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan* must apply to the future management of the land, *green corridors* and *biodiversity* assets i.e. it will stay with the land in perpetuity.

Local Green Spaces

6.63 While areas of the parish already have designated value such as SSSI, SAC, AONB etc., the principle of caring for natural habitats and biodiversity as summarised in Policy NE3 can be taken further to protect specific green areas through creating Local Green Spaces.

6.64 NPPF allows for policies to designate Local Green Spaces, to protect them for current and future generations. “Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to the local community.” Locality notes “Planning for green spaces can help to achieve social economic and environmental benefits of a neighbourhood.”

6.65 In a survey of their sites in 2016, The Land Trust found that “9 out of 10 people felt that our green spaces play a positive part in their happiness and wellbeing” and that over 75% of those questioned thought that “green spaces bring communities closer together” (‘The Land Trust Green Spaces Great Places Annual Review 2015-2016’). This is the ethos of Charmouth Local Green Spaces where opportunities are recognised for health and wellbeing, engaging with wildlife, and keeping the local area desirable. In turn this should also have an economic benefit for the local community.

6.66 A comprehensive Report on the proposed Local Green Spaces in Charmouth is available. See link to the Local Green Spaces Report in Appendix E. Table 6.5 provides a summary only, with Map 6.5 showing their locations.

Detailed maps of green spaces are to be found in the link to Additional Maps in Appendix E.

6.67. The Green Audit (see link in Appendix E) lists all green areas within the parish, a subset of which are as Local Green Spaces. If identified, it would be possible to add further Local Green Spaces during any review of the CNP.

Table 6.5 Proposed Local Green Spaces

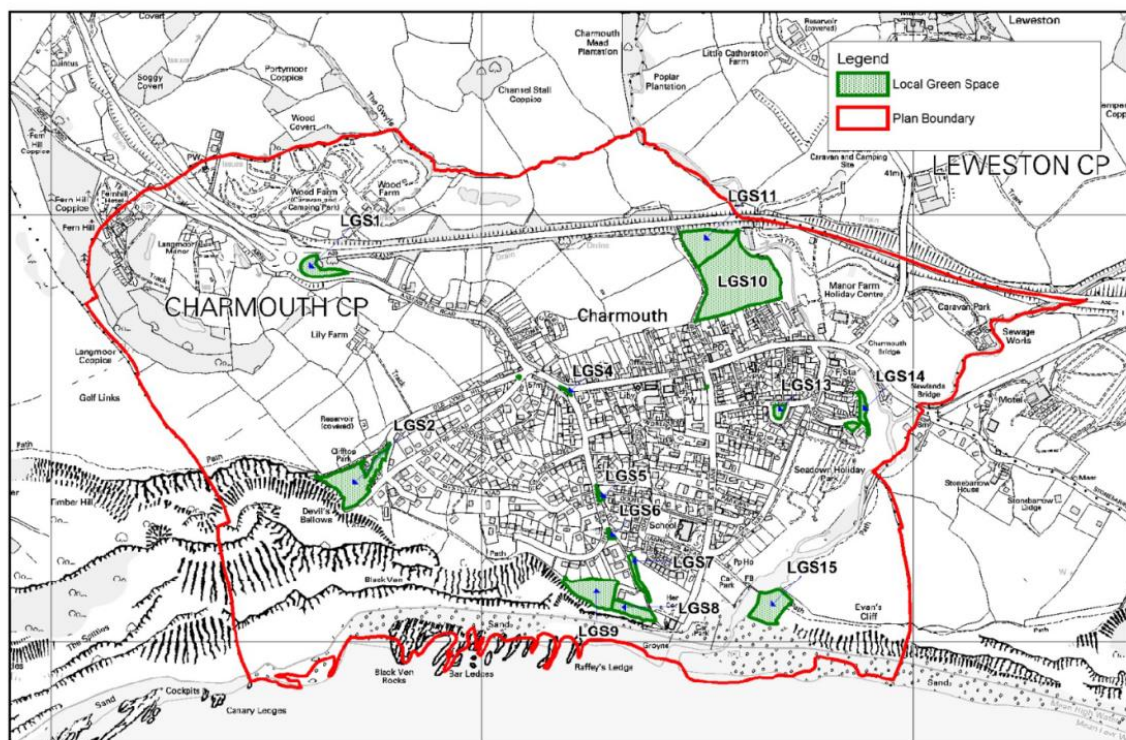
REF	DESCRIPTION	REASON FOR IMPORTANCE
LGS1	Verges at western entrance to Charmouth	Removed as a proposed site following consultation as Highways England identified this land as an operational highway with highway rights upon it.
LGS2	National Trust field, top of Old Lyme Hill	Attractive small wild field, with panoramic views of Lyme Bay
LGS3	The Pound, historic site of the old village stocks	Small area at top of the hill with historical interest, a good view over Charmouth, and a bench. Corner of The Street, Old Lyme Road and Old Lyme Hill. See also Table 4.1 H2 and Table 6.2 View B

LGS4	The Knapp, corner of The Street and Higher Sea Lane	Small area up the hill with a bench and view down The Street
LGS5	Two small grassy spaces in Higher Sea Lane, either side of the right of way down to Double Common	Small areas of grass and wild flowers and a bench
LGS6	Area adjoining Higher Sea Lane and the right of way to The Lookout Green. "The Triangle"	Grass, shrubs. A continuance of the green corridor leading down to the beach
LGS7	A stretch of biodiverse habitat between Higher Sea Lane and The Lookout Green, bordered by the grassed car park and the right of way	Stretch of wilderness which includes a stream and which supports a diverse range of species for the size of the area. A Species List can be found in the Local Green Spaces Report in Appendix E.
LGS8	The Lookout Green	Grassy area with benches and picnic tables; panoramic view of the sea. Much used by residents and visitors.
LGS9	Area west of The Lookout Green, bordering Black Ven	Extension of Lookout Green, rough grass, wilder. Much used by residents and visitors. Home to dozens of ant-hills of the Yellow Meadow Ant. Good grass and scrub for wildlife.
LGS10	Playing Fields	A large area which extends as far as the river bank, next to the centre of the village, used for recreation, sports and community events.
LGS11	Northern Extension to Playing Fields	Large mainly grassy area used for sports.
LGS12	Tommy's Patch, Lower Sea lane	A small piece of ground, made available by the Parish Council for Remembrance. Community funded.
LGS13	Wesley's Close Green	A small play area in the centre of a circle of houses, much used by the children living there
LGS14	Bridge Road Green	A small play area in the middle of a group of houses, much used by the children living there.
LGS15	Evan's Cliff	Green area by beach east of river. Recreation; picnic tables and benches; information display about safety for beach and fossil hunting.



Photos of some of the proposed Local Green Spaces

Map 6.5 Locations of the proposed Local Green Spaces



6.68 In some cases a site needs protection not just from being developed, but also from development in the immediate vicinity which would substantially impact on the enjoyment of that site.

6.69 The VS recognised a high level of interest in the environment and care for green spaces. Without a village green, green spaces in and around the village are part of the village context: such spaces are valuable and valued. Some of the proposed spaces are small and may appear insignificant, but the cumulative effect of these little patches of green helps to preserve the ‘village feel’ that is important to many residents of Charmouth, and which would be diminished if these spaces were tarmacked over. Many of the spaces also include a useful amenity in a village which has a steep hill and a large percentage of elderly residents - a bench. See also 6.22.

At the *Open Forum* in January 2019 the Steering Group asked attendees for comments on a list of suggested Local Green Spaces. A display of the same Spaces was held in the community library for the following 6 weeks also seeking feedback. See Appendix E for link to Local Green Spaces Report including evidence and comments from the Open Forum and the Library display. Positive comments were made on all spaces proposed during consultation. Many simply agreed with individual spaces proposed, others made statements such as “Maintain green spaces to improve their natural beauty and enjoyment for both residents and visitors”

6.70 Some areas of Local Green Space should also be protected due to their contribution towards a wider green infrastructure network, as outlined in LP-ENV3 and LP-6.3.16. See also 6.42 to 6.50.

6.71 The aim of Policy NE4 is to protect these local green spaces from inappropriate development.

POLICY NE4: Local Green Spaces

- ***Local Green Spaces*, as listed in Table 6.5 and shown on Map 6.5, have been identified as important to the local community and will be given special protection.**
- **Other than in very special circumstances, no development may take place which would undermine the importance or harm the enjoyment of these *Local Green Spaces*.**

Lighting and Pollution

Lighting

6.72 Most towns and many villages in the UK have a ‘glow’ of light above them, caused by wasted light escaping upwards from street lights, flood lights and other light sources. The Dorset AONB, being largely rural with few towns, suffers from little skyward light pollution away from towns, resulting in largely dark night skies. According to CPRE, current light emissions from Charmouth are in the 1-2 NanoWatts/cm2/sr range which is very low; a range which should be maintained. (www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps)

[sr = steradian, which is a directional quantity, applied in this case to light]

The CPRE Star Count results for 2019 show just how far-reaching the glow from street lights and buildings can be seen. “Light doesn’t respect boundaries, and careless use can see it spread for miles from towns, cities, businesses and motorways, resulting in the loss of one of the countryside’s most magical sights – a dark, starry night sky.” “By using well-designed lighting only when and where it is needed, investing in street light dimming schemes and considering part-night lighting – done in consultation with the local community and police – councils have a fantastic opportunity to limit the damage caused by light pollution, reduce carbon emissions and save money.”

6.73 With artificial lighting, there needs to be a balance between there being too much thus causing light pollution, and there being too little causing some people to be concerned for their safety.

6.74 Judging by the VS, responses appear to show that there is a balance. There were 20 comments relating to an excess of light, although these tended to be about specific locations with effects which were localised and personal. 26 respondents were concerned with street lighting inadequacy: some referred to the fact that street lights in much of the village time-out overnight, while others referred to The Street where lighting is on one side only with some concern over safety including tripping (See VS Reports Q8 and Q30).

These apparent anomalies can be corrected, but policy NE5 is intended to maintain the balance that has largely been achieved between safety and light pollution.

Note that crime statistics for Charmouth are very low: during 2019 the police logged 53 incidents, mostly minor, in the Parish. Only 5 respondents (3%) tended to feel the village is not safe.

6.75 Local authorities are advised in paragraph 180 of the NPPF that “By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation” including effects on wildlife. See also LP-ENV16(iii).

6.76 Therefore while street lighting on existing and new routes will be required for safety, operational and crime prevention reasons, unnecessary light pollution must be prevented through considered and careful design of lights, with the use of downlighting as a primary choice, and lighting times in keeping with the rural character of the area.

POLICY NE5: Street Lighting, and Light Pollution

- **Light *pollution* will be minimised at all times, using measures to control light spillage and glare, and with appropriate timing.**
- **Lighting will be energy-efficient, non-intrusive and be of down-lighting design.**
- **Suitably low level lighting should be provided for new developments to facilitate safe use by pedestrians at night both within the development and between such development and the village if appropriate.**
- **Where street lighting is required heritage designs are to be preferred.**

Pollution

6.77 This Plan aims to minimise pollution and its environmental impact, from any source, for the benefit of health and well-being for everyone, whether residents, other locals, or visitors, for now and the future.

6.78 Residents have noted their keenness on green environment and village tranquillity (especially VS Reports Q1 and Q4), and have expressed concern over village pollution sources (VS Report Q8). Within the VS, many comments relate to vehicle pollution specifying fumes, vibration (largely from vehicles going up and down The Street, which is steep), and noise (from The Street and from the A35 bypass).

Planting has mitigated the A35 noise to a certain extent for some of the parish other than when the wind is in the north (see VS Report Q8). Where appropriate, it could be suggested that noise assessment be undertaken if development is near the A35, noting the restrictions within Department for Transport Circular 02/2013, Annex A, paragraph A1.

Beach cleans have been run by CHCC and others for years. Since the VS the Plastic Free Charmouth initiative has been started to free Charmouth of single use plastics.

6.79 As a result of the HRA (see link in Appendix E), it was identified that pollution arising from development within Charmouth should not become a pathway of impact on European Sites (locally, this is Special Area of Conservation). The mitigation for this effect is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations which should be read in conjunction with Policy NE6 below.

6.80 This Plan will generally support development which minimises pollution not just during development, but also after the development has been completed. Any development application which ensures future sustainability will be encouraged. Any development must be achieved with the least possible impact on the environment from pollution.

POLICY NE6: Pollution

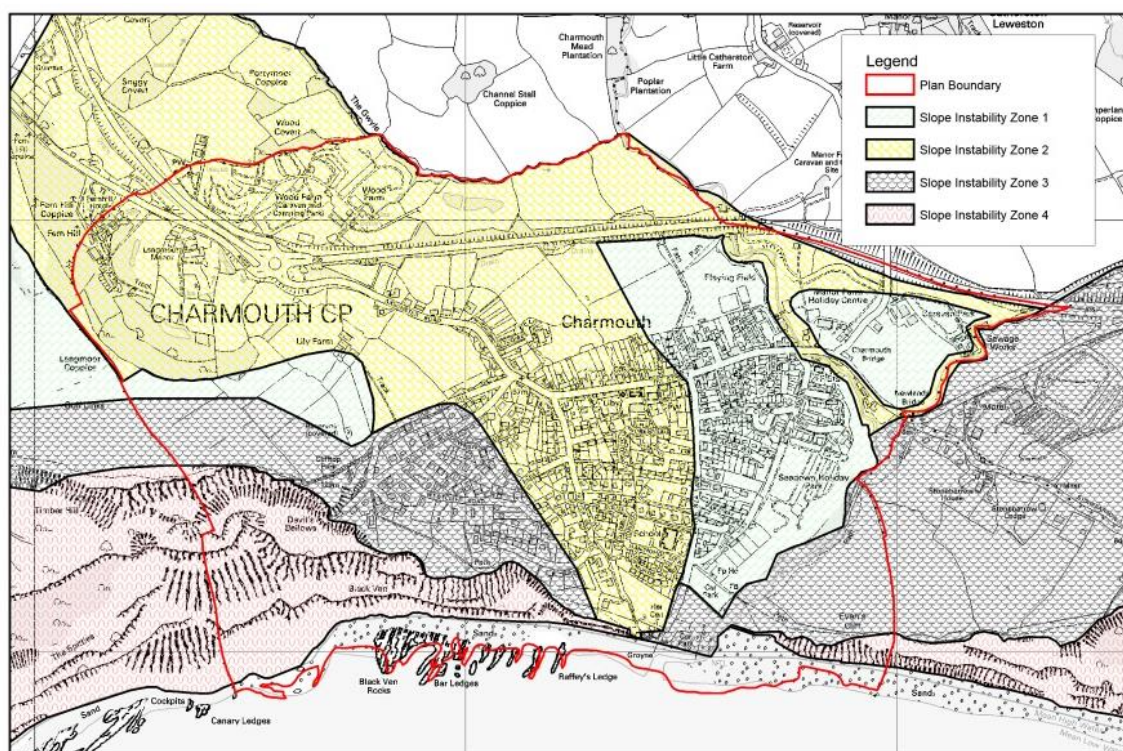
- Any development should make every effort to minimise any harmful impact on the local community and environment due to groundwater *pollution* (point sources and diffuse sources), noise, vibration, dust, smoke, fumes, light or other forms of disturbance or *pollution* (including from traffic movements generated by the development). See also Policy BET2.
- Any new residential or other noise-sensitive development, in proximity to the A35, should include a noise assessment and, where appropriate, measures to reduce noise.

Land Instability and Geology

6.81 Charmouth lies almost completely on Lower Jurassic Liassic marine clays (approx. 190 million years old). Upper Greensand (approx. 90 million years old) caps the hills to both east and west of the village. Near the river mouth are signs of a submerged forest dating from approx. 40,000 years ago, where bones of mammoth and red deer as well as the remains of ash and birch tree trunks can be found.

The lias forms hard and soft layers creating water slippages at the surface of hard limestone layers, resulting in instability of the land underpinning Charmouth. Four Slope *Instability Zones* exist within Charmouth (see Map 6.7)

Map 6.7 Slope Instability Zones



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From the map it can be seen that the area with least risk, Zone 1, occupies the lower part of the parish (lower part of the village, *playing fields* and around Market Field). The majority of the parish, including about half the built area, is within Zone 2. Slope Instability Zone 3 occupies the western part of the village from shore up to upper Old Lyme Hill. Zone 4, the area with the highest instability risk within the parish, has no buildings on it and is largely Black Ven in the west.

6.82 The upper western part of Charmouth has suffered extensive erosion and land slippage over the years: the original very steep trunk road from London to Exeter (Old Lyme Hill, originally the Roman road) was closed in 1824 when the new road to Lyme Regis (Old Lyme Road) was constructed slightly lower down the hill, nearer the sea. Neither road now exists past the very edge of the village. The South West Coast Path which used to link the foreshore area up to Old

Lyme Road, and then continue to Lyme Regis along the edge of the golf course from the top of Old Lyme Hill, has eroded down the cliff such that the South West Coast Path westward was closed prior to 2005 and diverted largely via the road. A new route for the South West Coast Path has been developed and will be fully open in 2021, see paragraphs 9.4 to 9.6.

6.83 Dorset Council provides information on what is required for planning applications in the areas of potential instability and explains requirements for the various zones within those areas. It also describes what type of development is appropriate in the areas of greatest risk.

6.84 Risks arise from the inherent instability created by the local geology, as well as those areas of future land instability and potential new flood areas resulting from the failure or removal of the Charmouth coast defences some time after 2025. See Chapter 10 on Coastal Change.

6.85 The design and construction of any new development in Charmouth where slope instability is a risk should take risk into account by ensuring that temporary or long term changes in loading on slopes are not excessive in terms of the potential instability. Advice of engineers or geotechnical specialists, who fully understand the local geology and nature of the slopes, will be required. It is important that proposals for development do not trigger ground movements either within or beyond a development site.

Furthermore, the design and construction of new developments should include drainage that does not result in surface water entering the ground. All surface water drainage shall be taken to an adequate piped, or otherwise sealed, drainage system. This includes new car parking areas: the use of permeable surfaces for car parking areas is not appropriate in areas of potential slope instability. All opportunities should be taken to check the condition of and improve any existing drainage systems. Recommendations from a suitably qualified expert to address such instability issues are likely to be required.

6.86 Buildings must therefore be designed and built to address Charmouth's land instability and drainage risks e.g. with enhanced foundations and having no soakaways etc., and avoid any negative impacts on the area's overall drainage network.

POLICY NE7: Land Instability and Geology

- Any development proposals must be designed to mitigate risks from *instability* and drainage effects within the village.
- New developments are required to have a sealed system for drainage.

7. SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

Context

7.1 Charmouth is a small village with a limited amount of services and employment opportunities. It is situated in close proximity and within commutable distance to Axminster, Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis, Yeovil and Weymouth; however, it should be noted that none of these towns are major employment areas. The nearest city or large town providing major employment and economic activity areas are Bournemouth and Exeter, which are both located a significant distance away from Charmouth.

7.2 One of our main objectives of this Plan is to support existing businesses, tourism and local services helping them to be sustainable and encourage new employment opportunities in Charmouth. Whilst the village benefits from tourism and the employment opportunities that brings, any growth in tourism or, indeed, local businesses will need to be done in keeping with the village's unique character and its surrounding natural beauty.

7.3 Dorset's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (2014), produced by the *Local Enterprise Partnership* (LEP), addresses the different components of Dorset's economy, as well as its challenges and opportunities. The SEP states Dorset's economic area is relatively self-contained with some 93% of those employed in Dorset living here with 89% of those residents also working here, reflecting a productive cohesiveness in the area.

This suggests that only a small proportion of Dorset's population commutes out of the area for work.

The SEP states that 26.7% of Dorset's population is of retirement age, which significantly exceeds the national average of 19.5%, and presents a major issue for the existing workforce and economy. The demographic challenge is the region's ageing population which is increasing the demand for Dorset's health and social care sectors. It is also placing a strain on infrastructure. It is predicted that by 2035 only half of Dorset's population will be of working age.

The SEP recognises that the coastline between Lyme Regis and Swanage, which has *World Heritage* status, is a natural asset serving as the major attractor of visitors to the area. This rural and semi-rural area is typified by a diverse range of small and micro businesses delivering retail, accommodation and food services.

Many of the businesses in the area operate at a local level, reducing the need for commuter travel. The SEP sets out a number of objectives for Dorset's economy, including the additional support of small and start-up businesses in the area, and the enhancement of employability and enterprise skills through cooperation with employers and schools. The SEP also seeks to prioritise the improvement of broadband to coastal and rural areas which will work to improve connectivity and opportunities to work from home. This includes the development of 5G technology. Another

major objective is to achieve sustainable economic growth in the area. These objectives have potential to strengthen the local economy of remote coastal areas including Charmouth through improving connectivity and supporting local businesses in the area.

Regarding rural/semi-rural Dorset (like Charmouth) the SEP recognises the potential for business growth particularly in areas on the *Jurassic coast*:

" There is much to celebrate about rural Dorset. Investment offers us the chance to leverage the value in local natural assets – protecting them all the while. The quality of the environment gives the area a competitive advantage attractive to businesses, employees and visitors. It is also a source for direct and indirect jobs, and offers real potential for new and sustainable enterprise and economic growth. It is important to both harness and conserve the assets of the environment to deliver economic growth."

7.4 Of Charmouth's economically active population in 2011, 26% work from home. This level is significantly higher than the regional average for West Dorset and the England average, in which 18% and 11% respectively regularly work from home. In terms of average distance travelled to work, Charmouth residents commute 21.4miles (34.4km) to work compared with an average of 11.2miles (18km) for West Dorset and 9.3miles (14.9km) for England. In 2001, 19% percent of Charmouth residents regularly worked from home, an increase of 7% during the ten year period. However, for Charmouth residents the average distance travelled remained the same during this same ten year period.

7.5 A recent BBC analysis (May 2019) reveals a 74% rise in the number of people in the UK working from home between 2008 and 2018. More than 1.54 million people work from home for their main job - up from 884,000 ten years ago, according to the ONS Labour Force Survey, the largest study of employment circumstances in the UK.

7.6 Clearly there is an environmental benefit by having local shops and businesses and tradesmen within the village by reducing travelling by vehicle for villagers and encouraging walking to shops.

7.7 Three *policies* have been included in this section, abbreviated BET (Business, Economy and Tourism) to support our vision to support retail units, local businesses and amenities in the village and to continue to attract tourists and visitors by offering good facilities but avoid being over-commercial.

Tourism within Charmouth

7.8 Tourism is by far the main component of Charmouth's economy (see 7.10-7.16).

7.9 From the *Village Survey* (VS) the views on tourism were as follows:-

- Most of us (60%) think there are about enough tourists

- 69% feel we should encourage tourists to visit more than just the beach and spend more money locally.
- 68% agree that Charmouth residents benefit from tourism.

Views on the impact of tourists vary, with a balance between being happy with them and not, and between encouragement and discouragement of more. A number of points were made about why Charmouth is special; however there were many suggestions about promoting the village and making the village more welcoming, as well as for better provision of information within the village.

The numerical data from the VS showed that nearly half the respondents were satisfied with the provision of tourist accommodation in Charmouth.

7.10 Clearly, Charmouth benefits economically from the Tourist industry which is the main economic driver in our rural community. See 7.12-16. Tourism is essential to the village in helping retail outlets to be sustainable. From the *Service Provider Questionnaire* (see link in Appendix E), many of the Service Providers, particularly retail outlets and holiday parks rely heavily upon tourism to make their businesses viable.

With the increasing pressure of internet shopping and local supermarket deliveries, this is clearly having an adverse impact upon turnover and profit for retailers. A BBC Report in March 2018 identified 'Six reasons behind the High Street Crisis', citing one of these being the shift to online shopping stating: "Online giants such as Amazon have had a huge impact on the high street as more consumers see online shopping as cheaper and easier than going to the shops. And while overall retail sales growth is weak, online sales continue to shoot up."

7.11 No specific policy for tourism has been included within this Plan. However, Policy LP-ECON5, which relates to tourism, attractions and facilities, and Policy LP-ECON7, which relates to camping and caravan sites are considered, along with policies within this Plan, to be adequate regarding planning legislation for tourism. Dorset Destination Management Plan 2014 - 2018 stated West Dorset as the second most visited part of Dorset with an estimated 2.87m visits per annum in 2012, so Tourism is a very important aspect of Charmouth life.

Visitors

7.12 Within Charmouth's *Parish* boundary there are three holiday parks: Seadown, Manor Farm and Wood Farm and one holiday park (Newlands) just outside the boundary on the east side, located in the parish of Stanton St. Gabriel.

It has been estimated by *Charmouth Traders* that these four holiday parks provide around 430,000 'bed nights' per annum. The average stay is 4 days so that means about 100,000 overnight visitors per annum. See Table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1 Visitors, Employment and Economy

Visitors per annum			Data source
Bed nights	Holiday parks	430,000	2017, <i>Traders</i>
	Hotels, self-catering and B&Bs	60,000	2017, <i>Traders</i>
Total overnight visitors		490,000	
CHCC visitors	Actual recorded number	150,000+	2018, CHCC
Employment			
Employed in holiday parks, hotels, B&Bs, and self-catering, including business owners	During the season; some throughout the year	400+	2017, <i>Traders</i>
Work in shops, pubs, food outlets and service sector during the season (including owners).	During the season; some throughout the year	200+	2017, <i>Traders</i>
Contractors / tradesmen	Many local contractors / tradesmen work indirectly for the above businesses		2017, <i>Traders</i>
Of these who are employed, the majority live in Charmouth and nearby villages.			
Economy			
Contribution to Charmouth's economy from the above is estimated to be £15 million per annum (2017) and £22m (2021) based on what would have been for a 'normal' year.			

7.13 There are two hotels: Fernhill and Hensleigh and a number of self-catering and B&Bs. It is estimated that these provide around 60,000 'bed nights' with an average of 3.5 days so providing more than 17,000 overnight visitors per annum. In recent years there has been an increase in Airbnb.

7.14 The Dorset Coast Forum's Tourism report, a well-respected source of Dorset tourism information, suggests that day trippers make up 76% of Dorset's visitors. This would suggest close to 400,000 day trippers to Charmouth in a year. The *Heritage Coast* Centre alone has over 150,000 visitors a year.

7.15 So, in view of the above, it is estimated that up to 500,000 visitors come to Charmouth each year. The income that Charmouth businesses generate from tourism is estimated to be close to £15 million per annum (in 2017) and £22m per annum (in 2021) based on a 'normal' year, with 80% from accommodation (holiday parks, Airbnb, hotels, B&B) and the remaining 20% from retail and

Charmouth *Parish Council* (Reference from Charmouth Traders). See also Chapter 10 on the economic impact due to failing *coastal defences*.

7.16 Whilst the majority of villagers recognise the benefits of tourism and want to encourage tourists they also do not want the village to become over-commercialised in order to maintain the village character (VS Ref. Q1, Q11/Q14/15). However, many feel we should encourage tourists to visit more than just the beach and spend more money locally, which would help the sustainability of local shops.

Commercial/Retail Properties

7.17 From the VS and the Service Provider Questionnaire (see Appendix E), it is clear that village shops and local businesses/services are highly valued in providing local services and amenities. These *community facilities* provide social cohesion for the village and are essential part of what makes Charmouth such a friendly and vibrant community. Seasonal variations of customers particularly affect shops and eating facilities; an increase in customers during the winter months would help their businesses to be financial viable. Some businesses have closed in the past due to a lack of customers particularly in winter months e.g. ice-cream parlour. In recent years the butcher, florist and Post Office have closed for various reasons; however, an Outreach Post Office now operates on a Thursday based in the Community Library and in the Village Hall in Wesley Close every Friday.



Shops on The Street

7.18 As a result of housing pressures, there is a need to prevent commercial/retail properties being converted wholly into housing; triggering premature closures of these valued businesses. If, however, through extensive marketing (i.e. various and comprehensive marketing methods had been made to keep the property as a retail/commercial outlet) then a 'change of use' to the property will be supported.

There may also be opportunities for housing provision (e.g. flats in unused upper floors of commercial buildings) to help sustain these businesses if adequate access and parking can be provided which is line with LP-ECON 4.

7.19 So, any policies relating to local businesses, in particular, on The Street should be made to protect and support them, helping them be sustainable. For the purposes of this Plan this area is called the '*Retail Hub*', comprising of shops, pubs, eating facilities and local services and is shown on Map 7.1.

Therefore, existing commercial properties in the Retail Hub of Charmouth should be protected to maintain the existing base of commercial premises, as they provide substantial value to the community. So a policy has been included to support the protection of existing retail properties, as follows:-

POLICY BET1: Charmouth's Retail Hub

- Housing development that causes the loss of an existing commercial use (*Use Class(es) E, F2, hot food takeaways and public houses*), as shown in the *retail hub* of Charmouth (see Map 7.1), will not be supported, unless it can be shown through extensive marketing that a commercial use is no longer viable.
- Change of use of upstairs rooms of retail properties, that are not required for the business, to residential will be supported providing adequate access, storage area for refuse bins and parking can be provided for the new dwelling without detriment to customer parking provision, access and delivery.

MAP 7.1 Retail Hub



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Note: Premises 9 and 10 in Map 7.1 are currently not occupied.

Local Businesses and Employment

7.20 As well as those directly employed by Charmouth businesses there are many others who provide support to businesses such as various tradesmen, cleaners, suppliers and contractors. A recent survey of Charmouth businesses, carried out by Charmouth Traders, showed over 400 people are employed by the holiday parks, hotels, B&Bs, and self-catering during the season (including business owners) and a further 200 people work in the shops, pubs, food outlets and service sector during the season (including owners). Most employees live in Charmouth and nearby villages. See Table 7.1.

Charmouth businesses also provide jobs for teenagers, this is helpful in preparing them for their future working lives. Many teenagers have seasonal and longer term jobs locally.

That said, employment opportunities in Charmouth are very limited, particularly for professional/vocational professions.

7.21 With the advancement of I.T., many businesses can be managed 'remotely' from home or a satellite office away from the main offices or centre of work. 'Web based' businesses can be managed practicably anywhere providing there are good I.T. links. As part of the Digital Infrastructure Strategy for Dorset 2015, Charmouth has benefitted recently from the arrival of Superfast broadband, so I.T. provision is generally good. Following BT's recent announcement of a £12 billion investment in Openreach to support the Universal Service Obligation, BT are working

with the Parish Council to assist with the community fibre scheme to improve broadband coverage where it is particularly poor.

Facilitating Home Working

7.22 As stated in 7.4 and 7.5, there has been an increase in the number of people working from home in recent years and this Plan supports the environmental and social benefits this brings with reduced travel and encouraging employment within the village.

7.23 The housing policies within this Plan allow for house extensions of an appropriate scale and good design which could be used for home working providing the dwelling house remains a private residence first and business second i.e. it is ancillary to their residential use.

7.24 Planning permission will not normally be required, under *permitted development rights*, unless the business leads to notable increases in traffic, disturbance to neighbours, abnormal noise or smells or the need for any major structural changes or major renovations.

Business Space and Its Use

7.25 Available land to create new businesses for employment is scarce within Charmouth.

7.26 Whilst the VS shows good support for more creative businesses including shops and eateries, the analysis does not give a common theme on where these spaces could come from.

A summary of the VS is as follows:-

- 70% feel the *Neighbourhood Plan* should support the use of space for more artistic/creative employment
- 70% would support the use of space for more cafés and restaurants
- 59% would support the use of space for more retail
- 45% would support more offices
- 44% would support more light manufacturing

7.27 Regarding additional employment types, preferences were creative/artistic, community groups and tourism but many had no strong views. Results from the VS are as follows:-

- 59% would like additional village/community group employment
- 58% would like to see additional artistic/creative employment
- 53% would like to see additional tourism employment
- Most of us had 'No strong views' for more: office-based; retail; professional/vocational or light manufacturing employment

7.28 In line with the *Local Plan* Policies, LP-ECON1 (Provision on New Employment), LP-ECON4 (Retail and Town Centre Development), LP-ECON5 and 6 (Tourism Attractions Facilities and Accommodation), and our overall objective to encourage new businesses and employment, a policy is included to support the use of new business space for small businesses, providing this does not adversely impact upon the surrounding area or significantly affect nearby residents. In line with permitted development rights for new industrial buildings and warehouses on existing

employment sites in designated land or environmentally sensitive area, it is proposed that any new business development should be limited to small-scale i.e. under 100sq.m (1076sq.ft), and be of a type and scale appropriate to the characteristics of the local area.

7.29 In the LEP Strategic Economic Plan, for Creative Industries in Dorset, it has been identified:-

- there are 2265 creative industry businesses in the Dorset LEP area employing 7,300 people and adding £349 million in Gross Value Added (GVA)
- Creative industries are one of the LEP's identified growth areas
- Dorset LEP Board has a creative industries champion
- Our universities have a particular strength in film, media, design and the arts
- Digital manifesto was signed in 2013. The creative industries are defined as being based on individual creativity, skill and talent or those that create wealth and jobs through developing intellectual property.
- Nationally the creative industries account for 1 in 12 jobs and are growing faster than any other part of the economy, with a value in 2012 of £71.4 billion, 5.4% of the economy as a whole.

Habitats Regulations

7.30 As a result of the *Habitats Regulations Assessment*, see Appendix E, it was identified that creation, conversion, or expansion of premises for small scale A class uses and B1 workshops could contribute to the threats to Sidmouth to West Bay SAC resulting from *pollution* to groundwater and industrial activities. The mitigation for these risks are contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations and should be read in conjunction with policy BET2 below. See 6.15.

Economic Development and Premises for New Businesses

7.31 Whilst it is recognised that there are limited opportunities in Charmouth, a policy has been included in BET2 below to encourage growth of new businesses, such as artistic and creative employment connected to tourism, whilst protecting the village's special character and its surrounding landscape.

POLICY BET2: Economic Development and Premises for New Businesses

The creation (including conversions), relocation and/or expansion of premises for small-scale *Use Class(es) E* will be supported, subject to all of the following criteria: -

- Proposals will not have significant harmful impact on the local community due to noise, vibration, light or other forms of disturbance (including from traffic movements generated by the development) or, significantly impact on meeting the everyday needs of residents through the loss of important *community facilities*.
- Proposals should not have significant harmful impact on the built environment of the village, the natural and historic environment of the area, the character and safety of the rural road network, or conflict with agriculture and other land-based activities.
- Where new buildings are proposed, the premises are to be small in scale (under 100sq.m (1076sq.ft.) gross floor area and not exceeding the equivalent of 2 storeys in height) and a restriction is applied to prevent their future conversion to non-employment uses. Under exceptional circumstances, a larger (in size) building may be considered if demonstrated that it has significant benefits to the village community.

Re-use of Rural Buildings

7.32 The potential for redundant farm and rural buildings outside the *Defined Development Boundary* (DDB) to be converted to business use is another possible source and is supported within this Plan. The BET3 policy below is therefore supportive of the Local Plan policy LP-SUS3, but highlights specifically the need to consider the impact on rural character and amenities whilst giving the scope to improve existing buildings.

POLICY BET3: The Reuse of Rural Buildings and Land for Employment Use

The reuse of farm and rural buildings outside the *Defined Development Boundary* for small-scale business purposes (*Use Class(es) E*), will be supported providing the proposal meets all of the following criteria: -

- The reuse of a building(s) does not have significant harmful impacts on the surrounding rural landscape and the local road network or conflict with agriculture and other land-based activities.
- There is no significant harmful impact, such as excess noise, light, air *pollution* and vibration, on the amenities of surrounding residents and other uses.
- The buildings concerned do not require substantial rebuilding or extension – with any re-development or alterations kept broadly within the existing footprint and height.
- Harm to their *significance* as historic farm buildings is avoided or minimised.

8. CREATING HOMES FOR CHARMOUTH'S NEEDS

Context

8.1 The VS (Q1, 31 and 32) indicated a range of views including those wishing to protect Charmouth's village feel and avoid becoming over-developed, although others thought there is a need for small and *affordable housing* for young people and families. Subsequent research, in the *Housing Needs Assessment* (HNA), recommended increased provision of affordable/social rent homes, with an additional focus on shared ownership/*starter homes* to reduce entry requirements to the local housing market. Demographic trends and rising affordability ratios point conclusively in the direction of smaller homes in an area dominated by detached dwellings which command comparatively high prices. Therefore, the increased provision of 1-3 bedroom units is recommended to meet current needs and to aid the 'right sizing' of an ageing population and to increase affordability for first time buyers. HNA also highlighted that this *Plan* should cater for the needs of an ageing population.

8.2 This Plan's Vision and Objectives incorporates the need for more *small and affordable homes* to meet local needs and maintain a balanced community. This is in line with the LP and Dorset Council's Plan (2020-24) which supports more affordable, suitable and decent housing.

8.3 LP-HOU2 confirms that housing needs can be identified at the *parish* level. This chapter sets out the number, type, tenure and size of housing needed and their design requirements with the aim of meeting the *housing needs* of Charmouth without causing harm to its natural and built environment (see Chapters 4 and 6) and to its community. It is essential therefore, that these housing *policies* are read in conjunction with other policies in the Plan which manage these impacts.

New Housing Development

Size of Housing

8.4 The VS confirmed that housing is an important issue for Charmouth with support for smaller and affordable housing: 55% wanting 1-2 bedroom houses (Q32); 66% wanting housing which attracts families with children (Q31). The HNA analysis of demographic trends and affordability ratios confirmed the need for 1-3 bedroom houses to balance the current stock which is dominated by relatively expensive larger detached houses; in the '2011 Census' 42.9% of the stock is detached. In March 2021, the Housing Waiting List for Charmouth, confirmed that 90% of the applicants were seeking 1-3 bed homes. Provision of this smaller type of housing would enable elderly people to downsize (46.9% of the population are 65+ compared to West Dorset's 31.9%),

thereby freeing up larger family homes and enable more movement through the size ranges. The HNA also indicated considerable under-occupancy, so this approach would make more efficient use of the existing housing stock. This Plan includes reference to the '*Charmouth Housing Needs Statement*' which will be updated over time as necessary and be available on the *Parish Council* website to inform developers of the number, type and tenure of housing required at that time (see Chapter 11).

Constraints on Development

8.5 The VS (Q1, 31 and 32) raised concerns about the possible negative impacts of development on the village's character, openness and on village life and wanting to avoid sprawl into surrounding *countryside*: (Q34) 59% not wanting building on greenfield sites; 54% not wanting building on agricultural land and 64% did not support *infill* in gardens. Charmouth has evolved organically primarily through small infill schemes, typically of 5-20 homes (see para 8.11), and individual re-developments and house sub-divisions within the built-up area of the settlement and this trend is expected to continue. This would be in line with the LP's Strategic Approach which envisages 'Tier 3' rural villages (those with a *Defined Development Boundary* - DDB) such as Charmouth providing smaller sites through redevelopment and infill.

8.6 Physical constraints have meant that there has been no new major development on the periphery of the village in the last 60 years. The settlement area is therefore substantially developed and tightly bounded (see aerial photograph below) and edged by constraints to development; the coast to the south, The Old Priory Wall to the north, River Char to the east and steeply rising land and an important skyline towards Black Ven in the west. In the LP, Charmouth is a 'Tier 3' settlement with a DDB (see Map 3.1), which the LP carries forward and no boundary changes are proposed in this Plan. Charmouth sits in an *AONB* and *World Heritage Site* and has areas liable to flood and land with ground instability adding further to its constraints (see Chapter 6). The call for sites in the Dorset '*Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2018*' (SHLAA) did not yield any credible options and the open land north of the DDB up to the A35 bypass was dismissed by the *Local Planning Authority* on access issues and environmental and visual impact grounds and determined as 'unsuitable' again in the 2020 Assessment. Therefore, this Plan has made no allocation of specific sites as there are no obvious areas in Charmouth and the LP confirms that *neighbourhood plans* can have criteria - based policies.



Charmouth's Tight Settlement Boundary



1950's Edge of the Village Housing

Number of Houses Required

8.7 The HNA (para 23) summarised Charmouth's 'share' of the forecast housing growth of West Dorset as approximately 8-9 houses p.a. but acknowledged that this analysis takes no account of the above constraints. The LP para 3.3.27/LP-SUS2 sets no target for the amount of housing required in Charmouth and confirms that new housing should be at an appropriate scale to each settlement which will be different in terms of its needs, opportunities and constraints which

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Note: 1. Words or phrases shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). 2. Abbreviations frequently mentioned are defined in the Abbreviations table (Appendix B).

neighbourhood plans can reflect. An updated indicator of Charmouth's housing requirement has been provided in the 2021 Dorset *Local Plan* Consultation Plan, Appendix 2 which provides figures to inform the preparation of neighbourhood plans (but do not represent a sub-area target). The figures assume extant permissions (approved but not completed or expired) will meet the requirement for the first 3 years of the Plan which represents 8 houses in Charmouth. For the remaining 12 years of the *Plan period*, an estimate of 3 new houses p.a. is indicated from windfall sites; no specific sites having been identified. Therefore, there is a minimum housing requirement of 44 over the Plan's timescale, with 18% already approved and half of these are under construction. This potential level of growth is considered appropriate when taking into account Charmouth's constraints and reliance on small infill sites.

8.8 In the wider housing market, there has been considerable recent housing development/planning approvals for over 2000 units in Bridport, Axminster and Lyme Regis providing considerable provision and pipeline of affordable housing within a 7 mile (11.2 km) radius of Charmouth.

Location of Housing

8.9 Inside the DDB, land is nearly fully utilised for residential use but there is some limited scope for small scale infill, re-developments and sub-division of larger plots/houses providing it is sensitively designed and at an appropriate density (see Policies H4 and H5). LP-SUS2(ii) confirms that residential development will normally be permitted if it meets the needs of the local area, which in the case of Charmouth, is for *small homes*, including *affordable*. This would continue the village's trend of organic growth. The 'Dorset *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2018*' (SHLAA) identified 2 sites of less than 0.3 ha. and 20 other minor infill plots.

8.10 Outside the DDB, opportunities are constrained and LP-SUS2(iii) states that development will be strictly controlled but identifies some exceptions relating to housing: alterations and extensions to existing properties, including their subdivision or replacement; affordable housing; rural workers housing; open market housing through re-use of existing rural buildings; and properties affected by coastal change (see Chapter 10 and Policy CC2). Additionally, this Plan seeks to support limited development on appropriate *brownfield* sites, and potentially small *rural exception site(s)* to provide the type of housing that meets Charmouth's needs (see Policy H2).

8.11 The LP-HOU2 clarifies that exception sites should be small scale and adjoin a settlement. In Charmouth this means *adjoining* the DDB as there are no other clusters of housing that could be considered as a settlement. Any such sites should not represent a marked intrusion into the open countryside that surrounds Charmouth's DDB and would be best placed where the development would result in the *rounding-off* of the existing Boundary and be contained within existing logical and physical boundaries. In the context of the scale of Charmouth's forecast housing requirements, the need to maintain the village's open character, the historic style of organic growth and to avoid unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside, *rural exception sites*

outside the DDB should comprise a maximum of 20 dwelling units. This would maintain the character of Charmouth's historic organic growth where, in the last 60 years, housing developments of more than 5 units had an average of 14 units (including flats) per scheme. New developments need to be sympathetically located and designed to avoid harm to its natural and *heritage assets* (see Chapters 4 and 6). Protection of these assets is an overriding Strategic Objective in the LP and this Plan.

8.12 Therefore, the policy aim is to support the development of new *small houses* on small scale sites primarily inside the DDB, to continue Charmouth's historic pattern of organic, small scale growth.

POLICY H1: New Housing Developments

New housing developments will be supported, in principle, if they do not harm the natural and built environment and meet the following criteria:

- inside the *Defined Development Boundary*, new sites should be small reflecting the organic, incremental growth of the village historically, or,
- outside the *Defined Development Boundary*, opportunities for further housing will be limited to *rural exception sites* and housing permitted by the *Local Plan*. *Rural exception sites for affordable housing* up to a maximum of 20 units per site must *adjoin* the *Defined Development Boundary* and form a logical extension to this *Boundary* and must not represent a marked intrusion into the *countryside*, or,
- across the *Parish*, re-development of a *brownfield* site which is not of high environmental quality,
- and in each case, will contribute to Charmouth's *housing needs* by size, type and tenure as defined in the latest *Charmouth Housing Needs Statement* (see *Parish Council* website) or, if out of date, the most objectively assessed review of Charmouth's *housing needs*. The initial need is for mixed developments of one, two and three bedrooms suitable for families, couples and individuals looking to downsize or as *starter/first homes*.

Affordable Housing

Housing Need Priorities

8.13 The VS (Q32) identified a need for affordable housing: 73% wanting more low cost/affordable homes for young families, couples and individuals enabling them to stay in the village; 47% wanting more local authority/housing association/shared equity homes. The HNA identified the need for a mix of affordable housing types including rental, shared ownership and starter homes.

The HNA recommends a spread of 70% *social/affordable rent* and a maximum of 30% intermediate affordable housing plus an additional focus on shared ownership/starter homes. LP-HOUS1 also recommends the same 70:30 ratio. In 2020, the Government consulted on proposals for *first homes* for sale at a discount for eligible first-time buyers with priority to those with a local connection. NPPF para 61 states that the size, type and tenure of housing for different groups in the community should be reflected in planning policies. Due to Charmouth's relatively high house prices, it is recognised that affordable homes at 80% of the market rate do not represent 'affordable' to many prospective occupants. Nevertheless, Charmouth's housing need priorities are, in descending order:

i) *social/affordable rent*

ii) *intermediate affordable*

iii) *starter/first homes*

iv) *market homes*

8.14 NPPF para 63 permits an affordable housing contribution on developments of 5 units or fewer in 'designated rural areas' such as Charmouth and NPPF para 77 confirms that rural housing policies should be responsive to local circumstances and reflect local needs. Due to the scarcity of land for housing in Charmouth, it is essential that the number of affordable homes is maximised and therefore all new developments of 3 or more homes should contribute to meeting Charmouth's affordable housing needs. This lower threshold is justified to avoid missing vital opportunities to secure affordable homes on the small sites expected to come forward and is a policy accepted elsewhere in Dorset e.g. Buckland Newton.

8.15 The proportion of affordable homes of types i) and ii) above of the site's total units:

- within the DDB, will be the LP-HOUS2 requirement of 35% and ideally higher;
- outside the DDB, a rural exception site should be 100% (see paras 8.18 and 8.19)

8.16 NPPF para 62 expects affordable housing to be provided on-site and, due to Charmouth's land shortages, support will only be given for schemes providing additional on-site affordable homes. Off-site financial contributions will only be considered for any shortfall fractions of whole units. It is also critical that any new affordable homes created are safeguarded for future local occupants and NPPF's definition of rural exception sites confirms they are for affordable homes, in perpetuity.

8.17 In order to determine that a proposed development will meet LP and this Plan's policy requirements, planning applications will state the number of affordable homes/market homes, their size (number of bedrooms) and tenure. To achieve a balanced and integrated development,

affordable and market homes will be indistinguishable by being evenly spread across the site and without discernible differences in quality, design and size.

Encouraging Rural Exception Site Development

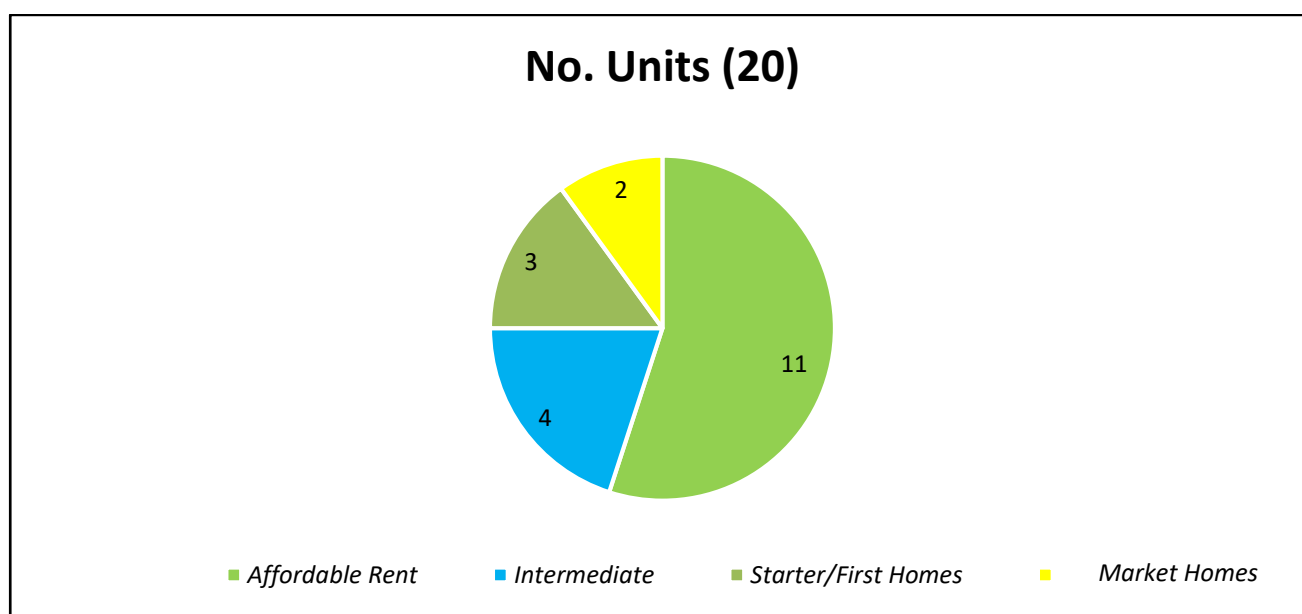
8.18 It is recognised that Charmouth's constraints and land conditions can lead to abnormal building costs. To positively stimulate new rural exception site development, but only in exceptional cases, a small proportion of 1-3 bed starter/first or market homes could be considered where viability need can be evidenced (including that any available grants have been maximised). NPPF para 71 confirms that Charmouth, being in an AONB, 'entry level exception sites' for first time buyers should not be permitted. However, starter homes were identified in HNA as a requirement and therefore such provision should be supported as part of a mixed development, but capped, to avoid encroaching unacceptably on Charmouth's higher affordable housing priorities (see para 8.13). In addition, NPPF para 77 provides for local discretion in allowing a proportion of market homes on rural exception sites, as does the LP in para 5.2.11. The viability case will be assessed on maximising Charmouth's housing need priorities (see para 8.13). The *viability assessment* will be at the applicant's cost and on an open-book basis and made available for public scrutiny in line with NPPF para 57. This approach seeks to strike a balance by permitting a small, but capped, proportion of starter/first and market homes to increase the likelihood of schemes coming forward, without sacrificing the overall net yield of affordable homes.

8.19 The proportion of starter/first or market homes of the site's total units will be:

- starter/first homes, up to 20%,
- market homes, up to 20%,
- but, their combined amount cannot exceed 30%

In this situation, the 70:30 split of social/affordable rent: intermediate affordable (see para 8.13) would apply to the remaining balance of units with a maximum 30% intermediate affordable. Table 8.1 illustrates a theoretical example of the mix of homes on a 20 unit site reflecting the Plan's descending order of priorities.

TABLE 8.1 Illustrative Rural Exception Site Housing Mix



Notes:

A Hypothetical 20 unit *Rural Exception Site* (maximum size)

Reflects the Plan's descending order of priorities (paras 8.13-8.19):

11 *Social/Affordable Rent* (55% of Total)

4 *Intermediate Homes* (20% of Total).

Together these reflect the 70:30 split of the balance after:

3 *Starter/First Homes* (15% which exceeds the % of *Market Homes* -max 20% of Total)

2 *Market Homes* (10% - max 20% of Total)

Combination of these cannot exceed 30% of Total and are subject to evidence of viability need.

Allocation of Houses to Local People

8.20 In line with LP-HOU2 the allocation of affordable housing will be prioritised to those with a housing need and a *Charmouth Connection* (i.e. an established residency or employment connection to Charmouth; full definition in Appendix A - Glossary). Consideration of housing needs at the parish level is supported by LP-HOU2. As the justification for building affordable homes is to meet Charmouth's needs, the housing provider will, during an initial period of marketing, exclusively allocate affordable homes to applicants with a Charmouth Connection. The marketing period will reflect the different lead times for rental-only properties (8 weeks) compared to those with a purchase element (13 weeks) which recognises the time to raise finance etc. Thereafter, wider marketing should prioritise applicants with an equivalent connection to adjoining rural parishes which Charmouth serves as a community service centre (the parishes of Catherston Leweston, Wootton Fitzpaine, Whitchurch Canonorum and Stanton St Gabriel). This sequencing to apply on first completion and subsequent re-lets/sales.

8.21 Therefore, the policy recognises that land for new housing in Charmouth is an extremely scarce resource and aims to give positive encouragement to maximise the provision of small affordable homes which meet Charmouth's housing needs. Affordable housing provision is also a key component of the *Village Improvement Projects* (see Appendix G).

POLICY H2: Affordable Housing

New housing developments will be supported providing that:

- they maximise their contribution to Charmouth's *housing needs* priorities which are, in descending order:
 - i) *social/affordable rent*
 - ii) *intermediate affordable*
 - iii) *starter/first homes*
 - iv) *market housing*

and, therefore, all planning applications will state how the development will meet these *housing needs* priorities in terms of size, type and tenure of housing proposed;

- inside the *Defined Development Boundary*, developments of 3 or more houses will include at least 35% on-site *affordable homes*. Financial contributions towards the provision of *affordable housing* will be required for any shortfall fractions of whole units;
- *rural exception sites adjoining the Defined Development Boundary* should comprise 100% *affordable homes*. Exceptionally, *starter/first* and *market homes* up to a maximum of 20% each type and a combined total of 30% of the total number of units on each *rural exception site* can be considered where they are essential to a scheme's viability. These homes should also meet the size/type/tenure priorities in the *Charmouth Housing Needs Statement*. The *viability assessment(s)* justifying the original application and any subsequent requests for variations to the composition of the development will be based on maximising Charmouth's *housing needs* priorities and made available for public scrutiny;
- the *social/affordable rent : intermediate affordable* ratio should be capped at 30% *intermediate affordable*;
- *affordable housing* should not be readily differentiated from the *market homes* by their design, quality and distribution within a site;
- the housing provider will, during an initial period of marketing, exclusively allocate *affordable homes* to applicants with a *Charmouth Connection* and be able to provide evidence of this marketing. This initial period of marketing will be 8 weeks for rental-only properties and 13 weeks for properties which include a purchase element. Thereafter, properties can be more widely marketed but with priority to applicants with an equivalent connection to adjoining rural parishes which Charmouth serves as a community service centre. This sequencing applies on first completion and subsequent re-letting/re-sale;
- *affordable homes* will be provided in perpetuity.

Benefitting from New Housing

Principal Residency Condition

8.22 There were 31 comments on *second homes/holiday lets* in the VS (Q34) with the majority voicing concerns about their negative impact on the local housing market e.g. the ability of young people/families to get onto the housing ladder; house under-occupancy and impact on local trade. The HNA shows that between 2001 and 2011, the number of 25-44 year olds fell by 26.4% and 16-24 year olds by 2.9% (considerably more than West Dorset rates) indicating disturbing changes in population structure. Uncontrolled growth of second homes/holiday lets can damage an otherwise sustainable community. The 'Draft Purbeck Local Plan' confirms that in the Dorset AONB, which also includes Charmouth, concentrations of second homes can harm the viability of local services and facilities, harm the sustainability of communities and create competition for residents seeking affordable homes and as a result it proposes a *principal residency* policy. The 'Dorset AONB Management Plan, 2019-24' Policy C4h also aims to "discourage growth in the number of second homes within the AONB". The *Service Provider Questionnaire* (see Chapter 7 and Appendix E) confirmed the seasonality of retail trade. With tourism trade essential to many businesses, some may struggle during the winter months and the village has already suffered several recent shop closures. For Charmouth, a principal residency policy would generate more consistent year-round trade without negatively affecting the current stock of tourism accommodation.

8.23 Census data of homes with 'no usual residents' represents the most consistent, official data for making comparisons. This data includes second homes and holiday homes, both representing housing unavailable for permanent occupation. For Charmouth, the '2011 Census' figure shows that 26.5% of the housing stock (West Dorset 10%) has 'no usual residents' and is higher than any other coastal parish between Charmouth and Portland e.g. a similar coastal village and tourist destination, Burton Bradstock, is 20.4%. Between 2001 and 2011 the Census shows that the total number of 'household spaces' in Charmouth increased by 117 (+14.4%) but the number with 'no usual residents' increased by 92 (+59.7%) indicating that the new housing developed has yielded few permanent households (increase of 25, +3.8%). The un-checked continuance of this trend will threaten Charmouth's ability to survive as a sustainable community. Dorset Council Local Plan 2021-2038 Options Consultation, Appendix 2 included a Background Paper on second homes and, using different and more up to date data, confirmed Charmouth's high proportion of second homes and identified the option to include a principal residency policy in neighbourhood plans. Therefore, new housing in Charmouth will be restricted to their occupancy as a principal residency and cannot be used as a second home or for holiday letting accommodation. Consultations on draft Plan policies have confirmed support for a principal residency condition; a policy which has been tested as legitimate in St Ives and other subsequent neighbourhood plans e.g. in rural areas of Cornwall and Devon. The Charmouth percentage of 'no usual residents' is also higher than some of the approved neighbourhood plans with principal residency policies in Cornwall.

8.24 It is estimated that in Charmouth there are over 50 individual instances of holiday let restrictions in force which prohibits full-time occupancy and occasionally applications are made to remove this restriction. Whilst not all such premises would be suitable as a permanent residence (e.g. layout, construction and ability to meet Building Regulations, terms of leases etc), it does represent a potential stock of genuinely affordable homes, important in the context of Charmouth's lack of sites for new affordable housing. To maximise the local benefit of removing a holiday let restriction, the property (of permanent construction and not, for example, a caravan) will be subsequently restricted to its occupancy as a principal residence. The impact on tourism is thought to be minimal due to Charmouth's existing high numbers of holiday lets/second homes.

Protecting the Stock of New Small Houses

8.25 Due to the scarcity of land to provide small homes in Charmouth, it is essential that new 1-3 bed homes remain small in size to help balance Charmouth's housing stock and safeguard a supply chain for first time buyers and their next move. Restrictions on extensions will therefore be placed on new small homes including affordable homes and all homes on rural exception sites.

Charmouth, being a *Designated Area*, has reduced *Permitted Development Rights* (PDR) compared to national allowances and only allows, before planning approval is required, for a rear single storey extension of 4 metres depth for a detached house and 3 metres depth for other houses. Rear extensions will be limited to these allowances. Alternatively, and not additionally, and subject to planning approval, small, single storey side extensions will be limited to 50% of the width of the *original building*. Such extensions will require particular attention to their elevations meeting Policy H5 design requirements. Limiting future extensions of new small houses to these allowances would still permit increases of up to 40% of internal floorspace depending on the dimensions of the original building and whether detached, or not. This strikes an appropriate balance between providing existing occupants with flexibility to expand whilst protecting the stock of small houses for future occupants.

8.26 Therefore, policies have been designed to maximise the benefits of new housing development for both Charmouth's current needs and to safeguard benefits for future occupiers in order to provide a more sustainable community.

POLICY H3: Benefitting from New Housing

- Applications for new housing, replacement homes and changes of use which result in net additional housing and applications to remove a *holiday let* restriction will be supported providing the property will be restricted, in perpetuity, by legal agreement to its occupancy as a *principal residence*; defined as the sole or main residence of the occupier for the majority of their time. Occupiers will be required to keep verifiable proof that they are meeting this obligation and make it available when requested for inspection by the *Local Planning Authority*.
- In order to protect the stock of new *small houses*, future extensions which create habitable rooms proposed for housing built after 2020, either on *rural exception sites* (both *affordable* and any *starter/first or market homes*) or on *affordable homes* within the *Defined Development Boundary*, will be restricted:
 - for rear extensions, to the allowance provided under *Permitted Development Rights in Designated Areas*; or, and not additionally,
 - for side extensions, subject to planning approval, single storey up to half of the width of the *original building*, roof height not exceeding the lower of 4 metres or the existing roof ridge and satisfy the other limits regarding *Permitted Development Rights in Designated Areas*.

Housing Form and Layout

8.27 The VS (Qs 1,31,32 & 33) had many comments on protecting the village's character rather than housing design. Residents were concerned to keep the village's unspoilt and natural charm, its open feel and, therefore, avoid over development. The CCSCAA highlights Charmouth's 'unique spaces with varying degrees of enclosure and exposure' and focal points where 'there are glimpses up side passages and lanes as well as views of the wider countryside, adding up to a rich and complex sequence of spaces, views and other townscape experiences'. Outside of the *Conservation Area*, more recent development has resulted in mainly low density, low rise, well-spaced housing and, because of Charmouth's undulating topography, this provides a similar feeling of openness. These characteristics are particularly valued by residents and are important to Charmouth's attractiveness as a tourist destination.' The VS indicated that residents were also concerned about the scale, visual impact and loss of amenity of housing development. 64% (Q34) did not support infill in gardens and 64% did not support demolishing buildings and re-building at higher density and some recent developments of this type have caused local controversy.

8.28 Within its DDB, Charmouth has very few undeveloped areas but there are potential opportunities as properties become re-developed. Outside its *Conservation Area*, Charmouth had significant areas of housing built between 1920-50s which spread as ribbon development towards the coast and subsequent infill either side of The Street. A process of refurbishment and re-development has already started and will continue, presenting opportunities to provide additional

housing, including the infill of larger plots and subdivision of larger premises. In fact, the majority of recent housing has been provided in this way although opportunities will inevitably diminish over time.



Recent High Density Infill



Low Density Housing Overlooking the Coast

8.29 Policies need to balance local concerns about the impacts of re-development with managing the inevitable process of improvements to an ageing housing stock by supporting opportunities for new housing but only in appropriate locations and at a sympathetic scale and density. NPPF (para 122 d) indicates that, in achieving appropriate densities and efficient use of land, policies should take into account the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens). The Government's '*National Design Guide 2019*' places emphasis

on well-designed places and how the layout of buildings relates to the settlement pattern and density of building plots and gaps between them. In this context, this Plan's policy focus therefore is on managing density and massing impacts of new build, re-developments and extensions, ensuring that they respect the *building line* and complement their neighbouring properties and the *immediate locality*. The immediate locality is the area spreading out from the plot which has a similar pattern of development, plot sizes, overall density and comparable building forms. The need is for the development to enhance the 'visual rhythm' of the street scene and create a sense of enclosure which is influenced by the massing and roof lines of buildings, the gaps between buildings, their positioning and orientation on their plots and the visual harmony of boundary treatments, access and car parking arrangements. In a generally hilly landscape, consideration must also be given to the massing impacts and building heights of new housing to ensure they do not visibly distort skylines and other defining features and do not result in the degradation of wide views and vistas (see Policy NE1 and NE2).

8.30 Particular attention is required to determine a property's positioning within its site and re-developments should normally occupy the original footprint, unless a different position would enhance the street scene. Rear gardens should have a minimum depth of 10 m. (32.8 ft.) to provide privacy and security with safe play areas and maintain the overall density of the immediate locality. LP-ENV 16 requires that development should be designed not to impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of residents. Any proposal should avoid adverse impacts of overlooking, loss of privacy, window shadowing of neighbouring properties with a minimum distance of 20 m (65.6 ft.) between facing habitable room windows. This approach is in line with LP-ENV 12 which requires that alterations or extensions should not overpower the original building or neighbouring properties.

8.31 Therefore, the policy aim is to establish criteria to support new developments, including infill, house extensions and replacements, where they fit sympathetically into their surroundings. The focus is on managing plot/site layout so that the density/massing etc of the development maintains the village's openness and characteristics and ensures that new housing is sympathetic to, and complements, its surroundings and blends into its immediate locality. This is in line with LP-ENV 12 and NPPF para 77 confirms that rural housing policies should be responsive to local circumstances and reflect local needs. Charmouth's principal needs are for small homes and Policy H4, bullet 8 aims to control the replacement of a small house with a much larger house. This happens in Charmouth and fails to contribute to its housing needs resulting in properties of an inappropriate scale to neighbouring properties and are often second homes/holiday lets. The words 'should' in policy bullet 8 (see also para 2.8) are included to consider exceptional situations where a much larger replacement house fails to meet the criteria specified in bullet 8 but satisfies the remaining criteria in Policy H4. Whilst Charmouth has generally low density development, there are areas of higher density housing and the policy allows new development in those localities to reflect these densities, resulting in efficient use of land. The planning applicant's

Design and Access Statement should explain how the proposal has been designed to meet the policy criteria.

POLICY H4: Housing Form and Layout

The size, scale, mass, height, layout, plot sizes and positioning, density and access of housing development must be designed to:

- be proportionate to its plot and complement and enhance Charmouth's openness and reflect its rural village and coastal characteristics;
- reflect the prevailing settlement pattern (plot size, spacing between buildings, orientation and shape) and density of development in the *immediate locality*;
- be in keeping with the wider street scene including visible boundary treatments and how access and car parking arrangements are arranged;
- reflect the prevailing street facing height of neighbouring properties and should normally be one or two storeys in height (any roof dormers counting as a storey). Only where adjoining an extensive block of 3 or more storey buildings would more than 2 storeys be considered providing the massing of the overall street scene is not distorted;
- provide/retain rear garden space commensurate with the size of the property, meet the needs of anticipated occupiers and maintain the general density of the *immediate locality*;
- protect the neighbours' amenity, in particular, from overlooking, loss of light, over dominance or general disturbance during construction;
- provide easy connections to nearby housing and facilities;
- inside the *Defined Development Boundary*, the replacement of existing house(s) should be on a 'one for one' basis. Each replacement building should not be materially larger than the demolished building and should reflect its height and form. The maximum size should be the volume of the *original building*, excluding ancillary buildings, plus any additional allowed under *Permitted Development Rights in Designated Areas*. The new property should be positioned with maximum coverage of the footprint of the *original building*, unless re-positioning would enhance the street scene;
- inside the *Defined Development Boundary*, where an existing house(s) (to be retained or replaced) sits on a disproportionately larger curtilage, additional houses can be considered providing they do not exceed the massing and density of development in the *immediate locality* or negatively impact on the characteristics of the street scene. Developments should not distort the setting of any retained property(ies) on the plot and the relationship with their surroundings;

Housing Design

8.32 A Strategic Objective of the LP is to achieve high quality and sustainability in design, reflecting local character and distinctiveness of the area. NPPF para 125 encourages neighbourhood plans to identify the special qualities of each area and explain how this should be reflected in development. Outside the Conservation Area, which has its own special protections, Charmouth has a wide range of architectural styles and these contribute to Charmouth's character. Large areas of Charmouth were developed by the release of fields with plots developed individually or in small numbers by local builders. VS (Q33) comments were positive about the varied mix which has resulted. However, the VS (Q33) also provided strong views (62%) that residents wanted new housing to be similar to neighbouring properties. The VS (Q33) indicated that new housing should be sympathetic to the village's built and natural heritage and characteristics with 57% supporting use of traditional design and materials and 41% feeling that it is not important to have modern design.



'The Street', part of the Conservation Area

8.33 Due to the variety of architectural styles, no attempt has been made to produce a formal design guide or to categorise the village by zones of housing style typologies. Instead the approach has been to establish policy principles building upon the best practice found in the 'National Design Guide 2019', Dorset Council's '*Supplementary Planning Guidance - Design and Sustainable Development Guidelines, 2009*' and '*Building for Life*'. In addition, The Government's 2020 consultation, 'Planning for the Future', indicates an increased role for *design guides*. Once clarified, there may be a need to produce a design guide for Charmouth which should incorporate the principles established in Policies H4 & H5.

The aim is to encourage good quality and innovative architectural design which results in good value, functional and sustainable homes which are sympathetic to, and enhances, *distinctive local features*. These are features visible when looking out from the plot, those visible on neighbouring properties when looking at the plot from the street or other public access point and traditional features appearing in the wider Charmouth/Dorset area. In the case of extensions/replacements this includes distinctive features of any remaining parts of the former building(s). This does not mean that design should replicate nearby properties, which may themselves be of poor design, but seeking opportunities to reflect distinctive local features through good quality design which complement and enhance the wider street scene. It also does not mean that, on a new development, each house should be of identical design and bland and repetitive styles must be avoided.

8.34 This Plan will not support housing which makes no effort to integrate its design with distinctive local features, especially generic ‘off-the-shelf’ designs imported from other parts of the country. This is in line with LP-ENV10 and 12 which emphasise the importance of good design and NPPF para 130 states that poor design should be refused. The planning applicant’s Design and Access Statement should explain how the proposal has been designed to meet the policy criteria.



Varied Mix of Housing Types

8.35 When considering the design of housing, particular attention should be made to the Plan’s Natural Environment policies (see Chapter 6) which seek to protect the environment and, in the VS (Q33), 56% of respondents supported environmentally friendly/eco-homes (see Policy CC1). The HNA indicates that due to Charmouth’s ageing population all new homes should be built to enable easy adaptation for the disabled and meet any national or local standards. The ‘2011 Census’

indicates that Charmouth's population (West Dorset figures in brackets) has 46.9% aged 65+ (26.4%) and 7.6% in bad/very bad health (5.0%).

8.36 Therefore, the policy aim is to encourage good quality, innovative and sustainable design which incorporates local distinctive features which will enhance the street scene.

POLICY H5: Housing Design

The design of new housing, including landscape and boundary treatments should:

- be sympathetic, responsive and complementary to the distinctive characteristics of the landform and site and not harm nearby natural or built environments;
- be of high quality and long-term durability, complementary to *distinctive local features* such as the variety of materials (in particular traditional materials where applicable), architectural detailing, textures and colours of buildings in order to add interest and reinforce local characteristics;
- reflect the form and pitches of roofs, chimney styles and typical door/window/lintel features and dimensions, including wall:window ratios, in the *immediate locality*;
- ensure that external structures such as waste and cycle storage are integrated into the overall design;
- include landscaping sympathetic to the existing natural landscape and retaining the maximum amount of existing on-site natural features and boundaries;
- incorporate scope for flexible solutions for elderly or disabled occupants;

9. GETTING AROUND CHARMOUTH

Context

9.1 One of the main aims of the *Neighbourhood Plan* is to protect and enhance existing pedestrian routes and provide new footpaths and cycle routes from new housing or business developments to encourage people to walk and use the local *community facilities* easily and safely.

9.2 Also, with an aim of avoiding increase in traffic congestion in the village centre and providing good access to the beach and foreshore, we have also set an objective to protect the existing car parks and large parking areas from new housing developments.

9.3 Within this section, we have also considered and addressed issues of mobility, transport and safe movement within the village, supporting our aim and objective of enhancing the quality of social life within the village.

Existing Pathways and Public Footpaths

9.4 Charmouth is surrounded by attractive walks and has many public footpaths including the *South West Coast Path*.

At 630 miles the South West Coast Path is Britain's longest path stretching from Minehead to Poole Harbour. The village is on the South West Coast Path and what will become the *England Coast Path* (to be completed in 2021) and is also on the Monarch's Way long-distance footpath, with its historical links to King Charles II and Charmouth's own story of when he stayed here.

9.5 The coast path immediately to the east and west of Charmouth was diverted for many years due to landslides, but work has been progressing on replacement stretches. The England Coast Path is being created by dedicated Coastal Access teams within Natural England working with local authorities and landowners.



Coast Path- New Parish Gate on Stonebarrow, looking west to the village

9.6 The new footpath routes are almost complete. After crossing the footbridge over the River Char, the eastwards footpath up Stonebarrow was reinstated in autumn 2020, complete with new signage. Work on the westwards replacement section of the footpath from the top of Old Lyme Hill in Charmouth to Lyme Regis, will be completed in 2021.

9.7 Pathways are an important feature within Charmouth. To make it easy to walk around the *parish* and into the surrounding *countryside* connecting footpaths are important to maintain and improve, so residents and visitors can enjoy the beauty of the surrounding countryside and coastline which makes Charmouth a vibrant and attractive place in which to live.



Footpath off Higher Sea Lane

9.8 From the *Village Survey*, 90% of respondents in the village use the local footpaths. There were 52 comments about the reinstatement of the South West Coast Path (i.e. for SWCP to be off-road) indicating its importance to local and visiting walkers. There was also good support for reinstating the footpath along the east side of the river, from the beach to Stonebarrow Lane, which is no longer in use. A small stretch of this footpath, at Stonebarrow Lane end, is located outside the NP area within the parish of Stanton St Gabriel and remains in relatively good condition.



Part of the footpath along the east side of the River Char which is no longer fully in use

See Map 9.1 showing the existing footpaths, including footpaths that are closed. It should be noted that there are footpaths shown on the OS map and the official Dorset Council footpath map, which are no longer on the ground and have been closed or diverted.

9.9 There is considerable concern about the future of the local footpaths, not just about the reinstatement of the SWCP, but also that unrecorded footpaths and bridleways created before 1949 which cannot be recorded after 1 January 2026 ('Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000').

Pedestrian Routes

Protecting existing pedestrian routes

9.10 Existing pedestrian routes should allow safe and attractive walking, and, where possible, be useable for people with mobility difficulties. In particular, routes into the village centre to shops, the community and leisure facilities, the school and the seafront are paramount.

9.11 Walking rather than using a vehicle is to be encouraged for health, wellbeing and reducing vehicle congestion in the village, as well as making a contribution to preserving the environment. This is in line with the Strategic approach stated in the *Local Plan* which states "Community facilities that help promote social interaction as well as minimise the need to travel by car should be provided within local communities."

9.12 There are a number of areas where pedestrian routes could be improved, by either making the existing route more pedestrian-friendly, or creating new off-street foot and possibly cycle paths to enable better, safer connections. Specific areas are suggested in the VS Report Q5.

9.13 Therefore, maintaining and protecting the current network of pedestrian routes is vitally important to the village's day to day life and visitors to Charmouth.

9.14 Policy GA1 has therefore been included to ensure the protection and enhancement of existing routes and the requirement of new routes to connect with them.

Providing New Pedestrian Routes

9.15 For new housing development, this Plan requires new access routes to link with existing pathways to encourage walking and enable those with mobility issues to safely use pavements and dropped kerbs. Clearly we want any new housing development (e.g. *rural exception sites*) to have good access and be in easy walking distance of local facilities and amenities in the village.

9.16 It is important that in designing the layout of development within or adjoining the village, due consideration is given to how the site connects to the existing pedestrian and cycle route network. In line with the 'Town and Country Planning Order 2013', a *Design and Access Statement* is required from Applicants to explain and demonstrate that proposed developments can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

9.17 Developments that are likely to generate increased traffic movements should be accompanied by a transport assessment, and this should include consideration of the potential

likely impact of increased traffic on the safety of this network, and how any adverse impacts can be mitigated.

9.18 As a result of the *Habitats Regulations Assessment*, see Appendix E, it was identified that pedestrian routes that are to be enhanced including those footpaths within Sidmouth to West Bay SAC are likely to contribute to human intrusions and disturbances within the European site. See 6.15. The mitigation for this effect is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations and should be read in conjunction with policy GA1 below.

9.19 The Policy LP-COM7 – ‘Creating a Safe and Efficient Transport Network’, supports the following policies on pathways, roads, traffic and parking.

9.20 Therefore, the policies, within GA1, have been included for the requirement of new footpaths and cycle connections (and their design) that connect new housing developments with existing networks.

POLICY GA1: Pedestrian Routes

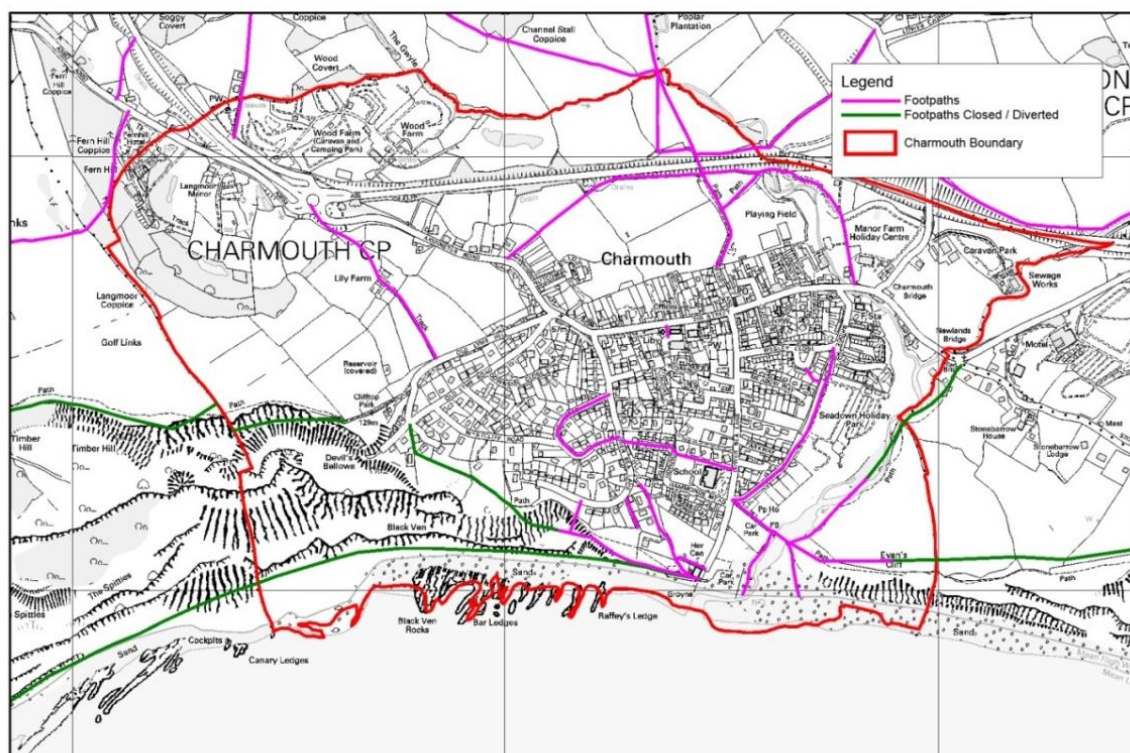
Existing Pedestrian Routes

- Existing pedestrian routes, including those shown on Map 9.1, must be safeguarded from development and enhanced where practical.

New Pedestrian Routes

- Any planning proposals that would adjoin or incorporate existing pedestrian routes or have the potential to provide new links will need to contribute to the safety and charm of the pedestrian routes, so that more people are encouraged to walk rather than drive locally.
- New housing developments should ensure suitable connections for safe walking and cycling access to local facilities, including the creation of new footpath and cycle connections to existing routes where practical and appropriate. A *Design and Access Statement* will be required from Developers to demonstrate that suitable access can be achieved.
- Pedestrian routes must be designed to be in keeping with the surrounding character of the area.
- Design of new routes, within the settlement, will be to best design guidance and allow wheelchair, mobility scooter, buggy and pushchair access and use, with surfaces designed to be well-drained and low maintenance. The useable width should, where possible, conform to current best practice to allow users to pass easily and safely.
- Development will not be supported if it is likely to lead to a level of on-street parking or points of access that would adversely impact on the safe use of key pedestrian routes.

MAP 9.1 Existing and Closed Footpaths



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Transport and Traffic Impact

9.21 From the Village Survey (VS), the numerical analysis showed that 59% of us walk within the village every day and 37% drive every day and over a weekly period 51% of us drive, 22% use the bus and 22% walk. We occasionally use bicycles and taxis.

9.22 From the 2011 census for Charmouth parish, 82% of households have at least one car/van with over 30% of households having 2 vehicles or more. A higher percentage of households (18.1%), within Charmouth, do not have a vehicle compared to West Dorset (15.7%).

9.23 Traffic levels significantly increase in the summer months, due to visitors to the village, causing traffic congestion; this is aggravated by 'poor' parking within the village. This was identified within Q21 Report (VS) – Transport: Parking.

Parking

9.24 Comments from the VS indicate that Charmouth needs more parking. That said, 45% felt the main roads had adequate parking arrangements whilst 40% thought not. There were however a significant number of comments, in excess of 170 regarding car parking, reflecting the general view that more parking was needed particularly in the summer period. Residents also considered there wasn't enough enforcement of parking restrictions.

9.25 Certain areas on the roads in the village were identified in the VS as being dangerous and suggestions of restructuring of parking were given. Many of the comments received (25 in all) on this particular parking theme related to parking on The Street.

9.26 A lack of parking, particularly on The Street, is clearly a frustration from the VS for residents and doesn't help in encouraging visitors to use local shops, facilities, etc., which is contrary to one of our main vision aims and objectives for this Plan.

9.27 It should be noted that many residents have to park on the road as many of the older properties do not have any parking space.

9.28 The lack of dedicated parking spaces, including garages and increased levels of car ownership, has created parking problems where levels and location of on-street parking, particularly on The Street has made it difficult for road users to pass parked cars; this has caused aggravation and road safety concerns to residents, pedestrians and cyclists.

9.29 In general, the shops do not have parking for either employees or deliveries so again, all parking, short and long term, is on the road. This can be seen in photographs of the village where roads have vehicles parked on either or even both sides. See Photographs on page 20, 44, 47, 48 and 49. This issue is also reflected in the VS results where a lack of parking, difficulty in parking leading to inconsiderate or even dangerous parking, was noted, particularly during the busy holiday periods. During these periods the main car parks often become full. See photograph below.



Busy summer's day showing all coast car parks full

9.30 LP-COM9, Section 5 sets out Parking standards for residential and non-residential development. The guidance for non-residential (e.g. retail outlets) parking shows that the amount of 'on street' parking spaces is clearly below what is required for new developments. This is no surprise as most of these shops have been retail outlets for many years some dating back before cars were around and, in any case, car usage has significantly increased in recent years.

9.31 Although there is a public car park (St Andrew's Drive) only 300m from the village shops there appears a reluctance to use it for short-time activities. Measures to further encourage its use is worthy of consideration as part of VIP (*Village Improvement Projects*). See Appendix G.

9.32 Available car/coach parking spaces are shown in Table 9.1. Car parks are largely used by visitors/tourists and often full during holiday periods.

The majority of public car parking in Charmouth is based by the sea and next to the river and so will be affected by climate change/sea level rise/stormy weather/storm surges. See Chapter 6: Natural Environment and Chapter 10: Energy Efficiency and Coastal Change.

TABLE 9.1 Available car/coach parking spaces in car parks

Car Park	Ownership	Car spaces	Coach Spaces	Notes 1	Notes 2
St.Andrew's CP	Dorset Council	27	3	+m/c spaces	
Beach CP	private	~200	not allowed	No marked spaces	aka gravel or footbridge CP
Seafront CP	private	~200+	not allowed	Closed in winter	aka Field CP
Foreshore CP	CPC	52	not allowed	+m/c spaces	
Foreshore CP overflow	CPC	~12-15	not allowed	No marked spaces	
TOTAL		500+	3		

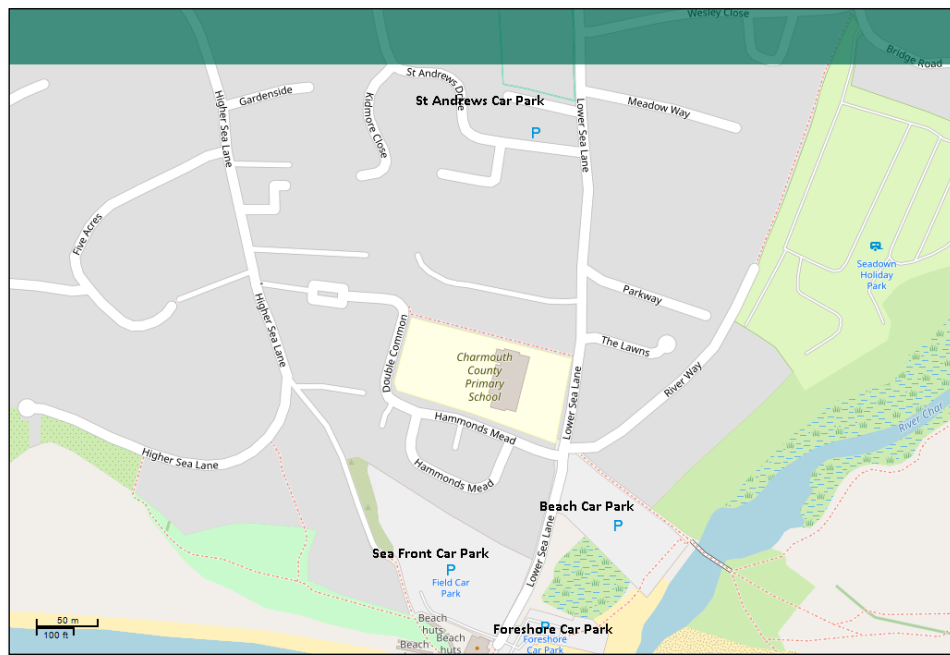
9.33 All car parks, except St Andrew's, are situated in an Area of Instability Zone 3 as shown on Map 6.7 in Section 6.80-6.85. From the *Shoreline Management Plan* (SMP2), it is forecasted that 50% of the public car parking will be lost if the sea defences fail.

9.34 As a result of the *Habitats Regulations Assessment*, see Appendix E, it was identified that building on the car parks although permitted in exceptional circumstances, is adjacent to the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC and has the potential to affect the European site due to its proximity. The mitigation for this affect is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations and should be read in conjunction with policy GA2 below. See 6.15.

9.35 The village is constricted in its capacity to provide additional parking so existing parking facilities need to be protected.

9.36 The use of existing car parks and parking areas for new buildings (other than a building that has to be near the shore) or for the building of new housing developments will not be supported. Therefore, to support this aim the policy GA2 has been included.

MAP 9.2 Car Parks in Charmouth



Parking implications arising from new Housing Development

9.37 Any new housing developments pose the risk of making the traffic/parking situation worse so planning any such developments needs to address the potential impact. Due to the shortage of parking, housing development that results in a loss of parking on roads (e.g. drop kerbs) or within residential or non-residential premises will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated there is excess parking being provided or there is no net loss.

9.38 An increase in traffic is acceptable to facilitate new housing and businesses, provided traffic management is planned to maintain safety, avoid congestion by providing adequate parking and protecting those local landscape features that characterise Charmouth village.

9.39 So, in supporting new housing developments, and the likely impact from increased traffic, street parking needs to be avoided and the safety impact upon existing routes and users of pedestrian/cycle routes must be duly considered.

9.40 Due to the specific problems of parking within Charmouth, as mentioned above, all new homes will be required to provide off-street parking with a minimum of 2 spaces for each house unit with 2 or more bedrooms or 1 space if smaller.

All surface water drainage, for new car parking areas, should be taken to an adequate piped, or otherwise sealed, drainage system. The use of permeable surfaces for car parking areas is not appropriate in areas of potential slope instability. See 6.80 to 6.85 on Land Instability and Geology.

POLICY GA2: Car Parking

- **Building on public / visitor car parks as shown on Map 9.2 will not be supported unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to justify the development in that location, and replacement parking provided of a similar capacity nearby, where practical.**
- **Development that would lead to the loss of parking spaces, on existing sites or on roads, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated there is excess parking provision or replacement parking is provided resulting in no net loss.**
- **Provide adequate car parking with a minimum of 2 spaces for each house unit with 2 or more bedrooms or 1 space if smaller.**

Other Traffic considerations

9.41 The majority of comments from the VS concerned buses and the need for greater frequency particularly in the evening and the winter. There were suggestions of having additional transport in and out of the village such as a hopper bus and/or local shuttle buses/buggy or bike hire/road train to ferry people around the village and encourage visitors to use all our facilities.

9.42 Also from the VS, most (56%) felt the current speed restrictions on the main roads were appropriate, 35% did not. However, among those who thought the current speed restrictions were inappropriate, there were strong views recorded in their comments; 78 specifically requesting a speed restriction to 20mph, 48 of these requesting a blanket speed restriction throughout the village and 21 requesting a speed reduction to 20mph in the Street.

9.43 Other suggestions made included having traffic calming, additional signage or greater enforcement of current speed restrictions.

9.44 Regarding the issue of mobility, accessibility and road maintenance, most asked (in the VS) for improvements to kerb and pavements, specifically identifying areas where these were most needed. Some of these areas were raised as a safety concern. Poor parking again was identified as an issue causing people with visual/mobility issues to move out into the road.

Double yellow lines have had to be added at certain locations to ensure large vehicles can access or turn corners e.g. fire engine.

9.45 A Questionnaire issued to residents by the *Parish Council* in 2010 (Ref. *Charmouth Parish Plan 2010*) raised similar concerns on traffic and transport in the village.

9.46 There were a number of suggestions that came out of the VS, which is proposed as a Project, that could improve traffic congestion, parking and reduce safety risks to pedestrians. These are covered in Appendix G.

10. ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND COASTAL CHANGE

Context

10.1 Coping with climate change is likely to be one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century as global warming makes its impact. The latest climate change projections for Dorset indicate there are likely to be warmer wetter winters, hotter summers, more extreme weather events (e.g. heatwaves, torrential downpours of rain, extreme wind and storm events) and rising sea levels. These changes in climate are likely to create significant impacts which will affect all aspects of Dorset's economy, society and infrastructure and the natural environment (See the *AONB Management Plan*). The 'AONB MP' is underpinned by, and contributes towards delivery of, the United Nations *Sustainable Development Goals* which address the global challenges.

Dorset Coastal Forum, an independent strategic coastal partnership is working towards "A coast that is managed to adapt to the issues of changing climate, economy and communities." It states "Change and development on the Dorset coast will take account of both its contribution to climate and other environmental change, and of the impacts of those changes to ensure that Dorset's coastal environment, economy and communities are resilient and well adapted to future change. Decision-making will be informed by robust evidence on the nature of social and economic trends and pressures as well as the environmental context in which they take place."

10.2 LP-ENV7 states that "The consequences of climate change, including extreme weather events, are some of the biggest challenges facing the country" with consequences outlined in LP-2.4.1.

10.3 Fundamental imperatives for managing climate change come from commitments made by the Government in the 'Climate Change Act 2008', which require changes to the way the economy and society are run, including a reduction in carbon emissions.

In 2019, the Adaptation Sub-Committee of the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC), produced a report which assesses whether the UK's housing stock is adequately prepared for the challenges of climate change; both in terms of reducing emissions from UK homes and ensuring homes are adequately prepared for the impacts of climate change. Suggestions for both new builds and existing homes are provided.

Charmouth Context

10.4 For Charmouth, local consequences of climate change are likely to be:

- coastal erosion and coastal change, which will have a serious impact on the village economy, not just those areas directly suffering erosion
- flooding of the River Char, which may affect holiday parks, some gardens and houses along River Way, and potentially other properties along the river

10.5 In the *Village Survey*, the value placed on the foreshore area by the respondents is extremely high. 85% to 93% of responses indicated extremely important or fairly important when asked whether there should be plans for management of immediate damage at the foreshore / protecting the buildings on the foreshore / replacing/moving the buildings on the foreshore back. (See VS question 2 and VS Report Q2)

When asked about the protection of areas at risk of flooding, 92% considered it extremely or fairly important that planning should be underway to protect buildings and areas at risk. (See VS question 3 and VS Report Q3)

Energy Efficiency

10.6 Climate change can result in future impact as outlined throughout this chapter. In simple terms, increase in carbon in the atmosphere creates heat, leading to warmer temperatures, melting ice and thus sea level rise. This section is entitled ‘energy efficiency’ and covers some practical actions which can be undertaken to lower carbon output, alleviating impact on the environment and ultimately lessening impact of a warming climate.

10.7 The NPPF chapter entitled ‘Achieving sustainable development’ contains an environmental objective “to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and *pollution*, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

10.8 Domestic CO₂ emissions accounted for 32% Dorset’s carbon emissions in 2014 (‘Climate Change Mitigation Position Paper: A Dorset Local Nature Partnership Position Paper’). However, suitable planning can encourage more sustainably built new homes, cutting emissions and providing houses which should also be cheaper to run.

10.9 LP-ENV13(i) states “New buildings and alterations/extensions to existing buildings are expected to achieve high standards of environmental performance.” LP-2.6 lists several ways by which high standards of environmental performance can and should be achieved.

The 2015 LP did not address the issue of carbon efficiency. However, in May 2019 Dorset Council made a Climate Emergency Declaration and now has a Climate Change Panel which met for the first time in July 2019. A draft ‘Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy’ was produced in July 2020 which identifies how the local authority will help tackle climate change over the next few

decades. Some of the 187 actions are being considered for inclusion in the emerging Dorset *Local Plan* and in time may be appropriate for Charmouth. The Climate Change Strategy and the action plan have been through public consultation which closed in January 2021.

Dorset Council, with Dorset AONB and originally supported by the European Regional Development Fund of the European Union, has an initiative for small businesses and community organisations named 'Low Carbon Dorset'.

10.10 56% of respondents to the Village Survey supported environmentally-friendly / eco-homes (VS Quantitative results Q33.5)

10.11 The aim of this policy is to ensure that development is achieved with the least possible negative impact on the environment by minimising carbon release and maximising energy efficiency.

POLICY CC1: Energy Efficiency

- **Applications are expected to address climate change through design which improves energy efficiency and delivers low/zero carbon emissions.**
- **Developers are encouraged to achieve higher environmental standards than required by Building Regulations, the *Local Plan* and *National Planning Policy Framework*.**
- **Any planning application relating to new or replacement buildings, whether residential or business, should include the provision of solar / photovoltaic panels, rainwater collection, car charging points and other features designed to mitigate climate change.**
- **In addition, applications for new buildings with solar panels or applications to retrofit panels to existing buildings will be subject to an assessment of their impact on *heritage assets* and their *settings*.**

The Coast

10.12 Situated in the middle of the *World Heritage Coast*, Charmouth has an internationally renowned fossil beach and Heritage Coast Centre (see Table 5.1 asset A1). The coastline exists because of erosion and over time it has exposed world-class geology and palaeontology. Ongoing natural erosion is fundamental to the Outstanding Universal Value of the *Jurassic Coast* and in order to protect World Heritage status, erosion must be allowed to continue. See 6.6 to 6.14. However, there is also a need to protect the shoreline assets and amenities, buildings and services. See also Jurassic Coast Trust Partnership Plan 2020-2025.

10.13 Although Charmouth has few built structures by the coast, it has a vibrant tourist economy based at the foreshore. The main building is the Old Cement Works, one of whose occupants is the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre, a major attraction which runs various activities including fossil walks. Other occupants are fossil, craft and beach shops; a café; and the beach attendants' office. Other structures include the NCI Lookout, the toilets, beach huts and a further café. For further

detail please see the document ‘Potential Direct Losses At Foreshore Following Damage To Or Loss Of Coastal Defences’, file ref: ForeshoreImpactTable in Appendix E.

Tourism depends on the foreshore and the assets there, which in turn rely on effective *coastal defences*.

10.14 Several hundred thousand people a year visit Charmouth. In late 2017 this generated an estimated £15million, making tourism probably the major driver of the local economy. In early 2021 this figure was estimated at £22million for a normal year, of which 80% would be generated by accommodation (holiday parks which have been upgraded; hotels and B&Bs, and an increased number of AirBnBs; with all rentals and other prices having increased). The remaining 20% is generated by retail and Charmouth *Parish* Council. (For more data on tourism see 7.8 to 7.16 and Table 7.1).

10.15 The Committee on Climate Change states that the “Current approach to protecting England’s coastal communities from flooding and erosion is not fit for purpose as the climate changes” and has made major recommendations to the authorities involved in managing England’s coasts.

‘UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Synthesis Report’ notes that “priorities for the next five years recognise the need for more research and more action needed into many aspects and potential effects of coastal erosion.”

10.16 In 2011 South Devon and Dorset Coastal Advisory Group (SDADCAG) developed the current ‘Durleston to Rame Head *Shoreline Management Plan*’ (SMP2) (sometimes known as the Halcrow Report).

Specifically, SMP2 states that from 2025 i.e. in the medium and long term: “There would be a move towards No Active Intervention along the cliffed (*sic*) western part of Charmouth (with) Managed Realignment within the River Char, through providing set-back flood defences as it becomes increasingly technically difficult to maintain defences in the existing position.”

In other words:

- a) no protection is proposed for Charmouth foreshore area (No Active Intervention) in the medium/long term i.e. the existing coastal defences will no longer be maintained after 2025, and when they fail, will be removed
- b) there may be some form of protection developed up-river (Managed Realignment) which should protect riverside properties and which might in time protect some of the lower part of the village from flooding.

However it is noted that SMP2 is not statutory and its conclusion that “it is technically difficult to maintain defences in the existing position” should be open to reconsideration.

Coastal Change and Sea Level Rise, and their Effects

10.17 The cliffs to both east and west of Charmouth are continually eroding: landslips, mudslides, and rock falls happen, often to a very small extent, with an occasional larger mass falling to the beach. This erosion however, is what makes Charmouth beach so important as a fossil destination, attracting many thousands of visitors every year from all over the world. High Spring Tides may lap the foot of parts of the cliff area.

10.18 It is quite normal at present that an on-shore wind, with large waves and a high tide, can deposit sand, gravel, stones, seaweed and other debris around the foreshore buildings and the CPC car park. Occasionally, the amount deposited can be significant. See photos following 10.24.

10.19 As sea level rises, these effects are likely to increase, although slowly as sea levels are likely to rise gradually. Damage to buildings or the existing coastal defences could happen slowly, or incrementally, or possibly suddenly as a result of a major storm.

10.20 Estimates for the extent of sea level rise vary. The Royal Society has estimated a rise of 0.5 to 1 m (1.5 to 3 feet) by 2100; the UK Committee on Climate Change (CCC) (an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008, which provides advice to government on building a low-carbon economy and preparing for climate change) estimates 1.0m; one of CCC's reports 'UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017' suggests rise could be 1.9m but more likely closer to 1.0m; whereas JBA Consulting (10.31) which undertook a coastal erosion survey at Charmouth in 2018, appears to suggest a possible extreme sea level rise above 3.8m by 2118.

The overall observed rise since 1901 is about 20 cm (8 inches). (Ref: The Royal Society).

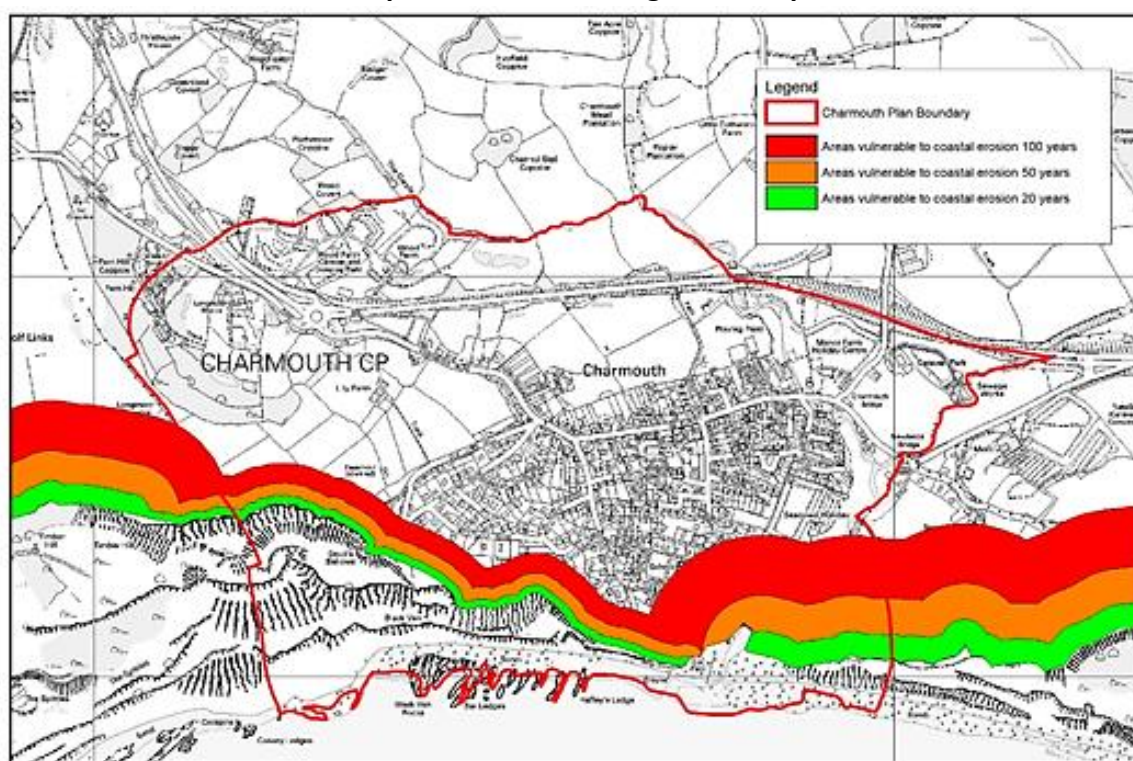
10.21 Some protection of the area may be provided by the River Char which is a gravel transporting river and takes boulders, cobbles and gravels out to sea at times of flood, forming a fan/delta:

- River-floods transport material out to sea thus protecting the coast
- Waves transport material back to the coast to form a beach, further protecting the coast



Photo showing the proximity to the beach to the Old Cement Factory building with the Heritage Coast Centre, car parking, and the position of coastal defences.

Map 10.1 Coastal Change Risk Map



Showing projected coastal erosion i.e. where the coastline may be in 20, 50 and 100 years.

Impact of Failing Coastal Defences at the Foreshore

10.22 Coastal defences are a key part of coastal management, in which the land-sea boundary is protected from erosion and flooding. However, the provision of or improvement to coastal or flood defences is generally based upon potential direct impact on buildings: any other kind of impact rarely appears to be considered.

In their inquiry into coastal flooding, coastal erosion and adaptation to climate change (interim report published Nov 2019), the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee identified that there is much discussion around government priorities “Several organisations raised concerns about what they saw as too narrow a focus in Government coastal change policy on protecting residential properties. They were concerned that this approach restricted the scope for adaptation, and overlooked many other important considerations such as the needs of business or the environment.”

10.23 The impact on the village following loss of coast defences would be considerable, both directly at the foreshore as well as indirectly. Without maintenance of the existing coastal defences the foreshore area would be subject to ongoing damage until defences finally fail. It has been stated (West Dorset District Council) that when defences fail after 2025, they will be removed.

10.24 Losses at the foreshore will be considerable.

For further details of the anticipated impacts at the foreshore please see the document ‘Potential Direct Losses At Foreshore Following Damage To Or Loss Of Coastal Defences’, file ref: ForeshoreImpactTable in Appendix E.

Summary of Losses

- Tourist facilities
- the Old Cement Factory Building and its occupants
- public toilets by the beach
- an estimated 50% of all car parking spaces
- income to Parish finances through CPC’s ownership of the Old Cement Factory Building, the Soft Rock Café, a car park and the foreshore ‘services’ such as beach huts
- easy access to the beach
- advice on beach safety from CHCC, NCI, CPC beach attendants
- watch on beach and offshore users from NCI and others
- possible damage to or loss of the sewage pumping station



Photos showing what happened in 2014 storms when the beach ended up in the car park.

10.25 In the medium to long-term, such threats to the village are significant. Chapter 7 paragraphs 7.8 to 7.11, discusses tourism, while paragraphs 7.12 to 7.16 and Table 7.1 outline the issue of visitors to the village in numbers (source: *Charmouth Traders*). Charmouth has a significant economic reliance on tourism. Loss of tourist facilities and thus a significant drop in tourists would have a serious impact on the economy of the village and the local area. In late 2017 Charmouth Traders, as representatives of the local businesses, researched the likely impact on Charmouth's economy were the sea defences to be damaged beyond repair.

The most likely effect is that the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre has to close, the beach huts are destroyed, the toilets are unusable and half the car parking spaces are lost.

Firstly, Charmouth's main attraction no longer exists – the beach and the related fossil hunting. Charmouth is a unique place. Many of our visitors come for not just a beach holiday but also to learn about the geological heritage which is of such significance that it is a World Heritage Site and contributes to our understanding of how we impact on our environment. There are many school visits to the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre which is an extremely valuable resource for learning as well as entertainment.

Secondly, there would be no cafes or toilets which would make the beach much less attractive.

It would be very difficult to rebuild any of the above given the continuing storm threat.

Thirdly, the loss of car parking space would halve capacity.

Fourthly, Charmouth Parish Council's two main income streams have gone so the Council would not be able to help.

Let us assume that the number of people visiting Charmouth falls by 50%. (It could be worse). Holiday accommodation income could fall by 50% with a commensurate fall in employment.

The effect on shops, pubs, food outlets and other businesses would be much greater as a 50% reduction in trade would make most unviable, and lead to total closure for the majority. There would also be a knock-on effect in jobs for tradesmen, cleaners, suppliers and contractors.

Quote: Charmouth Traders

In numbers, the impact was calculated as:

Jobs

It is estimated that more than 300 jobs could be lost, roughly 50:50 full-time and seasonal. There is little alternative employment so most of these people would become long-term unemployed. (2017 estimate).

Economic value

Difficult to estimate but by calculating the lost income from lost employment and adding on rough estimates of businesses' lost profitability this could well amount up to £10million per annum (2017 estimate).

Then in early 2021 it was estimated that from a likely income of £22million (see 10.14) up to £15million could be lost from the local economy.

Quote: Charmouth Traders

It should be noted that the (2017) estimated loss of 300 jobs would have a significant impact on Charmouth's population of 1300, and the surrounding area.

10.26 In view of the considerable difficulty in identifying suitable sites to relocate shoreline facilities which have to be by the beach, the priority for Charmouth and the local area, has to be serious improvement to the coastal defences. For example, the Heritage Coast Centre and the beach toilets need to be sited by the shore.

The future of the village and its economy has a major dependence on the existence and serious improvement or replacement of the coastal defences in the short, medium and long term, before they fail and the damage cannot be undone.

The River

10.27 Within the parish, the River Char runs down the valley into the parish, under the bridge at the main road, then down to the sea. The Gwyle is a main tributary of the River Char and marks part of the northern parish boundary.

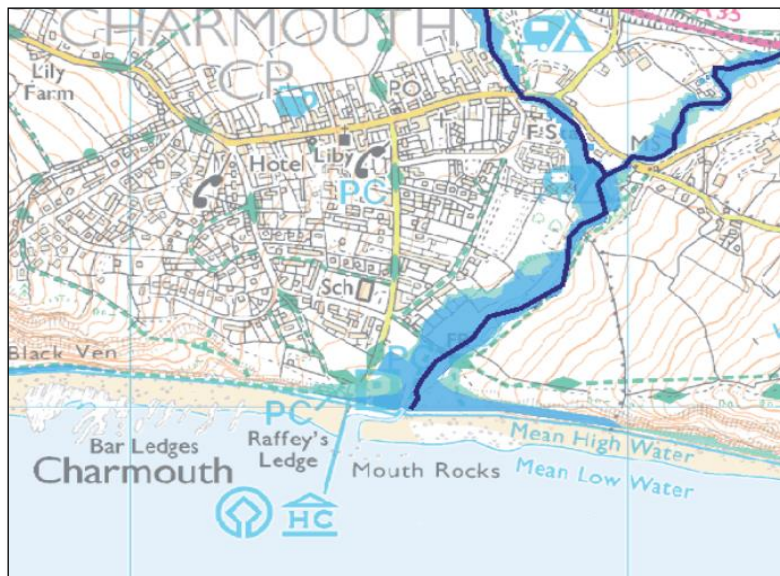
River Flooding and its Effects

10.28 The River Char has occasionally flooded due to excessive rain, particularly if combined with a very high tide backing up the river.

10.29 Climate change projections for Dorset indicate that there are likely to be warmer wetter winters and more extreme weather events such as torrential downpours of rain. Areas around the River Char and The Gwyle may be at risk of flooding from river level rise, however short-term. In addition some land near the river is likely to be affected by tidal flooding caused by sea level rise and the loss of coastal defences. Potential damage could result in flooding of holiday parks, impacting tourism, gardens and potentially later, properties close to the river.

10.30 To lessen the effects of river flooding, SMP2 proposes some measure of 'Managed Realignment' possibly sited part-way along Seadown river bank. In the long term, it is anticipated that 'Managed Realignment' may also protect the main road by the bridge and further properties low in the valley.

Map 10.2 River Flooding Map



*Extract from Environment Agency showing areas of flood risk (approx. 50 years hence).
Map provided by CPC*

10.31 In 2018 JBA Consulting said "The Managed Realignment Zone presented covers much of the existing or historical flood plain area, and is therefore land which could be susceptible to future flooding following climate change, sea level rise or potential beach roll back. Beach roll-back will also increase the potential for waves and tides to influence further upstream within the River Char."

The Future

10.32 LP-2.4.10 "Although there are uncertainties regarding the extent and pace of sea level rise and coastal change, the current (2011) Shoreline Management Plan has defined the over-arching strategy for managing the coast, identifying which sections of the coast are to be protected in the short (0 to 20 years), medium (20 to 50 years) and long term (50 to 100 years)." See 10.16.

10.33 In 2010 presumably as a result of SMP2 (10.16) DEFRA commissioned the Dorset Coastal Change Pathfinder Project on the 'Jurassic Coast' which undertook a detailed community consultation during 2011 relating to the Heritage Coast Centre and its possible relocation: planning for, and managing, adaptation for the future. The Pathfinder Report established that potential relocation for a new building required that relevant facilities be located adjacent to the main access to the beach and as close to the beach as possible. Five sites close to the shore were

proposed and the community voted on the options. Although one of the five proposed relocation sites was voted as preferred, it was later decided that none of the proposed sites was suitable. Links to the Jurassic Coast section of the DEFRA Coastal Change Pathfinder Programme, and also to the Parish Council's response to the Pathfinder Report can both be found in Appendix E. See App C for the hyperlink to the Pathfinder Report, Jurassic Coast section.

10.34 LP-ENV7(ii) "Councils will identify Coastal Change Management Areas ... based on the Shoreline Management Plan and supporting evidence." A CCMA proposes whether an area at the coast could be used for any development and of what sort. It is unlikely that residential development would be allowed. LP-ENV7(ii) also states that "The replacement of properties affected by coastal change may be permitted within a defined area agreed through a community relocation strategy as an exception to normal policy." In the longer term sites may need to be found to relocate properties affected by coastal change or flooding. LP-ENV7(ii) provides support for such policy within a defined area through a community relocation strategy and this Plan takes the opportunity to define appropriate locational criteria.

Policy CC2 outlines the principles for the community relocation strategy, were coastal defences to be allowed to fail.

However, although relocation is permitted, there are few, if any, suitable sites within Charmouth. Relocation of coastal organisations such as the Heritage Coast Centre or premises such as the beach toilets both of which have to be next to the shoreline would seem challenging. Similarly, there are no alternative sites for car parking in Charmouth.

10.35 LP-2.4.9 notes that "Managing coastal erosion is about finding the right balance between the needs of local communities, the economy and the environment, to secure a sustainable and affordable approach to the threat while protecting natural interests"

Conclusions from the report on Dorset's Environmental Economy, published in 2015 include:

- The natural environment on which the economy depends is a significant economic asset in and of itself, and should be protected, improved and invested in.
- Environmental assets are likely to become more valuable over time in response to rising scarcity and increased amenity and use values.

10.36 This Plan hopes to protect Charmouth and its economy by ensuring that the effects of coastal erosion are minimised or are delayed for a considerable period through serious improvement to the coastal defences. The balance between allowing coastal erosion to continue in order to protect World Heritage status, yet protecting shoreline assets, amenities, buildings and services, and thus the village economy, will be challenging.

10.37 As a result of the *Habitats Regulations Assessment*, see link in Appendix E, it was identified that engineering initiatives to significantly improve existing coastal defences or create new defences are likely to alter the local coastal processes. "The Sidmouth to West Bay SAC relies on

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Note: 1. Words or phrases shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). 2. Abbreviations frequently mentioned are defined in the Abbreviations table (Appendix B).

natural coastal processes – adverse effects on this must be avoided.” The mitigation for these risks is contained in Policy HRA1: Habitats Regulations and should be read in conjunction with policy CC2 below. See paragraphs 6.15-6.18.

10.38 This Plan has been developed for the future (to 2035 and later) yet the consequences after 2025 of SMP2 (Shoreline Management Plan) (10.16) as it currently stands will, in time, seriously damage the village and village economy through loss of tourism and its income. The village is unlikely to have a sustainable future without serious and prompt attention to the issue of coastal defences. SMP2 does not restrict the possibility of improving coastal defences prior to 2025.

10.39 In summary, without losing the opportunity to consider the relocation of coastal properties were that to be necessary, the parish needs to explore options for improved coastal defences in the first instance in view of the limited options for relocation that would be available.

In summary, once foreshore assets are unable to be used the prospect for Charmouth’s economy will have a significant negative impact. Therefore, the priority should be to explore improvement to coastal defences prior to considering relocation. While relocation of some of the foreshore assets may be possible it will never fully mitigate the overall loss to the economy.

This issue is of such significance to Charmouth and the surrounding area that it requires action.

POLICY CC2: Coastal Change and Flooding

Coastal Defences

- **To safeguard existing foreshore premises and Charmouth’s long-term future, any engineering works which maintain or enhance coastal or upstream defences will be supported, providing there is no significant impact on the environment.**

Coastal Relocation

- **Relocation of premises or services subject to or damaged by coastal change or flooding will be supported if there is no prospect of future improvements to coastal defences to safeguard the premises, and to an appropriate location suitable for purpose.**
- **Where it is necessary to relocate premises affected by coastal change or flooding this should be to a site within the *Defined Development Boundary* or, if no suitable site exists, to a site adjoining the *Defined Development Boundary* or to a *brownfield* site which is not of high environmental quality. An appropriate site anywhere in the *Parish* can be considered, if replacing an important community asset or amenity.**

10.40 Because of the threats to the village outlined in this Chapter, a Village Improvement Project has been proposed to examine the issues, seek options and take any solutions forward. It is likely that two related projects may be initiated (a) Coastal Defences and (b) Managed Realignment. It is probable that a Community Relocation Strategy would be part of both projects – with potentially different outcomes for (a) premises and services next to the shore (b) premises up-river. See Appendix G.

11. IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING OF THE PLAN

Planning Applications

11.1 Charmouth *Neighbourhood Plan's policies* have been developed to reflect the ambitions of its residents for their community following detailed consultation. The policies' primary role is to give local detail to complement the *West Dorset Local Plan* and be a material consideration for Dorset Council when determining planning applications in Charmouth. Therefore the implementation of the Plan is primarily through the planning application process and ensuring that decisions made by Dorset Council are in line with the community's objectives for these policies.

11.2 Charmouth *Parish Council* will continue to provide comments to Dorset Council on planning applications but with a focus on whether or not an application meets the intent of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. On major or sensitive applications the Parish Council will encourage and facilitate for the applicant's early engagement with the Parish Council/community as appropriate. In addition the Parish Council reserves the right to request from Dorset Council/the applicant information which may be critical to making its observations e.g. a viability study justifying the number of *affordable homes* in a development; how the proposed design meets policy criteria. The Parish Council may also engage specialist expertise to advise on key issues.

Plan Review

11.3 The Parish Council will monitor the Plan's performance and report to its Annual Parish Meeting so the community can hear about progress and provide an opportunity to hear any concerns.

11.4 The Plan's policies refer to the *Charmouth Housing Needs Statement* which summarises Charmouth's housing needs by size, type, tenure etc to which new housing must contribute. Current needs have been identified in the 2018 *Housing Needs Assessment*. The Needs Statement will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary without the need to formally amend the Plan in its entirety. Updates will be placed on the Parish Council website to inform applicants on current requirements.

11.5 In light of any major changes locally, or to Local Plan or national policies, the Parish Council will decide whether to formally review and seek re-approval of the whole Plan but it is hoped that

by updating the Charmouth Housing Needs Statement, the Plan will have a minimum life of 5 years.

Village Improvement Projects

11.6 An important by-product of consulting with the community on the neighbourhood plan has been the development of a programme of *village improvement projects*. These projects will be undertaken by a variety of organisations and voluntary groups but the Parish Council will liaise with them on actions and report on the overall progress on delivering this programme at its Annual Parish Meeting. See Appendix G.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

This Glossary defines terms shown in *italics* in the Plan's policies and where the word/phrase first appears in each Chapter (see para 2.9)

Terms in **bold** in the text of the Glossary are defined elsewhere in the Glossary.

Affordable Housing/Homes: Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy, or is at least 20% below local market rents; (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme; and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. Income restrictions should be used to limit a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those who have maximum household incomes of £80,000 a year or less. (see also **Starter/First Homes**)

c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, and other low cost homes for sale and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Adjoining: Sites adjoining the **Defined Development Boundary** must abut that Boundary or the far edge of a road that runs alongside that Boundary. (see **Rounding Off**).

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): An area of countryside which has been designated for conservation due to its significant landscape value and scenic beauty of national importance. Charmouth is situated in the Dorset AONB.

Basic Conditions: Criteria that a Neighbourhood Plan must meet before it can come into force. These are:

- They must have appropriate regard to national policy
- They must contribute to the achievement of **sustainable development**
- They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area

- They must be compatible with EU obligations.

Biodiversity: The variety and variability of life on Earth: the variability among living organisms, including plants, birds, insects and all other animals; mosses, lichens, algae, bacteria, viruses etc; within terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems; and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan: An ecological survey carried out by a suitably qualified person prior to applying for planning permission. This applies to all development sites of 0.1ha or greater in size or where there are known **protected species** or important habitats/habitat features. More specifically, a BMEP is required for a greenfield or brownfield site greater than 0.1ha, which isn't already being used as a residential or business premises. A BMEP covers habitat as well as **protected species** matters.

Brownfield: Land that has been previously developed and is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure and any associated fixed surface infrastructure (excludes gardens).

Building for Life: A Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. It provides questions designed to help structure discussions between local communities, local planning authorities, developers and other stakeholders along with a traffic light scoring system and associated quality mark.

Building Line: The line formed by the principal (normally front, road facing) elevation of the **Original Building** to which new developments should be aligned and not normally encroach beyond.

Charmouth Connection: To be used in legal agreements to determine how affordable housing should be allocated (in descending order of priority):

- being permanently resident in Charmouth for at least 2 years
- being in permanent full-time or part-time (minimum 16 hour contract per week) work in Charmouth for 12 months. This may include the need to move to Charmouth in connection with permanent employment (minimum 16 hour contract per week) where commuting from the person's existing home is accepted as unreasonable. In all cases there should be no break in the period of employment for more than 3 months over the relevant period
- having immediate relatives (i.e. parents, non-dependent children, brother or sister) who have lived in Charmouth for at least 5 years and with whom there has been shown to have been frequent contact, commitment or dependency
- having previously lived in Charmouth for a continuous period of 10 years up to the age of 18
- other categories or relationships may be considered where there is clear evidence of a special need to be resident in Charmouth.

Any changes to these priorities will be included in a revised **Charmouth Housing Needs Statement** on the Charmouth **Parish Council** website.

Charmouth Housing Needs Statement: A summary of Charmouth's housing needs by size, type, tenure and originally based on the 2018 **Housing Needs Assessment** (HNA). This will be updated over time as necessary and be available on the Charmouth Parish Council website to inform developers of the number and type of housing required at that time.

Charmouth Traders: A local working group who represent shop owners and local businesses within Charmouth.

Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA): An area likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion). Councils decide whether an area of coast should be a CCMA and therefore whether it is suitable for development, and of what type.

Coastal Defences: A key part of coastal management, in which the land-sea boundary is protected from erosion and flooding.

Community Assets and Amenities: Recognised as important by virtue of their contribution to the character of the village, its social fabric and cohesion, and the amenity, enjoyment and security of the residents. Included in **Community Facilities**.

Community Facilities: Includes all shops, pubs, eating places, medical practice, educational bodies, recreational park area, community/village/youth club halls, library, church, clubs etc. which together form the functioning village of Charmouth. This includes **Community Assets and Amenities**.

Conservation: (i) The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its **significance**. (ii) The protection of plants, animals, and natural areas; protection and management of the environment and natural resources.

Conservation Area: The Charmouth part (designated 1972) of the Charmouth and Chideock Conservation Area which are areas of special architectural or historic interest where policies exist for the protection and enhancement of these areas.

Countryside: Open land outside the Defined Development Boundary where development is generally restricted.

Defined Development Boundary: An existing boundary incorporated in the **Local Plan** which defines the extent of the built-up settlement area of Charmouth and, within this boundary, there is a general presumption in favour of development and outside this boundary, development is generally restricted.

Design and Access Statement: A report accompanying a planning application explaining how a proposed development responds to its site and setting and how it will be accessed. In Charmouth, as a **Designated Area**, a Report is required for one or more houses or buildings of 100 sq. m. or more.

Design Guide: A document approved by an appropriate body which promotes the design and style of homes and neighbourhoods local people want to see and their views are represented in this **Neighbourhood Plan**.

Designated Area: Charmouth is a 'designated area' due to its status as an **AONB** and **World Heritage Site**, and having SSSIs, a Conservation Area where special planning policy protections exist e.g. certain national **Permitted Development Rights** do not apply.

Designated Heritage Asset: See **Heritage Asset**.

Development Plan: Defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to include the adopted Local Plan and '**made**' **neighbourhood development plans**.

Distinctive Local Features: Attractive architectural features visible near to the development plot which should be reflected in the design of new buildings. These are features visible when looking out from the plot, those visible on neighbouring properties when looking at the plot from the street or other public access point as well as traditional features appearing in the wider Charmouth/Dorset area. In the case of extensions/replacements this includes distinctive features of any remaining parts of the former buildings.

Dorset's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): an organisation that works in partnership with businesses, local government, education institutes and other industry and community organisations to drive economic growth, attract funding and investment, increase productivity and develop local industrial strategies for Dorset. Their priorities are to:-

- Create new jobs
- Attract new businesses and grow existing ones
- Secure funding for projects that have long-term economic benefits
- Support businesses
- Develop skills, employment and career opportunities
- Support the development of appropriate housing.

Dorset Notable: Wildlife species chosen in Dorset as indicators of good unimproved or semi-improved habitat to assist in the selection of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest. Such species are not classified as Rare, but are Scarce.

Ecological Network: The interconnection of habitats and ecosystems allowing for persistence of species within sites as well as movement across the landscape between sites.

England Coast Path: The proposed long-distance National Trail which will follow the coastline of England which, when complete, will be 2,795 miles (4,500 kilometres) in length. It is due to be completed in 2021 and proposed plans would move the existing diverted **South West Coast Path** off the road both east and west of Charmouth.

Environmental Impact Assessment: A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

European and international wildlife sites: See **International, EU, National and Local Designated Sites of Importance for Biodiversity**.

Evidence Base: The information and data gathered by the Neighbourhood **Steering Group** to inform and support the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

First Homes: (see also **Starter/First Homes**) Homes for sale at a discount for eligible first-time buyers with priority to those with a **Charmouth Connection**.

Flood Risk: The combination of probability of a particular flood event and its corresponding hazard, is used to refer to the scale of flood effect, combining hazard and probability, upon a particular site.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green Corridor: Generally a stretch of land that provides sufficient habitat to support wildlife, while allowing the movement of wildlife along it. Species may be corridor dwellers or may be passage users. Corridors can provide a habitat for many diverse species, acting both as a stepping stone and a link between other green areas. Common green corridors include river banks, hedges, roadside grass verges and railway embankments. Also known as **Wildlife Corridors** or Habitat Corridors.

Green Infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Habitat: The place in which a species of animal or plant lives, providing a particular set of environmental conditions. Often used in a wider sense, referring to major assemblages or communities of plants and animals found together.

Habitats Regulation Assessment: Tests the impacts of a plan or project on nature conservation sites of European importance and is required under EU legislation.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of **significance** meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. They are likely to hold evidence of the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. Features of a heritage asset include those which contribute to its special historical, archaeological, social, artistic or architectural interest. Can be Designated or Non-Designated. **Designated Heritage Assets:** where special protections exist such as **World Heritage Sites**, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Areas designated under the relevant legislation. **Non-Designated Heritage Assets:** buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes

identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage **significance** meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for **Designated Heritage Assets**.

Heritage Coast: A strip of coastline in England and Wales, the extent of which is defined by agreement between the relevant statutory national agency (Natural England) and the relevant local authority. Such areas are recognised for their natural beauty, wildlife and heritage and amongst the purposes of definition is support for these qualities and enabling enjoyment of them by the public. Charmouth is within the Dorset Heritage Coast. A Heritage Coast is a separate definition from **World Heritage Coast**.

Holiday Lets: A property which has a planning condition imposed restricting its use at specified times of the year to its use as a holiday let i.e. the property cannot be used as a permanent dwelling.

Housing Needs: Charmouth's priority needs for specific sizes, types and tenures of housing as detailed in Chapter 8 of the **Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan** and summarised in the **Charmouth Housing Needs Statement**.

Housing Needs Assessment (HNA): Undertaken by independent consultants AECOM Ltd and published in March 2018. This is a demand-led study of the amount and type of housing that Charmouth might need but takes no account of Charmouth's constraints to development (see also **Charmouth Housing Needs Statement** which provides the latest guidance on **Housing Needs**).

Immediate Locality: The area spreading out from a plot for housing development which has a similar pattern of development, plot sizes, overall density and comparable building forms. The new development should reflect the prevailing settlement pattern (plot size, spacing between buildings, orientation and shape) and density of development.

Infill: New development e.g. housing between, or to the rear, of existing buildings.

Intermediate Affordable Homes: See **Affordable Housing** definition section d) and includes 'shared ownership' which offers the occupant part ownership/part affordable rent of a home e.g. from a Housing Association.

International, EU, National and Local Designated Sites of Importance for Biodiversity:

- International sites include Ramsar sites (designated under the Ramsar Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance)
- EU sites include **Special Areas of Conservation** (SACs, designated under EC Directive 92/43 on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora); Special Protection Areas (SPAs) is land classified under Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds.
- National sites include **Sites of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSIs, notified by Natural England under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 for their special scientific interest; National Nature Reserves (NNRs, designated by Natural England)
- Local designated sites include Local Wildlife Sites.

Instability Zones: The parish area includes four levels of slope instability ranging from Zone 1 (unlikely that problems will arise from slope instability) to Zone 4 (areas in which there may be severe problems arising from coastal erosion and/or landslipping).

Jurassic Coast: A popular name for the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site (see **World Heritage Site**).

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: The technique used to assess the effects of change on the landscape and can be key to effective planning decisions.

Listed Building: A building, object or structure that has been judged to be of national importance in terms of architectural or historic interest and included on a special register, called the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Local Green Spaces: Local Green Space designation protects green areas or open spaces against development where they are of particular importance to local communities.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. The Local Plan covering Charmouth is the 2015 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan or its successor and is currently under review as part of a new Dorset-wide Local Plan.

Local Planning Authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area including determining planning applications. For Charmouth, since 1 April 2019 this is Dorset Council (previously West Dorset District Council).

Made: When the neighbourhood plan is approved and adopted as part of the area's **Development Plan** alongside the **Local Plan**.

Market Housing: Homes available for sale on the open market i.e. not **Affordable Homes**.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019): Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Design Guide: Issued by Government in 2019, the guide sets out 10 characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

Neighbourhood Area: This is the designated area that a **Neighbourhood Plan** covers and for Charmouth this is the area within the Parish boundary.

Neighbourhood Plan/ Neighbourhood Development Plan: A neighbourhood plan is a document that sets out planning policies for a local area. It is used to decide whether to approve planning applications. It is written by the local community to ensure the area gets the right types of development, in the right place but protects the natural environment. Charmouth's Plan sits

alongside Dorset Council's **Local Plan** and provides more detail on specific areas or issues within Charmouth's **parish** boundary.

Non-Designated Heritage Asset: See **Heritage Asset**

Open Space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Open Forum(s): Presentations and 'open' meetings with residents and local businesses concerning various stages of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Original Building: A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Parish: The land area which forms the Parish of Charmouth.

Parish Council: Charmouth Parish Council.

Permitted Development Rights: Rights to undertake certain small types of Development without the need to apply for planning permission. In Charmouth, as a **Designated Area**, these Rights are more limited than exist nationally.

Plan Area: The designated area of the Charmouth **Neighbourhood Plan** which is identical to the Charmouth **Parish** area.

Plan Period: The timespan of the Charmouth **Neighbourhood Plan** from 2020 to 2031.

Playing Field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. In Charmouth this is also known as the Recreation Ground.

Policies: Policies of the Charmouth **Neighbourhood Plan** which, together with **Local Plan** policies, will be a material consideration when planning applications are determined by Dorset Council.

Pollution: Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

Principal Residency: The sole or main residence of the occupier for the majority of their time and cannot be used as a **Second Home** or **Holiday Let**.

Protected Species: Species specially protected by the law, primarily under Schedules 1 (birds), 5 (amphibians, reptiles & mammals), and 8 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Referendum: A vote by the eligible voters of a **Neighbourhood Plan** area. **Neighbourhood Plans** are “**made**” when a referendum produces a majority vote in their favour.

Retail Hub: The area where existing commercial/retail properties are concentrated within the centre of the village.

Rounding-off: To avoid marked intrusion into the open **countryside**, sites should **adjoin** the existing **Defined Development Boundary** and provide a symmetry or completion to this Boundary. Rounding off development should not visually extend development into the open **countryside** and should be predominantly enclosed by edging features such as existing physical and logical boundaries. The presence of definite boundaries, landscape features, the history and nature of the land, the form of existing development and topography will be important considerations.

Rural Exception Sites: Small sites adjoining the **Defined Development Boundary** (see also **Adjoining** and **Rounding-off**) used for **Affordable Housing** in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural Exception Sites seek to address the **housing needs** of the local community that the market is failing to provide by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection (see **Charmouth Connection**).

Social/Affordable Rent: see **Affordable Housing**.

Second Home: Privately-owned habitable accommodation that is not occupied by anyone as their main residence. It may be occupied occasionally, for example as a holiday home or when working away from the household’s main home.

Service Provider Questionnaire: A Questionnaire given to Service Providers in Charmouth, including retail outlets, tradesmen, businesses, leisure services, the school and community facilities. 31 responses were compiled and results contained in a Service Provider Survey Report.

Setting: The surroundings of a asset that make a positive (or negative) contribution to its **significance**, or, may affect the ability to appreciate that **significance**. The extent of the setting may change over time.

Shoreline Management Plan: A non-statutory council plan providing a large-scale assessment of the risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment associated with coastal processes and determines the action which will be taken to protect the area, or not.

Significance: The importance or value of an asset to this and future generations because of its special interest. That interest may, for example, be archaeological, architectural, artistic, economic, environmental, historic or social.

Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI): Sites selected for their habitat or species interest. In Dorset these sites are selected by an SNCI Panel with representatives of Dorset Wildlife Trust, Dorset Environmental Records Centre, Natural England and Dorset County Council.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are protected areas designated as being of special interest by virtue of its flora, fauna, geological or geomorphological features. SSSIs collectively form a nationally important series of sites of biological or geological value.

Small Homes/Houses: Homes with 1-3 bedrooms.

South West Coast Path (SWCP): Britain's longest path stretching from Minehead to Poole Harbour. The village is on the South West Coast Path and what will become the England Coast Path (opening 2020).

Special Area of Conservation: Sites exist under EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1992 (The Habitats Directive). Sites of international importance, designated to conserve habitats and species which are rare or threatened within the European Union. Sites hosting habitats or species which are particularly threatened have "priority" status.

Starter/First Homes: see **Affordable Housing** definition section b) and **First Homes**.

Steering Group: the Charmouth residents/ volunteers who undertook the evidence gathering, community consultations and drafting of the Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan and its policies.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): A technical exercise undertaken by Dorset Council to determine the quantity and suitability of land potentially available for housing development following a call for sites from landowners, agents and developers. At the time of drafting the Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan, this was the 2018 Dorset SHLAA, updated in September 2020, which did not identify any suitable sites in Charmouth.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the **Local Plan**. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues such as design and are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions. Charmouth is covered by the 2009 West Dorset Design & Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines which provides 10 design policies.

Sustainable Development: Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is about supporting growth and innovation for jobs and prosperity, creating a high quality built environment with accessible local services and the home to meet current and future needs, whilst protecting and enhancing our environment, using natural resources wisely and minimizing waste and pollution.

Sustainable Development Goals: The Sustainable Development Goals developed by the United Nations are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address

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Note: 1. Words or phrases shown in *italics*, when they first appear in the chapter or used in policies, are defined in the Glossary (Appendix A). 2. Abbreviations frequently mentioned are defined in the Abbreviations table (Appendix B).

global challenges including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO): A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity.

Use Class: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. In many cases involving similar types of use, a change of use of a building or land does not need planning permission. Planning permission is not needed when both the present and proposed uses fall within the same 'class', or if the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order says that a change of class is permitted to another specified class. *Sui Generis* means uses that do not fall within any use class.

Viability Assessment: An 'open book' assessment submitted with a planning application and available for public scrutiny, which demonstrates the financial viability justification for the mix of housing including any **Market Homes** on a **Rural Exception Site**. This applies both at the time of the original planning application and any subsequent revisions.

Village Improvement Projects: Projects identified during public consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan identified as being beneficial to the enjoyment of the community.

Village Survey: A comprehensive Village Survey with 854 being issued to all residents and businesses within Charmouth in February 2017 resulting in 255 returns. The Survey comprised of 7 sections and sought views on: the draft vision, natural environment, tourism, transport, community facilities, housing and employment in the parish. There were 38 questions in total and 29 reports were compiled collating the responses.

Wildlife Corridor: See **Green Corridor**.

World Heritage Coast: The term used to include both the Dorset and East Devon Coast **World Heritage Site**, and the immediate towns and countryside which provide the education, accommodation and transport facilities that enable people to visit and understand the **World Heritage Site**. The site was designated because it provides a unique example of 185 million years of Earth's history, recording life, significant ongoing geological processes in the development of landforms, and significant geomorphic or physiographic features. See **Jurassic Coast**.

World Heritage Site: An area considered to be of outstanding universal value, that meets one or more of the four criteria set out by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

APPENDIX B: ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AONB MP	Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024
BET	Business, Economy and Tourism
BMEP	Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan
CCSCAA	Charmouth, Chideock and Seatown Conservation Area Appraisal
CHCC	Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre
CLT	Community Land Trust
CNP or NP	Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan
CPC	Charmouth Parish Council
CPRE	Council for the Preservation of Rural England
DC	Dorset Council
DDB	Charmouth's Defined Development Boundary
DERC	Dorset Environmental Records Centre
DFY	DorsetForYou website
DHTS	Dorset Historic Towns Survey 2011
ECP	England Coast Path
HNA	Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment 2018
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessments
IT	Information Technology
LEP	Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership
LP	West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2015
LP-ENVn	Local Plan policy number
LP-n.n.n	Local Plan section number
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework 2019
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
OS	Ordnance Survey relating to maps
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SDADCAG	South Devon and Dorset Coastal Advisory Group (responsible for developing SMP2 = current Shoreline Management Plan)
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEP	Dorset's Strategic Economic Plan
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SNCI	Site of National Conservation Interest
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SWCP	South West Coast Path
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VS	Village Survey for Charmouth Neighbourhood Plan (contains both quantitative and qualitative responses and analyses)
WHS	World Heritage Site (Jurassic Coast)

APPENDIX C: HYPERLINKS TO DOCUMENTS

Document	Link
AONB MP = Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024	https://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/DAONB_Managmentplan.pdf
Basic Conditions Statement(Draft)	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
'Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' DEFRA, published 2011	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf
BMEP	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/biodiversity/pdfs/biodiversity-mitigation-enhancement-plan-form-v4-2019.pdf
Building for Life	http://www.builtforlifelifehomes.org/
CCSCAA = Charmouth Chideock Seatown Conservation Area Appraisal	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/west-dorset/pdfs/charmouth-and-chideock-incl-seatown-conservation-area-appraisal.pdf
2011 Census, Local Area Report for Charmouth Parish	https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E04003520
Charmouth Foreshore Management Plan: Charmouth Parish Council	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/file/Charmouth-foreshore-management-plan-final-plan-0911-16(5).pdf
Charmouth Housing Needs Statement	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
Climate Change Mitigation Position Paper: A Dorset Local Nature Partnership Position Paper	https://dorsetlnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Climate-Change-Mitigation-Position-Paper2.pdf
CPRE (light emissions analysis)	link only for levels of light at night www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps
Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Framework (includes Compensation Framework in Guidance Section C)	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/biodiversity/biodiversity-appraisal-in-dorset.aspx
DERC (Dorset Environmental Records Centre)	http://www.derc.org.uk/general/welcome.htm
DFY = DorsetForYou website	https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk
DHTS = Dorset Historic Towns Survey 2011, for Charmouth	https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/libraries-history-culture/local-history-heritage/pdf/historic-towns/charmouth

Dorset Coastal Forum: Strategy 2011-2021	https://www.dorsetcoast.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Dorset_Coast_Strategy_final_low_res.pdf
Dorset's Environmental Economy 2015	www.dorsetforyou.com/environmental-economy https://jurassiccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Dorsets-Environmental-Economy-Final-Report-Dec-2015.pdf
Dorset Land and Seascape Character Assessment	http://www.cscope.eu/_files/MSP_Dorset/Land-and-Seascape_Character_Assessment.pdf
Dorset Local Enterprise Plan/ Dorset Strategic Economic Plan	https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/sep
Ecological Networks	https://dorsetlnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Ecological-Networks-Guidance-update-August-2018.pdf
Green Spaces Report	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
Habitats Regulation Assessment Report	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee : Coastal flooding and erosion, and adaptation to climate change: Interim Report' November 2019	https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201919/cmselect/cmenvfru/56/56.pdf
Housing Needs Assessment	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
Jurassic Coast Trust Partnership Plan 2020-2025	https://jurassiccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Juassic-Coast-Partnership-Plan-2020-2025.pdf OR Jurassic-Coast-Partnership-Plan-2020-2025.pdf
Localism Act 2011	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted
Locality doct	https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/
LP = Local Plan 2015	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/adopted-local-plan/pdfs/alp/west-dorset-weymouth-portland-local-plan-2015.pdf
LP 2021 Preferred Options Consultation	https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/s21978/20201208%20-%20Dorset%20Council%20Cabinet%20-%20Local%20Plan%20Consultation%20final.pdf
Non-Designated Heritage Assets Assessment	https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/locallylistedhas/ https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#non-designated http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/
NPPF 2019	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810507/NPPF_Feb_2019_print_revised.pdf
ONS Labour Force Survey	https://www.ons.gov.uk

Open Forums Events & Feedback	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/charmouth-nhp
Pathfinder Project Report, Jurassic Coast section	https://jurassiccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/jurassic_coast_pathfinder_project_final_report_to_defra.pdf OR Microsoft Word - Document1 (jurassiccoast.org)
Permitted Development Rights	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830643/190910_Tech_Guide_for_publishing.pdf
Strategic Environment Assessment Report	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
The Royal Society sea level rise	https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/climate-change-evidence-causes/question-14/
Service Provider Questionnaire & Report	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2018 (SHLAA)	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/local-plan-review/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment.aspx
Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design and Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines, 2009	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/other-planning-documents/pdfs/sg/design-sustainable-development-planning-guidelines-2009.pdf
SMP2 = Shoreline Management Plan 2 (2011) (West Dorset area)	https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/beaches-and-coast/coastal-protection-and-management/coast-protection-in-west-dorset.aspx
SMP2 (complete)	SMP2: https://sdadcg.org/SMP.html
UK Committee on Climate Change report on housing	https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/uk-housing-fit-for-the-future
Village Consultation and Survey, Reports and Analysis	https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents
World Heritage Site Management Plan (JCT)	https://jurassiccoast.org/world-heritage-site-partnership-plan/
Designated Heritage Assets Assessment	www.civicvoice.org.uk/uploads/files/Civic_Voice_Local_Heritage_List_Guide.pdf
National Design Guide	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide
Dorset Council climate action	https://Dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/climate-emergency
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017	https://www.theccc.org.uk https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017

Note: the 'links' information contained above was correct at the time of issuing this document but subsequently may have changed.

APPENDIX D – MAIN ACTIVITIES TIMELINE – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Date	Activity
Summer 2015	Charmouth Parish Council commissioned the Plan
21 st June 2015	Village Consultation led by Parish Council
7 th Dec 2015	Steering Group established and officers appointed
18 th Jan 2016	Collecting views from Steering Group for Charmouth vision
22 nd Feb 2016	Established main themes to be included in the Plan
22 nd Feb 2016	Established 6 working parties to cover main areas of Plan
31 st March 2016	Terms of Reference agreed with Charmouth P.C.
13 th August 2016	Street Interviews and collecting comments on draft Vision and general issues
14 th Dec 2016 – Jan 2017	Issued pilot survey to get feedback on questions prior to formal issue
25 th Feb 2017	Open Forum event – generally about what the NHP is and forthcoming village survey
27 th Feb – 31 st March 2017	Issued Village Survey to every household and business
28 th Feb 2017	New NHP website ‘live’
11 th March 2017	Open Forum event – Drop-in session and general discussion on NHP and survey
March 2017	News article published in Shoreline ‘Spring’ edition
29 th August 2017	Presentation to the Parish Council on forthcoming Open Forum
9 th Sept 2017	Open Forum event – initial survey feedback(numerical responses)
Oct 2017 – March 2018	Housing Needs Assessment carried out by AECOM and report issued
14 th Feb 2018	Meeting with WDDC re. HNA Report and general issues on NHP
10 th March 2018	Open Forum event – feedback from Village survey(qualitative analysis)
March 2018	News article published in Shoreline ‘Spring’ edition
5 th July 2018	Draft housing policies issued to Parish Council
12 th July 2018	Meeting with WDDC re. draft housing policies and general NHP issues
Aug-Sept 2018	Service Provider Questionnaire issued and spreadsheet compiled
26 th Sept – 24 th Oct 2018	SEA Screening Report issued to statutory bodies. Report finalised on 2 nd November.
Nov 2018	News article published in Shoreline ‘Winter’ edition
13 th Nov 2018	Meeting with WDDC re. Draft housing policies submitted to Planning Committee for comment.
11 th Dec 2018	Meeting with Parish Council to go through presentation of Open Forum event.
5 th Jan 2019	Open Forum event – draft policies, green spaces and village improvement projects presented and comments received from residents.
27 th May 2019	Draft Basic Conditions document issued by Jo Witherden and sent to Dorset Council

17 th June 2019	Meeting held with Dorset County Council's Senior Planning Officer, Planning and Community Services to discuss draft policies and basic conditions document
Dec 2019 – Jan 2020	Habitats Regulation Assessment Report compiled by Dorset Council following consultation with statutory bodies.
Dec 2019	News article published in Shoreline 'Winter' edition
10 th December 2019	Meeting held with Parish Council to present policies and associated tables and maps for discussion.
January-February 2020	Letters issued to landowners and homeowners notifying them of policy proposals that could directly affect them.
March 2020	Consultation planned to start in April postponed as a result of COVID-19 outbreak
July 2020	Publicity of Pre-submission Draft Plan – Leaflets, pamphlets, posters, Newspaper articles. Formal notification to consultees.
31 st July 2020	Pre-submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan issued for 6 week consultation.
September 2020 – March 2021	Review of comments received during the consultation and updating of Draft Plan. Comments received recorded in Consultation Summary Table.
March – April 2021	Basic Conditions Statement revised by Independent Consultant based upon amendments to Policies following consultation.
May 2021	Amended Draft Neighbourhood Plan presented to Parish Council for their approval. Consultation Statement including Consultation Summary Table and amended Draft Neighbourhood Plan placed on Charmouth Parish Council website for public viewing.

Note:

1. The above activities do not include NHP Committee meetings, workshops, etc.
2. Minutes of the NHP committee meetings are shown on Charmouth Parish council website, under the tab 'Neighbourhood Plan':
<https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/charmouth-nhp>
3. Dates of the remaining stages towards Plan approval will be added to the final document

APPENDIX E – SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The following documents can be found on Charmouth Parish Council's website:

<https://www.charmouthparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents>

- *VILLAGE CONSULTATION AND SURVEY, REPORTS AND ANALYSIS*
- *OPEN FORUMS EVENTS & FEEDBACK*
- *SERVICE PROVIDER REPORT*
- *CHARMOUTH HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT*
- *CHARMOUTH HOUSING NEEDS STATEMENT*
- *STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT*
- *DRAFT BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT*
- *CONSULTATION STATEMENT INCLUDING CONSULTATION SUMMARY TABLE*
- *HABITAT REGULATION ASSESSMENT REPORT*
- *GREEN AREAS AUDIT*
- *BOTANICAL SURVEY OF VERGES ALONG A35 CHARMOUTH BYPASS*
- *LOCAL GREEN SPACES REPORT*
- *ADDITIONAL MAPS*
- *DERC WILDLIFE INFORMATION FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN*
- *COASTAL DEFENCES– POTENTIAL DIRECT LOSSES AT FORESHORE FOLLOWING DAMAGE TO OR LOSS OF COASTAL DEFENCES (FILE REF: FORESHOREIMPACTTABLE)*
- *CHARMOUTH PARISH COUNCIL REPORT ON DEFRA COASTAL CHANGE PATHFINDER PROGRAMME*
- *THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES REPORT*

Note: the information contained in the above documents was correct at the time of issuing this document but subsequently may be amended.

APPENDIX F - LISTED BUILDINGS

L1. Going up through The Street and Axminster Road the **Listed Buildings** on the **north side** are: Toll House; Bow House; Stow House; The George (Public House); Primrose Cottage; Charmouth Lodge; 3 The Manor House; 2 The Manor House; 1 The Manor House; The White House; Hillside; Albury House; The Court (whose listing includes the Folly Mound in its grounds); Monk's Rest; The Stone House.

L2. Coming back down through the village the **Listed Buildings** on the **south side** are Grange House; Hill View; Thatched Cottage; Foxley Cottage; Badgers; Charmouth House; The Royal Oak (Public House); Littlehurst (location of the Medical Practice); The War Memorial; The Rectory; St Andrews Parish Church; Winton House; Beech House; Carrum House; Littlecote; The Abbot's House (formerly The Queen's Armes); the former United Reformed Church; The Lilacs.

L3. Other Listed Buildings in Charmouth are The Lookout near the Heritage Coast Centre, and Langmoor Manor on the western approach to the village from Lyme Regis.

Map 4.2 shows the location of all Listed Buildings in Charmouth Parish.

All Listed Buildings are located within the Conservation Area other than Langmoor Manor, The Lookout and The Tollhouse.

Inserts to Map 4.2 show The Lookout and Langmoor Manor.
The Tollhouse is located on the main road east out of Charmouth.

APPENDIX G – VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS AND ACTIONS

Background

During consultation with residents and businesses, in particular feedback from the Village Survey, many ideas and suggestions have been put forward by local people. Among them were common themes and the most popular of these have been identified below.

Residents and businesses have the option of forming village improvement project groups to facilitate putting these projects into action. Where this has occurred in other villages with Neighbourhood Plans in place, it has led in many cases to successful outcomes benefitting the village as a whole.

Residents or businesses who are interested in volunteering for any of these particular projects will have an opportunity to write down their names and contact details during the final stages of consultation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Suggested projects

1. Affordable Housing Project

Main aim: to investigate and facilitate small-scale affordable housing within the village.

Context

See Chapter 8 and policies H1 to H5 of the NP.

From the Village Survey (Q31 and Q32) 73% felt we needed more low cost/affordable homes; 55% felt we needed more 1/2 bedroom small houses and 47% felt we needed more Local Authority/Housing Association/Shared Equity.

The HNA Report recommended increased provision of affordable/social rent including shared ownership/starter homes.

Focus

One approach, which has proved successful throughout the UK, is to form a Community Land Trust (CLT), which can be set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes ensuring that they remain genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier.

A local example is the CLT set up by Marshwood. With advice from Wessex Community Assets, Marshwood formed a CLT and joined forces with Hastoe Housing Association, which borrowed money to cover the purchase of land from a local farmer (at a rate well below market value) and build the houses.

One of the benefits to the landowner was that he was able to have a house built at his own expense to rent out, where previously he wouldn't have been given planning permission. Being partnered with a CLT gave Hastoe access to a substantial grant from the Homes and Communities Agency (now renamed *Homes England*) which contributed to the construction of two homes with one bedroom, two homes with two bedrooms and two homes with three bedrooms for affordable rent plus one property with two bedrooms for shared ownership.

Hastoe collects rent from the tenants and covers all maintenance. The CLT owns the land and charges Hastoe ground rent each year which is used to finance other projects for the community.

A Charmouth CLT could chose to partner one of a range of housing associations, and select a funding body such as WDDC's *Community Infrastructure Levy* and the government funded *Homes England*.

2. Coast Project

Main aim: to help facilitate improvement to coastal and river defences

Context

See Chapter 10 and Policy CC2 of this Plan.

From the Village Survey (Q2) relating to the threat to Charmouth's foreshore from climate change: 85% were in favour of 'do something'. There were 16 comments with all but one in favour of managing the effects of sea level rise.

The impact of losing coast defences would be considerable, both directly at the foreshore as well as indirectly to the village and its economy. Without maintenance of the existing coastal defences the foreshore area would be subject to ongoing damage until defences finally fail. Direct effects and losses at the foreshore are potentially considerable.

Changing climate is likely to create more heavy rainfall and thus possibly river flooding. SMP2 states "There would be a move towards No Active Intervention along the cliffed western part of Charmouth (with) Managed Realignment within the River Char, through providing set-back flood defences as it becomes increasingly technically difficult to maintain defences in the existing position."

A starting point would be the formation of a Charmouth Coastal Community Project to address the risks and issues and consider raising funding for feasibility studies for both Focus 1 and Focus 2. The issue of the relocation of at-risk premises could be addressed as Focus 3.

Forward planning is necessary if the Parish is to address any of these issues.

Focus 1

Campaign for a viable form of coastal defences to protect the foreshore area and indirectly the economy of the village before erosion and rising sea levels threaten coastal premises.

Focus 2

Campaign for a viable form of managed realignment for the River Char area which could also in time protect houses in the lower part of the village.

Focus 3

Develop a Community Relocation Strategy

3. Beach Area Eating Facilities

Main aim: to improve beach area eating and drinking facilities.

Context

From the Village Survey (Q26) there were 158 comments received highlighting the need to significantly improve eating facilities at the beach area. More comments were made on this one issue than any other in the survey. 58% responding there were not satisfied with eating/drinking facilities at the beach, 29% satisfied and 13% had no strong views. Those who commented clearly felt strongly that the café needed to be improved.

Focus

To explore options with the Parish Council and owner of the café on how this could be improved. There is a lease for this facility, which is held in perpetuity, that the café owner has but Charmouth Parish Council owns the building.

4. Parish Nature Conservation Project

Main aim: to enhance and protect wildlife and flora, facilitate coast paths, tackle pollution and support eco-projects.

Context

See Chapter 6 and, in particular, policies NE3 and NE4 and Chapter 9 including policy GA1 of the NP.

From the Village Survey (Q4) there was significant interest in nature conservation with 104 comments covering a wide range of topics wildlife and the environment.

From the Village Survey (Q5) there were 116 comments, 52 about the reinstatement of the South West Coast Path. There are many other suggestions including the reinstatement of the footpath along the east bank of the river to Stonebarrow Lane: 12 people supported this.

Focus

There are many groups already working in this area doing excellent work. Perhaps a pamphlet listing the activities of these groups could encourage more volunteers to get involved in, for example: planting flowers, trees and bee-friendly shrubs; bringing together various ecological groups such as gardeners, beekeepers and birdwatchers to make Charmouth a biodiversity hotspot; encourage links between younger people and the environment in collaboration with the School; and establish a wildlife garden for the community. Another suggestion has been the creation of nature wildlife area near the river on the east side.

5. Sports and Recreation Project

Main aim: to improve facilities in particular for young people.

Context

From the Village Survey (Q6) whilst 38% of respondents were happy with youth people's facilities there were 12 comments and suggestions made about sports activities and how they could be improved.

Focus

Those interested in getting involved in this project might consider reaching out to youth groups such as the Scouts, Guides, Youth Club and to children and parents of Charmouth School to canvas their suggestions.

6. Marketing, Promotion and Information for Visitors Project

Main aim: to encourage tourists to spend more money locally, and support village fetes and festivals.

Context

See Chapter 7 of the NP.

From the Village Survey (Q11, Q14, Q15 and Q16) 51% felt we should organise and publicise village events that appeal more to visitors. There were many suggestions for activities and events. 69% feel we should encourage tourists to visit more than just the beach and spend more money locally.

Focus

One possibility, particularly in holiday periods, would be to print and put online a programme of recreational events, and a list of services offered by local shops and businesses, which could be distributed to holiday camps and available in local shops.

7. Transport Project

Main aim: to address a) traffic speed limits and b) parking issues in the village.

Context

See Chapter 9 and in particular policy GA2 of the NP.

a) From the Village Survey (Q22) there were 117 comments on speed restrictions on the main roads of which 78 requested a speed reduction to 20 MPH, with 48 of these requesting a blanket speed reduction throughout the village. A smaller number (within the 78) requested reducing the limit either on the Street or Lower Sea Lane. The quantitative analysis, however, indicated that 56% of respondents felt the current speed restrictions on main roads were appropriate. Other suggestions related to traffic calming, additional signage and greater enforcement of the current speed restrictions.

b) From the Village Survey (Q21) there were 173 comments on parking, many of which indicate that Charmouth needs more parking, especially in the summer, and that there isn't enough enforcement of parking restrictions. There are certain areas on the roads in the village which are noted as dangerous and a restructuring of parking should be considered. Some suggestions were made, including free parking or low-cost parking permits for residents.

Focus

A focus group could provide a valuable service in undertaking further research to clarify ways of tackling these problems.