



2022 - 2038

SUBMISSION DRAFT

SUMMER 2022

Together with its associated documentation this Neighbourhood Plan is to be used for its intended purpose only.

Related information and the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base can be found at:

www.portishead.gov.uk

For questions and further information please contact:

Portishead Town Council
The Folk Hall, 95 High Street,
Portishead,
Bristol
BS20 6PR

Email: office@portishead.gov.uk

Base maps licence information where not otherwise stated:

© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100053431) 2022, Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2022.

Special thanks to Bailey's Balloons for aerial photography.

This document was produced by the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with assistance from consultants Place Studio

place

www.placestudio.com

Place Studio is a community planning and design consultancy which seeks to enable local communities to harness their local knowledge and objectives to produce sound and robust planning and design documents.

Thank you to Celia Dring, our North Somerset Council Link Officer, who has provided valuable support throughout the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

FOREWORD

Portishead is a vibrant community of 27,000 people which has experienced a 60 percent population growth over the last 20 years. It has a relatively young population and a strong community ethic. We believe that Portishead deserves a Neighbourhood Plan that supports a sustainable, prosperous and healthy future for our children and grandchildren.

The Portishead Neighbourhood Plan was prepared on behalf of the residents of Portishead by a Steering Group and working groups made up of local community volunteers and Portishead Town Council. We are very grateful for the work of community volunteers who have brought a range of knowledge about Portishead and expertise to help create this Plan. We would also like to thank the hundreds of people who have responded to Neighbourhood Plan surveys or provided input in other ways.

Our approach has been to develop a Plan for the people of Portishead, by the people of Portishead.

The membership of the Steering Group has changed a number of times since its formation. However, the following people have at some time played an active role on the committee:

Patricia Sterndale, Paul Gardner, Robert Bull, Nigel Chapman, Patrick Heaton-Armstrong, Rachel Nash, Tanya Slatter, Nicola Holland, Paul Davis, Ben Aldridge, Polly Shepperdson, Paul Thurston, Lin Sargent and Sarah Jackson.

CONTENTS

PART ONE	7	What is a Neighbourhood Plan?	PART TWO	21	Planning Policies
	9	Why Prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?		22	Introduction to this Section
	10	How has the Neighbourhood Plan been prepared, and how does it represent community views?		24	List of Planning Policies
	11	Where are we in the process?			Environment
	12	Policy Context			Natural Environment
	13	About Portishead			Sustainable Design, Character and Heritage
	14	A Brief History of Portishead		69	Wellbeing
	16	Overarching Issues for the Neighbourhood Plan			Community Facilities and Infrastructure
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Climate Crisis and Portishead• Pre-application Community Involvement			Housing
	18	Vision		99	Prosperity
19	Objectives		Economy		
			Transport		
		126	Area Based Policies and Community Actions		
			Priorities for the Wyndham Way Development Area		
			Priorities for Portishead Town Centre		

HOW TO READ THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan should be read as a whole, but we have colour coded each section with the aim of making it easier to follow.

1.2 Part One introduces the Neighbourhood Plan and 'sets the scene' for why it has been produced and what it will achieve. This part includes the draft vision and objectives of the Plan, setting out how we can harness the town's assets and opportunities in order to 'Create a Modern Sustainable Town of the Future'.

1.3 Part Two covers different theme and topic areas, setting out local level planning policies and practical community actions. This part is structured around the three themes of Environment, Wellbeing and Prosperity. These themes are the three that support Portishead Town Council's strategy to 'Create a Modern Sustainable Town of the Future'.



**PORTISHEAD
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN**

**PART ONE
INTRODUCTION**

1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

1.4 How can the local community have a say in the future of Portishead? We face many challenges, as we emerge from the pandemic and look ahead to a future shaped by climate change. We need to protect our valued and loved environment and heritage whilst balancing the local need for jobs, housing, community facilities and other infrastructure that contributes to making Portishead a great place to live.

1.5 This document is the Portishead Neighbourhood Development Plan ('NDP', 'Neighbourhood Plan' or 'Plan'), and it is one of the tools we have to shape the future of the town. It builds on the views of the community and on research undertaken by local volunteers, and presents a vision for Portishead, looking ahead to 2038.

1.6 This Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for local people to have more control over the future of the town.

1.7 Neighbourhood Plans work alongside existing legislation and policy by providing developers and assessors with criteria that must be met, and detail on what the local community has told us they want and expect from development in their area to guide and inform future change in Portishead.

1.8 Once formally in place, the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory local development plan, and will be used to inform decisions on planning applications within Portishead.

1.9 The Neighbourhood Area that this document relates to is shown on Figure 1. The boundary for the Neighbourhood Area follows the Portishead Town Council administrative boundary.

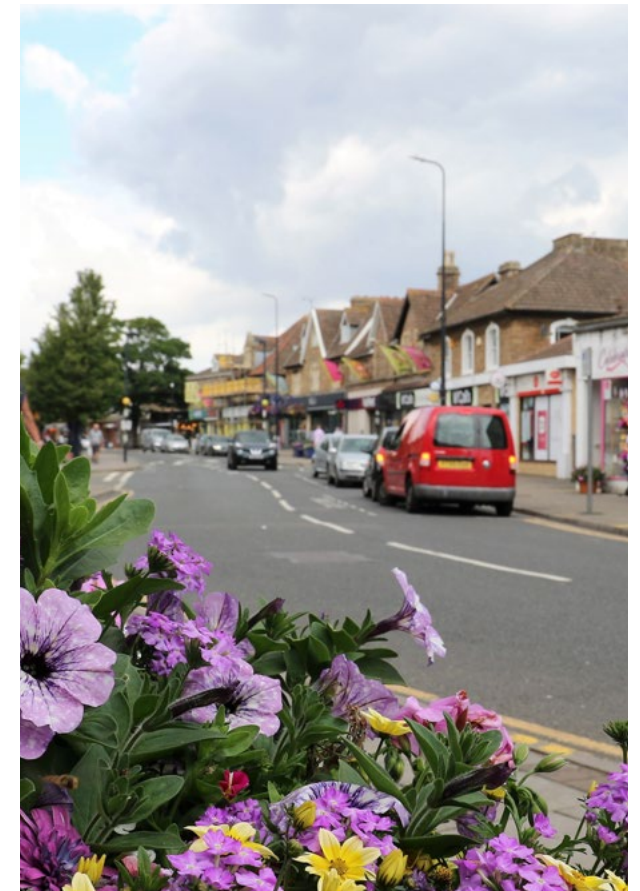
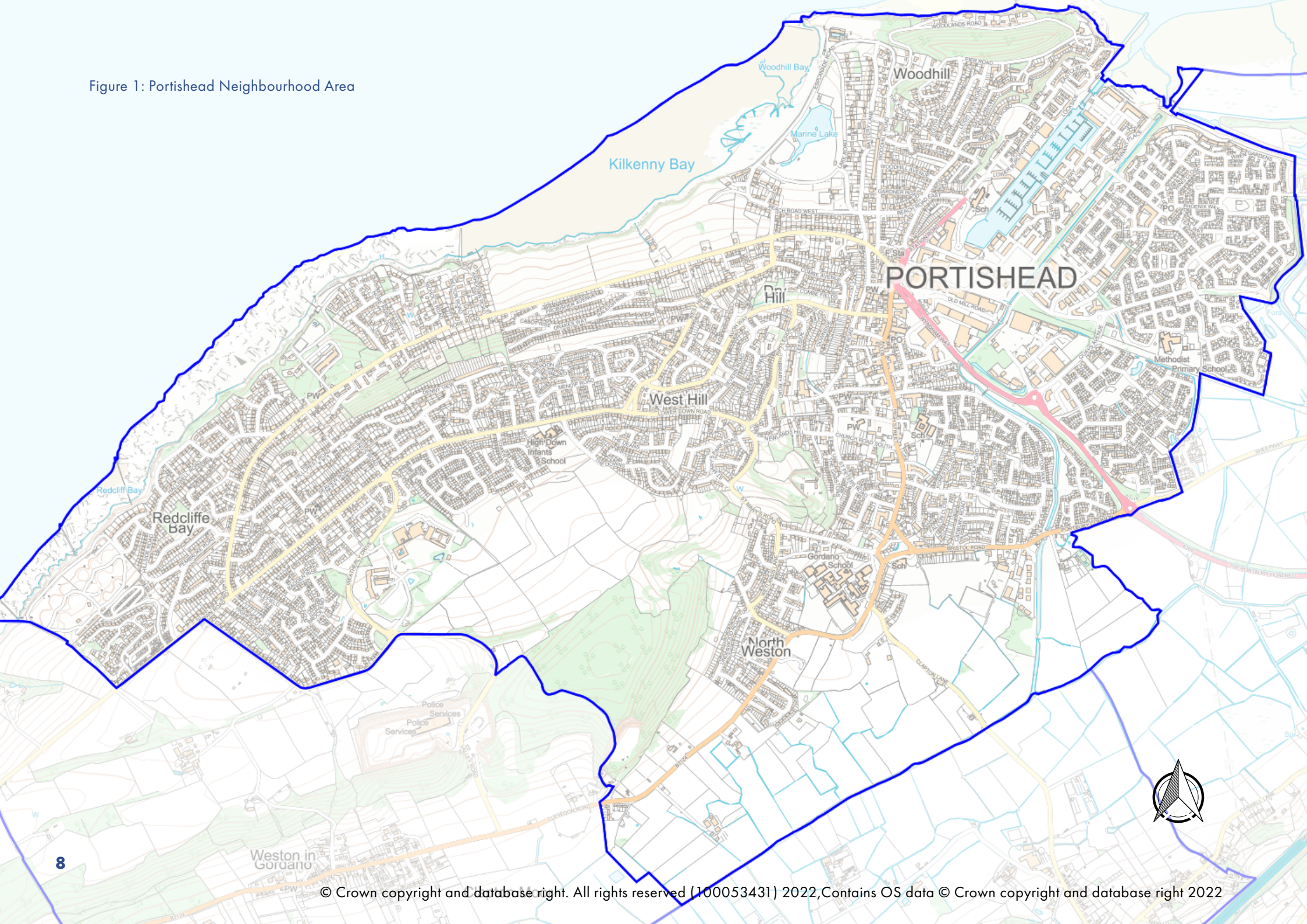


Figure 1: Portishead Neighbourhood Area



WHY PREPARE A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR PORTISHEAD?

1.10 In 2011, the [Localism Act](#)¹ gave communities the power to produce their own Neighbourhood Plan, and develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood Plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan ([National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\), 2021](#))².

1.11 Before 2011 it was only local authorities who could produce planning documents, so Neighbourhood Plans are a significant opportunity which communities can choose to take up.

1.12 Once it has passed through a number of required stages, the Portishead NDP will become part of the Development Plan for North Somerset to be used to guide and inform both those proposing development, and those who consider and decide upon planning applications at North Somerset Council.

1.13 The planning system in England is based on legislation, planning policy and guidance. Policies are instructions that inform what development can and can't do. National planning policies are set by the government for the whole of England ([NPPF, 2021](#))² and by Local Planning

Authorities for their local areas (in our case, North Somerset Council). The Neighbourhood Plan gives local people greater ownership of the plans and policies that affect their area.

1.14 Through the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan, we can set out what we expect from any new development and, importantly, what we want protected and what is deficient.



HOW HAS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BEEN PREPARED, AND HOW DOES IT REPRESENT COMMUNITY VIEWS?

1.15 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been led by the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Steering Group is formed of representatives of Portishead Town Council and people from the local community.

1.16 Throughout 2019 and 2020, effort was put into explaining to local communities what the Plan involved, what challenges were facing the area, and how preparation of the Plan would proceed. Initial consultation in December 2019 revealed the key issues for the community. During 2020 and 2021, work moved onto evidence collection on these key issues.

1.17 Throughout the preparation of the Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has used a range of methods to collect the local community's views. The Steering Group has used online consultation portal Commonplace (<https://portisheadplanconsult.commonplace.is/>) to collect a range of local evidence, as well as share progress on plan preparation.

1.18 The Steering Group has also regularly updated the community on progress on the Neighbourhood Plan website (www.portisheadplan.uk).

1.19 Regulation 14 consultation (the first round of formal consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan) was held over April - May 2022. This is the submission version of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, which has been updated to reflect comments made by the local community during Regulation 14 consultation.

1.20 A summary of the consultation undertaken throughout the preparation of the Plan is included within the formal Consultation Statement, which is submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan and is available to view at www.portishead.gov.uk.

1.21 The NDP is based on research and evidence. The Local Evidence Base List in [Appendix 1](#) is a summary of the evidence collected and referred to from studies, investigations and the various consultation exercises undertaken. The Evidence Base is available to view at www.portishead.gov.uk.

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

1.22 The NDP must go through a series of required stages to ensure people who live, work and have an interest in Portishead have a say in the Plan. It must also be examined by an independent examiner in order to make sure it is positively prepared and meets prescribed 'basic conditions'.

1.23 If the NDP passes examination, it will be put to a referendum and local people can vote for or against the Plan. If the majority vote in favour of the NDP it will become part of the overall development plan for North Somerset to guide developers, planning officers and councillors when considering planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

NP PROCESS



- Defining the NDP area
- Preparing the Plan
- Formal 6 week consultation (Reg.14)
- Make changes and revisions in response to the consultation
- **Submit to North Somerset Council**
(We are here)
- Formal 6 week consultation (Reg.16)
- Examination
- Referendum
- Legal Force

POLICY CONTEXT

1.24 Although the [Localism Act \(2011\)](#)¹ gives communities a way to decide what goes on in their towns, The Portishead Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity to positively help to shape the future of our town, ensuring that local needs and aspirations are taken into account in future environmental and development projects.

1.25 Legislation and [National Planning Practice Guidance](#) sets out rules, conditions and limitations. Neighbourhood Plans cannot be used to prevent development; they cannot say no to more houses when there is a national and regional shortage of housing.

1.26 As well as being set within the context of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)\(2021\)](#)², and the latest National Planning Practice Guidance, the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan must also be in 'general conformity' with the strategic planning policies of North Somerset Council (our Local Planning Authority).

1.27 North Somerset Council is currently reviewing its adopted policy framework, to produce an updated Local Plan to

cover the period until 2038. A review is required because the Government requires local planning authorities to revisit their Local Plan every five years and review as necessary. The updated Local Plan for North Somerset will set out an overall strategy to meet housing, employment, leisure and other needs up to 2038, as well as management, conservation and enhancement policies for the built and natural environment.

1.28 The Portishead Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in parallel with the emerging North Somerset Local Plan. To meet requirements set out by National Planning Policy and Guidance, the draft Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the current adopted policy framework, which is the Core Strategy. However, as required by National Planning Policy, the Neighbourhood Plan looks ahead over the next 15 years, to anticipate and respond to long term needs. In doing this, it is intended that the Neighbourhood Plan policies are 'future-proofed' and capable of extending beyond the adopted Local Plan period.

1.29 Once the new North Somerset Local Plan is adopted, it is anticipated that this Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed to fully align it with the new Local Plan policies. This should involve only minor changes such as updating policy references.

ABOUT PORTISHEAD

1.30 Portishead is a vibrant community of c.27,000 people which has experienced around 60% population growth over the last 20 years. It has a relatively young population and a strong community ethic.

1.31 The town is located on the Severn Estuary, about 8 miles to the west of Bristol and 6 miles north east of Clevedon along the coast. The built environment of Portishead is surrounded by locally valued landscape and biodiversity features; Portishead Down and Weston Big Wood, the Gordano Valley, East Wood, Kilkenny Fields and the Golf Course, and the Severn Estuary itself, which is an internationally important wildlife site.

1.32 Portishead town centre is home to a number of successful local businesses, with the High Street catering to a range of retail needs, including specialist stores that draw people to the town from elsewhere.

1.33 Local residents value Portishead's views and spectacular sunsets, but also the Lake Grounds, Eastwood, Battery Point, the varied architecture and shopping. Community spirit abounds and residents and visitors alike enjoy annual events such as the Christmas Victorian event under the

magically lit High Street, the Carnival in June and the Portishead Summer Show in July.

1.34 The Marina area has a rich history as a deep-water dock in the 1800s and then as home to a major coal-fed power station. The power station closed in 1980, and during the early 2000s the area was redeveloped, providing a range of residential and commercial uses, as well as a world-class sailing and leisure craft facility.

1.35 More information on the history of Portishead is available in the Portishead Community Character Statement, which is part of the Neighbourhood Plan's evidence base.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF PORTISHEAD

1.36 Portishead has always been much admired for its scenery and the wide reaching views of the River Severn. Its proximity to Bristol has meant that large swathes of its acreage have been owned by the Bristol Corporation from as early as the 1600s but long before this there is a brief mention of Portishead in the Domesday Book of 1086. At that time, it was part of the Portbury Hundred, with Portbury itself being the largest and most populated as well as the chief town of the Hundred. Portishead was its poor neighbour; there weren't many animals or men to tend them. Most important at that time though was the mill which probably stood near to the site of the White Lion/Old Mill pub in the High Street, itself a tidal mill until 1810. The White Lion/Old Mill stands at what was the head of the old pill (or creek) which meandered in for about half a mile from the River Severn right up to the northern tip of the High Street.

1.37 The early population of Portishead made their homes on the rising ground that had a water supply and was sheltered from most winds on the rectangle of land between Church Road North and Church Road South. Next to the fine St Peter's

Parish Church with its traditional North Somerset tower lies Courthouse Farm which has its origins in the Tudor period and was once the manor house for this part of Portishead.

1.38 An ancient way runs from the settlement at St. Peter's Church, along Slade and Battery Lanes, out to Battery Point just above the most northerly of the Somerset Levels called Rodmoor. This was dug out by the unemployed of Bristol in 1910 to form the Lake Grounds, now considered to be the jewel in Portishead's crown. Previous to this in the mid-1890s, an esplanade had been built along the seashore from Battery Point to Beach Road



West that enclosed the old marshland. Springs can still be seen seeping along the edge of the lake.

1.39 The wide street that became the High Street (formerly known as Mill Street and Duck Street) was once lined with apple and pear orchards. From the 1860s onwards shops were gradually built mostly in Victorian times with some Edwardian additions and an assortment of 20th century builds.

1.40 The topography of Portishead helped to disguise the industry that was coming to the dock area from the mid-19th century. Tourists were also arriving to admire the scenery and views. The old pill was converted into a dock: two railways arrived – the GWR branch line from Temple Meads and the Weston, Clevedon and Portishead Light Railway (access to which was through the archway of the White Lion/Old Mill pub) and a pier was built just along from the Royal Pier Hotel. Industry grew alongside the docks, the first being the Mustad nail factory in 1911. In 1926, construction began on the first of two coal fired power stations. Some local coal produced in the Somerset coalfields was delivered by train, but the main supply

of coal was imported by boat from South Wales. Further factories followed providing jobs for the majority of Portishead residents.

1.41 During the latter part of the 20th century and now in the 21st century, the population of Portishead has grown rapidly. The industry on the dock area and beyond (the Power Stations, Phosphorus plant, and Petroleum industry) has completely disappeared and the huge brown field site has become an area of considerably varied housing. It is hard now to believe that the agricultural and fishing community of 1801 numbered just about 300.

1.42 In the last twenty years the population has grown by 10,000 from 17,000 to 27,000. With traditional local industrial employment opportunities now mostly gone, most local jobs are in the service sector (where the Avon and Somerset Police headquarters is a major local employer), the creative sector and micro-businesses with many people working from home. These employment opportunities do not match the local population growth. Some of the reduction in employment land in Portishead is due to revised government

planning advice which gave preference to residential use over employment use. There have also been site allocations for employment development within the Local Plan which have not been delivered. This has resulted in many people commuting to Portbury and Avonmouth docks, Bristol or further afield to find employment. Portishead has become a commuter town.

1.43 Recent housing development was not accompanied by the necessary level of infrastructure investment, and there is a large infrastructure deficit in Portishead, which is particularly acute in transport as well as community facilities. Development

continues to put a lot of pressure on remaining green spaces and the natural green and blue environment.

1.44 The totemic example of inadequate infrastructure is the planned re-opening of the Bristol to Portishead railway line which has been promised for 25 years or more but still has no firm delivery date. Portishead is famously known as the largest cul-de-sac in Europe, its geography, location and the lack of public transport means that currently, people rely almost exclusively on car transport despite the inadequate road infrastructure into and out of the Town.



OVERARCHING ISSUES FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND PORTISHEAD

1.45 The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019³ (which is an update to the Climate Change Act 2008) commits the UK to a carbon emission reduction target of 100% by 2050 compared with a 1990 baseline. The 2050 commitment necessitates radical changes in how we live and how we plan our settlements to ensure our energy and transport systems are decarbonised.

1.46 In February 2019, North Somerset Council declared a 'climate emergency' in light of evidence that illustrates how urgent it is that action is taken, seeking to make the district of North Somerset carbon neutral by 2030. The since published [North Somerset Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan](#)⁴ lists a series of actions to contribute towards this aim.

1.47 Like the rest of the world, we also are facing a biodiversity crisis as well as a climate emergency.

1.48 In Portishead, flooding is a major area of concern. The local coastline has one of the largest tidal ranges in the world, sometimes as great as 15m, and Portishead is susceptible to storm surges caused by the coincidence of a high tide and low-pressure

systems from the south-west, the prevailing wind direction. A deep low-pressure system can add 1 to 2m to an expected high tide. Portishead suffered significant storm surge flooding in December 1981 and February 1990. Fortunately recent storm surges have coincided with lower tides. The local rhynes are tidal so rainwater can back up at high tide causing localised flooding in some parts of the town on a regular basis. Climate change is predicted to increase the frequency and severity of this flooding problem.

1.49 Portishead is fortunate to be home to Salt Marshes on part of its coastline. Salt marshes are more effective than rainforests in their ability to store carbon and must be protected for this reason notwithstanding that they also support rare and endangered wildlife.

1.50 We are fortunate to also have ancient woodlands and wetlands within the settlement boundary. Although still viable, many local species, flora and fauna have declined over the last 25 years. It is a priority to protect and sustain these areas for the future, helping them to regenerate naturally through the process known as Rewilding.

1.51 The warming of the climate is evidenced locally by the fact that small leaved lime trees in Weston Big Wood are now flowering and seeding again after an interval of probably thousands of years during which time they have only propagated by growing out of old fallen down trees.

PRE-APPLICATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.52 The importance and benefit of community engagement is widely acknowledged as key to shaping good places to live. Early discussion between planning applicants and the Portishead local community, as well as with Portishead and North Somerset Council, from the earliest stages enables a more collaborative approach to the process of preparing a development proposal that will need to balance many factors as the design evolves.

1.53 Portishead Town Council supports the notion that 'Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot' (NPPF, para. 132). The Portishead Pre-Application Community Engagement Protocol (see Appendix 2) is intended to facilitate a structured approach to enable effective, positive and early involvement of the local community in outline and full planning applications.



VISION & OBJECTIVES

1.54 The draft vision, and related objectives, are based on issues raised during consultation and highlighted through evidence gathering work. They have been refined by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering and Working Groups, and form the basis of the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan.

1.55 The vision is the long term goal describing what we want Portishead to be like at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period (2038). The objectives set out what needs to be achieved in order to reach our vision.

VISION

Our vision is for a healthy, green, inclusive and prosperous community, met through sustainable change.

Over the Neighbourhood Plan period, Portishead will see sustainable development in line with the underpinning principle of all planning and development.

This means a town with:

- **A protected and enhanced natural green and blue environment, which provides a network and space for local wildlife, biodiversity and people to thrive;**
- **Sustainable growth that prioritises using brownfield land; responding positively to the climate emergency, and mitigating its local impacts;**
- **Valued local facilities, infrastructure and housing that are sufficient to meet local needs;**
- **An inclusive and green local transport network that provides everyone with safe opportunities for active travel;**
- **A mixed economy that supports our local businesses, town centre and High Street, and**
- **An outstanding and locally distinctive built environment.**

OBJECTIVES

Environment

01 To protect Portishead's locally valued views, landscape setting and valued relationship with the Gordano Valley, and maintain the separation of Portishead from other villages and towns.

02 To protect and enhance the multi-functional blue-green (water and green) spaces of our town and the links between them, recognising the importance of these areas for health and wellbeing.

03 To protect, maintain and expand Portishead's distinctive treescape and woodland areas such as Weston Big Wood.

04 To protect and enhance the biodiversity of our area, recognising the important sites in Portishead that act as carbon sinks and sustain species under threat, including our small locally valued green spaces, nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and internationally designated RAMSAR site and associated Salt Marshes.

05 To ensure that development protects and reinforces Portishead's character and distinctiveness, and encourages the highest standards of building, public space and landscape design and sustainability.

06 To ensure that new development is sympathetic to our local heritage, including its maritime and industrial history.

Wellbeing

07 To deliver sustainable development which prioritises brownfield land, responds positively to the climate crisis, reduces our carbon footprint and energy demand, and mitigates the local impacts of climate change.

08 To protect Portishead's stock of one and two bedroom and accessible homes, and ensure that any future housing that comes forward to meet government targets contains a diverse range of tenures, forms and sizes to meet the identified housing needs of the community, protects and enhances Portishead's distinct character and maintains resident amenity and highway safety.

09 To protect and improve health, wellbeing, leisure and recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities by protecting and expanding community facilities and spaces for community activities to ensure that Portishead is a welcoming, safe and accessible place for everyone.

010 To ensure all residents have easy access to local green, blue and open spaces, and to promote environments and transport networks that offer all individuals and communities the greatest potential to lead active and healthy lifestyles.

Prosperity

011 To support Portishead's economy and local employment, and support the continued development of a diverse, high value and low carbon economy.

012 To deliver a connected, accessible, inclusive, attractive, vibrant and distinctive town centre at the heart of Portishead's community and economic life.

013 To deliver an integrated, sustainable, accessible and inclusive transport network that encourages active travel and reduces congestion within Portishead.