Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Document



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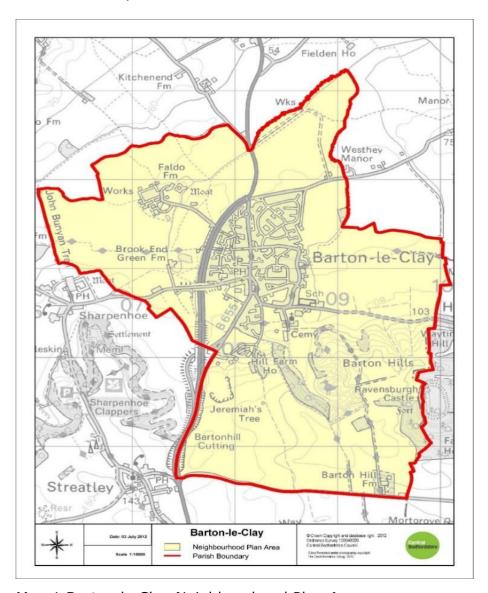
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1 Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.2 This Consultation Report accompanies the submission of the Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan (BLCNP). It summarises the consultation process in the development of the BLCNP and shows how the requirements of Regulations 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) have been satisfied.
- 1.3 Work on BLCNP began in 2012, but its completion was delayed until CBC had completed their Local Plan. The CBLP 2015-2035 was adopted in July 2021 and work to complete the BLCNP restarted in January 2022.
- 1.4 The development of the BLCNP has been informed by an extensive evidence/information gathering, the results of external and public consultations, mapping, and data from public records.



Map 1 Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan Area

2 Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Engagement and Communications Strategy

- 2.2 In early 2022 the inaugural Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (BLCNPSC) met to examine and discuss the work of the previous Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan committee and determine what outstanding works would be required the complete the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) process.
- 2.3 As part of the BLCNPSC early work, a set of Terms of Reference¹ were agreed by the committee and Parish Council which put a responsibility of the committee to:

Engage as many members of the community and key stakeholders as possible in the process, by encouraging participation and the submission of views and ideas. Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation exercises.

2.4 To achieve this the BLCNPSC produced a Neighbourhood Plan Engagement and Communications Strategy:

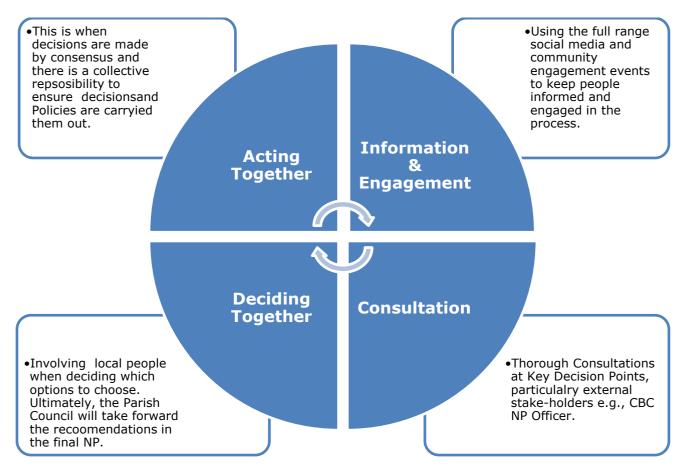


Figure 1 - BLCNP Communications Strategy.

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¹ See Annex A to Barton le Clay Neighbourhood Plan.

3 Communication Channels

- 3.2 There are a wide range of media formats/channels that are available and that will appeal to different demographics, and it was particularly important to take account that the village has a high proportion of elderly residents who may not have access to e.g., social media. The communication channels that were utilised included:
 - 3.2.1 Talking to community groups and individuals Focus Groups.
 - 3.2.2 Interactive workshops and 'drop-in' sessions.
 - 3.2.3 Exhibitions & Presentations.
 - 3.2.4 Putting up posters and banners.
 - 3.2.5 Delivering leaflets.
 - 3.2.6 Magazine articles and newsletters.
 - 3.2.7 Use of I.T. Parish Websites, social media (e.g. Facebook or Twitter/X).
 - 3.2.8 Email groups using our contact database.
- 3.3 The key communication channel was the Parish Council website and NP webpage Neighbourhood Plan Barton-le-Clay Parish Council see Annex A, where villagers have easy access to copies of previous minutes, documents etc.
- 3.4 In support of the Parish Council NP webpage, and to ensure villagers who do not use or have access to the internet, a periodic Newssheet, to all villagers, was included in the Parish Council leaflet drop see Annex B.
- 3.5 Direct/face-to-face consultation with villagers is an essential part of the communication strategy and details of events and feedback is discussed below.

4 Community Aspirations

4.2 At the start of the current BLCNP journey, a General Questionnaire (Annex C) was hand delivered to all residents within the parish, identified stakeholders (see Annex D) and local businesses on 22nd March 2022, with a completion date of 25th April 2022. The questionnaire was also made available online and advertised on both the Parish Council Facebook page and website. An Information/Q&A Stand was also set up outside of the Village Co-op store on 26th March 2022. At the end of the consultation period, we received 62 responses.



Photo 1 - Q&A Stand at Village Co-op store.

- 4.3 The answers the Questionnaire questions are grouped into four Key Areas Environment, Facilities, Traffic and Getting Around and Housing see Annex C.
- 4.4 Based on the earlier work of the original BLCNPSC and the results the above survey, a series of draft Aims and Objectives were agreed.
 - 4.4.1 To safeguard the rural character and compact form of the Village, conserving and enhancing the attractiveness of the countryside, landscape, and biodiversity, and to ensure that any new development is sympathetic to the distinctive character of the Village.
 - 4.4.2 To ensure sustainable growth in line with the development principles and maintain the important countryside gaps between them.
 - 4.4.3 To protect, conserve and enhance local distinctiveness/landscape, including nationally protected AONB landscapes by retaining hedgerows, trees, and key views.
 - 4.4.4 To preserve the special historic character of the Village, including the Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and their settings and the historic landscape.

- 4.4.5 To support a mix of housing, in accordance with the Housing Needs Survey, based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of diverse groups in the community.
- 4.4.6 To ensure any developments are small scale, of the highest quality, positively contribute to or improve the local infrastructure, and have minimal impact on the character of the Parish.
- 4.4.7 To reduce the reliance on cars by improving walking and cycling access within and between the Village and local services and to improve both road and pedestrian safety throughout the Village.
- 4.4.8 To support proposals for reducing the speed, volume of traffic and congestion through improvements such as better parking.

5 Consultation on Draft Aims Objectives & Plan

- 5.2 Throughout 2022-2023, the BLCNP continued to work hard to develop evidence-based Policies and supporting narrative, including engaging third-party experts/specialists to carry out:
 - 5.2.1 **Housing Needs Survey**. Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) was commissioned to conduct a housing needs survey in March/April 2022 to identify the housing needs of local people over the next 10 years. We received 316 responses from around 2200 distributed. The final report from BRCC was published on the website.
 - 5.2.2 **Barton-le-Clay Parish-wide Design Guidelines and Codes**. AECOM was commissioned in June 2023 to provide design support to BLCNP and Parish Council. The support is intended to provide design guidance and codes based on the character and local qualities of the parish to help ensure future development, particularly forthcoming housing, coheres with and enhances the village.
 - 5.2.3 **Green Infrastructure Plan.** The Greensand Trust was commissioned to prepare a Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan during late 2022/early 2023. The preparation of the Green Infrastructure Plan followed a tried and tested methodology, including several consultation events. Attendance at the consultation events was very good. The methodology is described further in the Green Infrastructure section and the Green Infrastructure Plan document itself.
- 5.3 By early 2023, the draft BLCNP was sufficiently developed to present to the villagers for comment and a wide range events and social media campaigns were carried out. A representative from the Greensand Trust attended several events in 2022/2023 to engage with the community to ensure the views of local people were considered when drafting the GI Plan.

Method of community involvement	Date	Details	Attendance/ Response
GI Plan Survey	2013*	Specific questionnaire to local residents based on GI	76 completions
Stakeholder Workshop	Sept 2013*	Attended by representatives of key groups and organisations. Reviewed community input and made own input.	16 attendees
Landowners/ Farmers' Workshop	July 2014*	Attended by main local landowners/farmers. Introduction to GI Plan. Opportunity to understand their operations and aspirations.	3 landowners, BLCPC, GST
St Nicholas Church Fete	June 2022	Stall with maps and opportunities to comment	Attendance = 200+ (overall fete – good level of engagement on stall)
Christmas Lights Switch- on 2022	27 Nov 2022	Stand alongside NP information. Engagement on what people value, issues and problems, projects and aspirations.	Attendance of event = several hundred. 35 visited stall 26 directly engaged
Community Event	8 th May 2023	Stand as part of large community event. Engagement on proposed policies and projects.	Attendance of event = several hundred. 37 directly engaged.

From earlier BLCNPSC Consultations.

Table 1 – Consultation on BLCNP Version 1.

- 5.4 On 8th May 2023, the BLCNPSC manned an information stall at the Coronation 'Big Help Out' Event, held in the Barton-le-Clay Village Hall. Over 100+ people attended the event. The event provided the opportunity to:
 - 5.4.1 Update people on the progress of the BLCNP.
 - 5.4.2 Share the draft GI Plan,
 - 5.4.3 Share the results of the questionnaires, and,
 - 5.4.4 To consult on the draft Policies which had been formulated based upon the evidence gathered during earlier consultations.
- 5.5 The draft Policies were very well supported with 100% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the draft Policies. A few improvements were suggested which resulted in some minor changes to the text of the final set of Policies which were subsequently approved by the Steering Committee.







Photos 2 - Engagements Events in 2022.





Photos 3 – Engagements Events in 2023.

- 5.6 At the Coronation 'Big Help Out' Event, held in the Barton-le-Clay Village Hall held in May 2023, the BLCNPSC manned an information/Q&A stall and over 100 people attended the event. The event provided the opportunity to:
 - 5.6.1 Update people on the progress of the BLCNP.
 - 5.6.2 Share the draft GI Plan,
 - 5.6.3 Share the results of the questionnaires, and,
 - 5.6.4 To consult on the draft Policies which had been formulated based upon the evidence gathered during earlier consultations.

- 5.7 The draft Policies were very well supported with 100% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the draft Policies. A few improvements were suggested which resulted in some minor changes to the text of the final set of Policies which were subsequently approved by the Steering Committee.
- 5.8 The demographic at the May event was notably the older population of the Village and it was decided to hold another information stand event, targeted specifically at the younger population, at the village Firework Display on 3^{rd} November 2023. To incentivise completion of a short questionnaire, there was the chance to win a £50 Amazon voucher. A copy of the questionnaire and breakdown of responses is at Annex E.



Photo 4 - Engagements Event Village Bonfire Night.

6 Road to Regulation 15 Submission

- 6.2 To comply with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Regulation 14², the proposed Neighbourhood Plan was:
 - 6.2.1 Made available electronically to everyone who lives, works, or runs a business in the area,
 - 6.2.2 Copies were sent to:
 - 6.2.2.1 The planning authority at Central Bedfordshire Council,
 - 6.2.2.2 Statutory Consultation Bodies³,
 - 6.2.2.3 Adjacent town/parish councils and local authorities,

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² Regulation 14.

³ Statutory Consultation Bodies

- 6.2.2.4 Landowners, including individual letters to the registered landowners/ potentially affected landowners of the proposed Local Green Spaces to notify them that their land may be affected by policies contained within the Draft Plan.
- 6.3 Hard copies were made available (and still are), for those requiring it.
- 6.4 Our Regulation 14 Communications Plan included increasing awareness through:
 - 6.4.1 Social media e.g., the parish Facebook page, parish newsletter, Parish noticeboards and a door-to-door leaflet drop that gave details of the proposed plan, where and when it could be viewed, how to make comments and by what date.

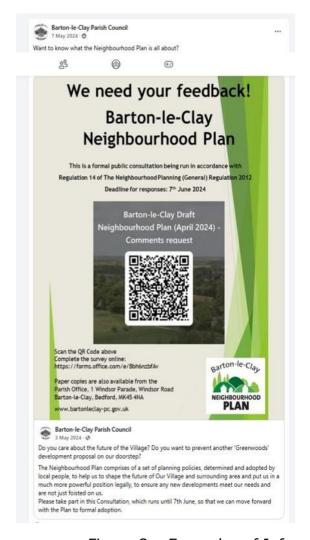




Figure 2 – Examples of Information Notices/Flyers and Social Media Posts.

6.4.2 Several successful drop-in/Q&A sessions were also organised, e.g., an information desk at the Village Co-op where members of the BLCNPSC had the opportunity to engage with villages to promote the BLCNP and answer any questions.







Photos 5 – Engagements Events 2024.

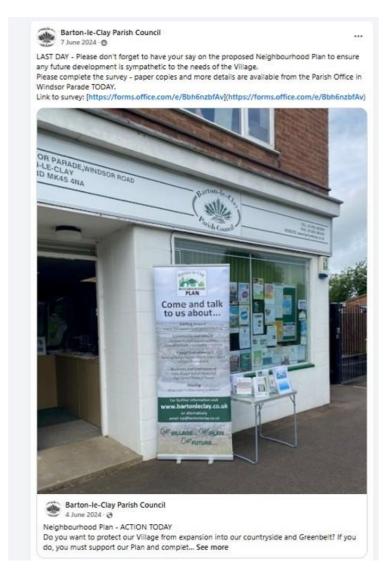


Photo 6 – Parish Council Office Open Day 2024.

6.5 A summary of the engagement events held is detailed in Table 2 below.

Method of Community Involvement	Date
Parish Newsletter Survey	Feb 2024
Leaflet Drop	Apr 2024
Parish Newsletter Survey	May 2024
Co-op Drop in/Q&A stand	7 May 2024
Co-op Drop in/Q&A stand	11 May 2024
Stall/Q&A stall at Annual Parish Council meeting	13 May 2024
Co-op Drop in/Q&A stand	16 May 2024
Stall/Q&A stall at Coronation Community Garden preview day	19 May 2024
Stall/Q&A stand outside Parish Council Office.	4-7 June 2024

Table 2 - Summary of Reg 14 Events.

6.6 The responses from the Regulation 14 consultations have been thoroughly examined and discussed with the CBC Neighbourhood Planning Officer and the BLCNP document has been updated accordingly and is now ready to be submitted for Regulation 15^4 approval.

7 Lessons Learnt

- 7.2 Throughout this process, the importance of using a wide range of communication channels was critical to communicate with the diverse demographic in the village. Some innovative techniques such as, the use of QR Codes, were not successful, others, such as Q&A Stands at the entrance of the local Co-op, proved to be very successful.
- 7.3 Disappointingly, and despite having over 2000+ followers on the Barton Today Facebook group site, views and comments on posted NP information etc, were limited.
- 7.4 One notable criticism of the BLCNP was that the document was to long and difficult the read. The Reg 14 document was 100+ pages, and the Reg 15 submission document has been consolidated down to 70 pages.

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⁴ Regulation 15

Barton Le Clay Parish Neighbourhood Plan Webpage



Neighbourhood Plan

Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

Put simply, a neighbourhood plan is a set of planning policies, determined and adopted by local people, that add detail to the planning policies set a national, regional and district level. It has mandatory status and must be followed when planning applications are considered by the planning authority – Central Bedfordshire Council is the planning authority for Barton-le-Clay

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

The 2011 Localism Act gave local communities the opportunity to have a say in how they would like their local environment to look in the future. By creating a Neighbourhood Plan, a community can ensure that their views will be listened to.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future A Neignbourmook in a Scommunity-lea framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. A neighbourhood plan is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may deal with a wide range of social, eccommic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only.

A Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory development plan for the area, if successful at referendum. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than some other local documents, such as parish plans, community plans and village design statements.

A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with national legislation and must have appropriate regard to national policy and be in general conformity with existing strategic local planning policy. It should not promote less development than that identified in the development plan for the local area (such as new housing allocations). It can allow greater growth levels. Also, it can specify policies and guidance on how new development should be designed, orientated and located. Neighbourhood Plans can be a powerful tool in shaping the development of a neighbourhood. The timeframe for the Neighbourhood Plans is for communities to decide, for example whether it is a 5, 10, 15 or 20-year plan

Once a Neighbourhood plan has been completed, it will have to be submitted to the Once a Neighbourhood plan has been completed, it will have to be submitted to the local authority and then be subjected to an independent examination. This will make sure that the proper legal process has been followed and that the plan meets the basic conditions, including general conformity with strategic local policy. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to a public referendum. Once plans have been subjected to an independent examination and any necessary modifications made to ensure they meet important legal requirements, it is necessary to gain a more than 50% New Justs of those suition is quality affected unit in order to those them in the public plant of the properties of the properties of the public of the pub 50% 'yes' vote of those voting in a public referendum in order to bring them into

Neighbourhood Plans carry legal weight in the planning system and once adopted, they form part of the Local Plan.

Who draws up a Neighbourhood Plan?

Usually a Neighbourhood Plan Committee is established with representation from

Usually a Neighbourhood Plan Committee is established with representation from the area covered by the plan.

Barton-ie-Clay Parish has been designated a Neighbourhood Plan Area; a Neighbourhood Plan Committee, comprising volunteers and parish councillors, was set up in 2012 and started to gather all the necessary evidence and to test thoughts and ideas in the wider community. The Plan was put on hold in 2014/15, pending the completion of the Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan. Now that his has been adopted, the Barton-ie-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Committee are re-launching in 2022 to develop the plan for the Village future.



Annex B to BLCNP Consultation Document Dated 19 May 25



Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Newsletter March 2022



Background

Neighbourhood planning is a way for communities like ours to have a say in the future of the places where we live, work and socialise. It gives us the power to produce a plan: the 'Neighbourhood Plan', that has real legal weight to direct development(s) in our local area. It helps us:

- · choose where we want new homes, shops and offices to be built;
- have our say on what those new buildings should look like, and:
- have greater control on planning permission applications for the new buildings/developments we want to see go ahead.

Work on the 'Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan' (The Plan) started back in 2011. Unfortunately, it was halted due to the launch of Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Plan, which was finally adopted in 2021.

We have now restarted work on 'The Plan' and it is important that everyone has the opportunity to contribute. We are, therefore, consulting you to ensure we reflect your views and build on the work carried out previously.

The Environment

The key message from a survey in 2014 was that you wanted Barton to remain a village, in size and feel, with Bedford Road, the historic Village centre, remaining at its heart.

You said Green Spaces were important to you, with Lime Close being singled out. We believe there are other green spaces that should be preserved, like Arnold Recreation Ground, and various greens around the Village, e.g., Nicholls Close, Arnold Close, Franklin Avenue, Simpkins Drive, Burr Close and Windsor Parade.

Throughout the Village, there are pieces of land/grass verges that are Amenity Land. Some of these areas are maintained by the householder(s) who adjoin it, but it is not for their sole use, and should not be misappropriated. The misappropriation of Amenity Land should be challenged so it remains available for everyone to enjoy.

We live in an area of outstanding natural beauty, full of wonderful fauna and flora, e.g., the Pasque Flower, and wildlife like the Red Kite and chalk-down Blue Butterfly. The Springs have proved particularly popular over the Covid Pandemic and walking around the Village, via its many footpaths, has been an important part of maintaining personal wellbeing.

Trees and hedgerows are important, and we are pleased to say that more have been planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy to mark the Platinum Jubilee and the Local Authority Treescapes Fund Projects.

'Garden Grabbing', where houses and other buildings are squeezed into gardens, needs to be discouraged.

It is vital we maintain these habitats and green spaces and, in addition, ensure that the Greenbelt surrounding our Village, including the allotments, school playing fields and football pitches, are not further eroded.

Flooding was identified as an area of concern and parts of the Village are identified on the 'Local Flood Map for Planning'. It is important that water can drain away naturally so, for example, front gardens should not be concreted over for parkine. and water courses should be maintained.

> HAVE YOUR SAY - WE WILL BE OUTSIDE THE CO-OP ON SATURDAY 26th MARCH – COME AND TALK TO US

Getting around and Transport links

The previous work on the Plan highlighted that public transport links are extremely poor – bus services are infrequent and do not go to Harlington Railway Station. The service only goes North/South to Bedford and Luton and once a week to Hitchin.

The Village is currently well served by footpaths, linking to the village centre and it's important that any new developments incorporate similar connections.

The need for additional crossing points on Bedford Road and Hexton Road were identified, and a safer crossing to the Water Mill and Faldo Road Estate.

The need for better access to the railway station and Harlington Upper School, via footpaths/cycleways, was identified, but it is recognised this would not be easy to achieve.

Housing

The previous surveys suggested that there was a need for more affordable and social housing, together with a need for more retirement bungalows, and smaller properties for local people wishing to downsize, which would in turn release larger properties back onto the market. Please help us by completing a new Housing Needs Survey which will be delivered to every household in the coming weeks. This will help us understand if these needs have changed significantly.

Shops / Amenities

The Village has a good selection of shops and restaurants. Since the previous survey, we have also had the introduction of several cafes – something highlighted as a need – but we have lost the Bank (and its ATM), and the Post Office has been under threat.

The previous survey highlighted the importance of these facilities and emphasised the need for them to be retained.

Doctors and Dentists

It is important that any future development recognises that we already have a stretched service, and any plans must take this into account.

chools

Village schools form Part of the Harlington Pyramid. Any increase in housing would need to be supported by an increase in local school places, either through expansion of existing schools, or the development of new ones. Leisture facilities

The Parish Council's new Leisure Strategy (link: https://barton-le-day-leisure-strategy-2021-2026/) covers this in detail. 'The Plan' would support this.

OUR POSTCODE:

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE VIEWS THAT HAVE BEEN HIGHLIGHTED?

YES/NO

IS THERE ANYTHING / ANYWHERE WE HAVE MISSED, SHOULD WE TAKE ANYTHING OUT AND IF SO, WHY?

You can drop this back to the Parish Office at 1 Windsor Parade, respond via email t
np@bartonleclay-pc.gov.uk or pop and see us when we are outside the Co-op on
Saturday 26 th March 10am – 2pm

Community Group Stakeholders

Sports:

Football Clubs Badminton Club
Tennis Club Bowls Club

Leisure:

Conservation Group
Women's Institute
Scouts
Over 60's Club
Rambling Group
Rotary Club
Guides
Wine Guild

Whiskey Club Photographic Club

Faith Groups:

St Nicholas Church Methodist Church Baptist Church Noah's Ark

Sunday School

Environmental:

Green Waste Recycling Farmers

English Nature Conservation Group

Greening Group

Educational:

Ramsey Manor Arnold Academy
Harlington Upper Orchard School

Playgroup

Medical:

Doctors Dentists
Pharmacy Opticians

Vets

Businesses:

Industrial Estate The Mill

High Street Retail Home Workers

Newsletter Questionnaire Data

1 Results

1.2 To better understand the Community Aspirations, Ideas and Actions the Comments received have been grouped into:

2 Environment.

- 2.2 Keep Village a village/don't let Barton get any bigger.
- 2.3 More trees, particularly on verges, and ensure existing trees are maintained.
- 2.4 Green spaces need to be protected, particularly including Arnold Recreation Ground, Norman Road play space, football pitches, etc.
- 2.5 Improve pavement surfaces, many uneven and dangerous.
- 2.6 Improve road drainage (clear more often to reduce flooding).
- 2.7 Need more litter bins.
- 2.8 Maintain amenity land and verges. Discourage parking on these areas with flowers and trees.
- 2.9 Discourage dog fouling on verges.
- 2.10 Stop people turning front gardens into car parking spaces.
- 2.11 Improve the availability of parking in the Village, e.g., behind library.
- 2.12 Don't develop Baileys Piece (Franklin Avenue).

3 Facilities.

- 3.2 Need a bigger GP Practice (more GP's) so can get access to doctors' surgery / appointments.
- 3.3 Need to maintain Village hub.
- 3.4 More indoor sports facilities (a leisure centre).
- 3.5 Don't let shops and businesses (The Bull) be turned into housing.
- 3.6 Need to keep Post Office/need more cash machines.
- 3.7 Library facility particularly important and needs to be preserved.
- 3.8 Maintain all the community halls.
- 3.9 Need more carparks in centre of Village and for people using the hills.
- 3.10 More benches.
- 3.11 Preserve Green belt.
- 3.12 Need for charging points for electric vehicles.

4 Traffic and Getting Around.

- 4.2 Issues with speeding on Bedford and Luton Road flagged suggestions re making max 20mph/make all village roads 20mph limit at school times.
- 4.3 More pedestrian crossings needed in Bedford Road and Hexton Road Church Road and across Bypass to Faldo Road and Watermill.
- 4.4 Need more cycle tracks Hitchin to Harlington.
- 4.5 More parking needed for people visiting the 'Barton Springs'.

- 4.6 Speed humps needed on Windsor Road.
- 4.7 Bus service needs improving. More frequent buses to Hitchin.
- 4.8 Traffic / parking issues Manor Road. Suggest sign e.g., Dangerous Bend.
- 4.9 Speed calming Grange Road (Road Hump by bend).

5 Housing.

- 5.2 More facilities for elderly (assisted living).
- 5.3 If we must have development, then should be Retirement village so elderly residents can stay in Village.
- 5.4 More 2 bed bungalows.
- 5.5 More luxury bungalows for retired people to move to.
- 5.6 Smaller social Housing (not elderly).
- 5.7 Need to stop bungalows being converted to houses.
- 5.8 Housing for 18–24year-olds.
- 5.9 Parking outside houses needs to be enough for current needs as most people have more cars and visitors.
- 5.10 If new school built to replace Ramsey Manor, should use this site exclusively to build 2 bed bungalows.
- 5.11 Expansion of Village inappropriate!

BLCNP Questionnaire and Analysis - Bonfire Night 2023



1. Do you have any intentions to move away from Barton for work or any other purpose?

YES / NO

If so, is Barton a village you would like to return to someday?

YES / NO

2. Would you like to see more rental options in the village?

YES / NO

- 3. How often do you use our 'Green Spaces' in or around Barton?
- 4. What Community Amenity is your favourite?

Name:	Contact Mobile/Email:
Please provide an indication of	Male / Female
your Age:	
Under 18	
18 - 30 years	
31 – 45 years	
46 – 60 years	
61+ years	

