

Submitted to Somerset Local Plan: City Town and Parish Councils Engagement Activity 1  
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Introduction

1 What is your name?

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3 What is your organisation?

Organisation:  
Norton St Philip Parish Council

Section 1 - Settlement Assessment Overview

1a - Settlement Assessment

1 Please review the Excel Spreadsheet, below.

2 Are there any settlements, within your Council area, that you think are missing from the assessment that should be included?

Yes

If yes, please provide further information.:

Hassage is a small settlement on the western edge of the parish; however there are no community facilities. Population of approx 8 in 4 dwellings.

3 To the best of your knowledge, do the community facilities we have identified match what you know is in your City or Town; or the settlements within your Parish?

No

If not, please provide further information.:

Column H ("Local education facility for young people who should not need to travel far, within settlement and accessible by foot") notes that there is a "Primary School/First School (state)". It is important to note that Norton St Philip First School is federated with Rode First School. Children in Reception and Year 1 attend Norton St Philip, those in Years 2 and 3 travel to Rode either by school minibus or independently.  
Column 'O'. There is a cafe in the parish. This, however, is within the Flourish Farm Shop located at the junction of the A366 and A36 which is approx 1 mile from the centre of NSP village. The only pedestrian access is via the A366 which has no footway.

4 Services and facilities within a settlement play a crucial role in shaping how a community functions and its significance in the broader context. In your view, what are the top 10 essential amenities that contribute to a community's self-sufficiency? Please rank them in order of importance, with 1 being the most critical.

Prioritised amenities - District Hospital:

Prioritised amenities - Community Hospital:

Prioritised amenities - Health Centre / GP Surgery:  
10

Prioritised amenities - Pharmacy and Walk-ins:

Prioritised amenities - Higher Education College:

Prioritised amenities - Secondary / Middle School:

Prioritised amenities - Primary School:  
2

Prioritised amenities - Nursery / Pre-school:

1

Prioritised amenities - Food shop:

6

Prioritised amenities - Comparison goods shops:

Prioritised amenities - Village Hall / Meeting Rooms:

5

Prioritised amenities - Public House / Restaurant / Café:

4

Prioritised amenities - Bank / Building Society / Banking Hub:

Prioritised amenities - Library:

Prioritised amenities - Leisure Centre:

Prioritised amenities - Post Office:

7

Prioritised amenities - Recreation Ground (incl. sports field):

3

Prioritised amenities - Dentist / Optician:

Prioritised amenities - Children's Play Area:

9

Prioritised amenities - Place of Worship / Faith Facility:

8

5 Does this list of community services and facilities need any changes, to reflect what might be necessary for a settlement to be self-sufficient?

No

If yes, please provide further information on items to add or remove.:

6 If you have any further comments on community facilities and services, please add them here.

Please provide further information.:

The bus service is critical to the sustainability of the village. At present this is inadequate. There is no east-west service linking Midsomer Norton/Radstock to the west and Bradford on Avon/Trowbridge to the east. The service linking the village with Frome to the south and Bath to the north is irregular, unreliable and often full-particularly at rush hour.

## 1b - Key Issues

1 What are the top planning-related challenges or issues your city, town or parish is currently facing? (Please select in order of priority, 1 being most challenging; and 8 being least)

Key issues - priorities - Housing affordability:

1

Key issues - priorities - Housing availability:

5

Key issues - priorities - Adaptation to climate Change:

4

Key issues - priorities - Ability to walk and wheel to key services and facilities:

7

Key issues - priorities - Access to education:

2

Key issues - priorities - Access to public transport:

3

Key issues - priorities - Impacts on biodiversity, habitats and/or the environment:

6

Key issues - priorities - Health and wellbeing:

8

2 Are there any other challenges or issues, not mentioned here, that your city, town or parish is currently facing? How would you prioritise these?

Please provide further information.:

- 1.Foul drainage overflow from sewage works in NSP, Beckington and Rode
- 2.Flood risk along brook at lower point of village
- 3.Increase in traffic/car ownership and related issues (parking,congestion)
- 4.Speeding cars
- 5.HGVs flouting 7.5ton weight restriction

3 How do residents perceive these challenges, and what solutions might there be?

Please provide further information.:

1. In 2023 the sewage treatment plant spilled into Norton Brook on 66 occasions for a total of for a total of 832 hours, polluting what used to be a biodiverse stream. This treatment plant serves the village of Faulkland as well as NSP. The treatment plants in Beckington and Rode also have a large number of overflows into the River Frome which affects Farleigh Hungerford which is the next settlement downstream. The PC suggests that Wessex Water should be addressing this lack of capacity as a matter of urgency. This needs to be satisfactorily addressed prior to permitting any further expansion of the village.
2. Serious surface water flooding occurred in the village on 2 occasions over the winter of 2023/24 along the line of Norton Brook. This flooded two houses and came very close to flooding several others.The PC would like Somerset to investigate the causes and propose solutions.
3. The centre of the village is also the location of a crossroads where the A366 and B3110 meet. This busy junction combined with increased car ownership results in significant traffic issues including inconsiderate parking, damage to parked cars and bottlenecks on the High Street and Bell Hill.
4. The village has an active Traffic Action Group. Speeding remains a significant concern for other road users and pedestrians in particular where there are narrow pavements, or none at all.
5. There is a 7.5 tonne weight restriction in the village. This is regularly ignored by HGV drivers.

4 Do you have any other comments on this topic?

Please provide further information.:

The village has seen over 35% growth of its housing stock in the current Local Plan period; almost 250% of the expected minimum. Of the 119 houses permitted, only 8 have been affordable. The remainder have been "executive" type homes and have been unaffordable for those seeking to get onto the property ladder. Evidence shows that the majority of those moving into the village come from outside of the former Mendip area. Although NSP is less affordable than Frome, Radstock and Trowbridge (the towns to the east, west and south) it is significantly more affordable than Bath and its "green belt" villages immediately to the north. This draws people in from that area as well as from London and the Home Counties. This affordability is a major concern in particular for those wishing to remain in or return to the village to which they have strong connections. "Housing availability" is not an issue, but the affordability of those houses is a very major issue.

## 1c - Infrastructure Priorities

1 What do you view as the top five infrastructure needs in your city, town or parish? (Please select in order of priority, 1 being most important; and 5 being least)

Top 5 infr priorities - GP's and healthcare:

4

Top 5 infr priorities - Pre-school education:

Top 5 infr priorities - Primary education:

1

Top 5 infr priorities - Secondary education:

Top 5 infr priorities - Tertiary education:

Top 5 infr priorities - Flood mitigation and alleviation:

2

Top 5 infr priorities - Sports facilities, open spaces and play areas:

5

Top 5 infr priorities - Broadband:

Top 5 infr priorities - Mobile reception:

Top 5 infr priorities - Public transport:

3

Top 5 infr priorities - Active travel infrastructure:

Top 5 infr priorities - Postal and banking services:

Top 5 infr priorities - Community/village hall/meeting space:

Top 5 infr priorities - Health facilities such as pharmacies, dentists and opticians:

2 Are there any other provisions, not mentioned here, that you would like to mention? How would you prioritise these?

Please provide further information.:

The foul sewage overflows from the sewage treatment plant are increasing; in 2022 the NSP sewage treatment works spilled into Norton Brook on 42 occasions for a total of 450 hours. In 2023 this increased to 66 spills for a total duration of 832 hours. Future government targets are for a maximum of 10 permitted overflows per annum. Frome, a town 28 times the size of NSP, had half as much "spill time" in both 2022 and 2023. Addressing this together with the spills from Rode and Beckington should be a priority and should be a condition of any further proposed development.

Surface water drainage is also an issue that must be properly addressed in any further development proposals and should not be left to planning conditions.

Renewable energy projects within the parish are likely to come forward in the course of the new Local Plan and these could be community led. The PC hopes that the new Local Plan will include consideration of this and give guidance on the balance between any proposal and protecting both landscape and residential amenity.

One of the former Mendip DC's last acts was to adopt the "Greenspace" SPD. The Green Infrastructure of the village is of critical importance to its character and appearance as well as the protection of biodiversity and ecology. The PC very greatly regrets the deletion of the proposed "Local Green Spaces" from Mendip's LPP2 and hopes that the new Local Plan will consider designating them.

## Section 2 - Open Spaces, Built Sports and Playing Pitch Overview

### 2a - Community Views on Facilities

1 How satisfied do you believe your local community is with the current provision of play, recreational, and open spaces in their area?

Choose your level of satisfaction:

Satisfied

2 What are your primary concerns regarding the provision of play areas, recreational spaces, and open spaces for your local community?

Quality of provision, Antisocial behaviour

If "other", please specify:

3 Which types of play, recreational, and open spaces are most utilised currently by your local communities?

Sports pitches, Playgrounds (equipped play area), Other (please specify)

If "other", please specify:

Open space and permissive paths around the drainage ponds associated with the Fortescue Fields development.

4 What kinds of additional play, recreational, and open spaces does the community need in your local area?

Outdoor recreational facilities e.g. tennis courts, bowling, Other (please specify)

If "other", please specify:

A football pitch and tennis court.

Please provide further comments on any additional needs you have identified:

The village has one of the largest village greens in the country, Church Mead Recreation Ground. In terms of recreation, this serves most of the village's needs. Being centrally located is critical and, being both overlooked and much used throughout the day, greatly reduces the likelihood of antisocial behaviour. A further facility including a football pitch and tennis court might be welcomed by the community as a benefit of further housing; however the location of this would be critical in terms of amenity, safety and accessibility.

5 Which groups feel least served by the play, recreational, and open spaces in your local community?

Teenagers

If "other", please specify:

6 While the Local Plan doesn't deliver or maintain play, recreational, and open spaces, it ensures these needs are planned for in existing and new developments. What do you think are the most important roles of the Local Plan in enhancing these facilities in your community? (Please rank in order of importance, 1 being the most important)

Role of Local Plan - Allocation of sites - for additional facilities:

Role of Local Plan - Protecting and enhancing sites – protecting from encroaching development and enhancing through considering other play/recreational uses:

1

Role of Local Plan - Promoting community participation – in the planning process, ensuring that facilities meet local needs and support healthy lifestyles:

2

Role of Local Plan - Sustainable development – integrating recreational facilities into urban and rural planning through improved accessibility through active travel and public transport:

3

Role of Local Plan - Inclusiveness for everyone:

4

Role of Local Plan - Ensuring climate resilience of recreational spaces:

5

7 What are the main obstacles in sustaining and providing play, recreational, and open spaces within your local community? (Please rank in order of importance, with 1 being the most important)

Obstacles - Funding:

1

Obstacles - Management:

Obstacles - Resources:

Obstacles - Land availability:

3

Obstacles - Addressing safety concerns:

2

Obstacles - Other (please specify):

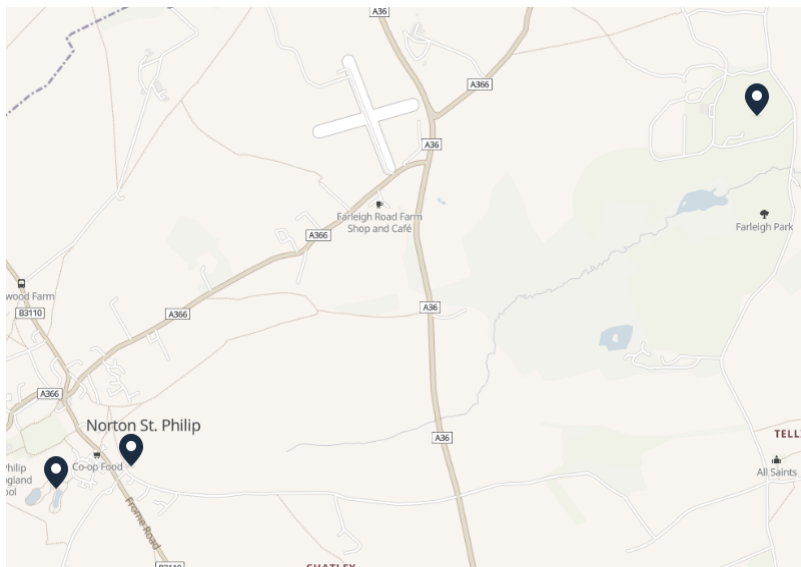
4

If "other", please specify:

Protection of neighbouring amenity

## 2b - Location of Facilities

1 Please check the map below matches your local knowledge of open spaces, built sports facilities and playing pitches in your city or town, or for settlements in your parish. If there are any facilities you would like to add or amend, please drop a pin. On the following page, you will be able to provide more details.



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Not Answered

If "no" or "unsure", please drop a pin on the map to identify an additional location, or a feature that is incorrect, and provide further information below:

2b - Location of Facilities Questions

1 Does the map match your knowledge of the location of open spaces, built sports facilities and playing pitches in your city or town, or for settlements in your parish?

No

If "no" or "unsure", please drop a pin on the map to identify an additional location, or a feature that is incorrect, and provide further information below:

- 1) It identifies Bath Rugby's training facility at Farleigh House. There is no public access to this.
- 2) It does not identify the open space at Fortescue Fields SUDS ponds which includes surfaced paths and connects Mackley Lane and the Fortescue Fields development with the lower village.
- 3) It does not identify the village green located off Tellisford Lane designated by Somerset Council in 2018.

If you have any further comments on open spaces, built sports facilities and playing pitches, please add them here.: