

## 6. Community Infrastructure

### Introduction

132. The provision of a good range of community services and facilities to support local people is the hallmark of a sustainable community and particularly applies in the context of Wool as a key service village, as Dorset Council may want it to expand significantly if emerging plans are progressed with preferred options as currently set out.
133. Dorset Council has assessed the requirements for health and community facilities provision to support proposals in emerging local plans and has suggested how these will be met where new provision is required. This is through direct provision by developers, and use of CIL and public investment as required.
134. Residents who engaged in the survey to support the development of the neighbourhood plan, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, related significant concerns about the pressure on existing services. No new provision has been made since then and Covid-19 has created acknowledged additional pressures on access to local community/public services.

### Survey of infrastructure and service providers

135. The emerging Purbeck Local Plan and emerging Dorset Local Plan provide statements about infrastructure requirements to support planned development. These are drawn from emerging local plan policies, a memorandum of understanding relating to site allocations, and the Infrastructure Development Plan. A summary of Dorset Council's position on infrastructure requirements for Wool is a supporting document to the neighbourhood plan.
136. The neighbourhood plan started with extensive consultation and engagement. This followed on from the Parish Plan of more than ten years ago. When the public have been asked for their views about the future of the parish, throughout they have raised consistent themes and these do not accord with the conclusions about infrastructure set out in emerging Dorset local plans. However, these matters are regarded as strategic, and the neighbourhood plan must conform with them and so it cannot 'demand' or 'require' infrastructure deemed not required by Dorset Council.
137. Nevertheless, assumptions about infrastructure requirements in local plans are made following enquiries at a strategic scale and are fixed in time, and this means local details can sometimes be overlooked, overtaken by events or simply mistaken. Some elements of infrastructure requirements set out in emerging plans (such as local libraries and other local community facilities) are assumed to be delivered through use of CIL accruing to parishes. But if CIL does not apply to the most strategic developments and the list of S106 requirements does not address these, then how can they be funded locally?
138. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has undertaken its own survey of local service providers to understand their needs in the context of planned development in emerging local plans. The purpose was to establish from these bodies, their projected, planned or estimated provision of infrastructure development that would be needed to give the required stability and sustainability in Wool Parish over the period covered by the developing Dorset Local Plan, assuming growth of housing in Wool in line with the potential development of up to 1,000 new homes.
139. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group sent out letters to 14 identified companies and organisations who operate infrastructure or provide services in the Parish. Seven organisations responded to the letter with a summary of the consideration of matters raised given below.

140. **Burial space** – All residents of the parish have a right of interment in the Churchyard of the Holy Rood. The Church of Holy Rood Parochial Church Council has indicated that they are utilising burial space within an extension to the Holy Rood Churchyard purchased some time ago and at current rates of usage, this will last a further 8-10 years (to 2030-2032). Over time, a significant expansion of the population of Wool Parish would result in an acceleration of the usage of burial space and a need for a larger extension to the south of the current extension. This is considered further later in this chapter.
141. **Community Hall** – The current community hall and meeting spaces at the D'Urberville Centre are currently adequate to meet the needs of the local community. A significant expansion in population would result in increased demand for community hall and meeting spaces. Currently facilities would need to be expanded to meet increased demand. This would most likely be required as a further development of the D'Urberville Centre.
142. **Primary School Provision** – St Mary and St Joseph, Wool Primary and Bovington Academy Schools are in federated academies and so not under the direct control of Dorset Council. All appear to have capacity in terms of available places at present. However, it is not clear whether this capacity is required or is sufficient for the future, or whether there is physical development capacity, should it be needed to support a growing population because of new development in Wool.
143. **Community Library** – The community library is located in the D'Urberville Centre, and this is seen to be provided at a lower footprint than is recommended. To bring the library up to standard and to accommodate significant additional population, it is anticipated that a significant investment would be required, to be considered as part of the extension required to the D'Urberville Centre.
144. **GP Surgery** – Current premises are seen to be adequate to cater for an increased population in the area, with a more pressing difficulty being the recruitment of medical professionals to provide services.
145. **Highways and Public Transport** – The response from Dorset Highways to the survey raises some concern in the parish over the certainty of delivery of programmed schemes or schemes under consideration. The neighbourhood plan is unable to require schemes to be delivered in support of planned housing.
146. **Water Supplies and Wastewater Treatment** – Wessex Water has indicated that it has responded separately to Dorset Council and that requirements for investment arising from new development are addressed through existing mechanisms and so there is no role for the neighbourhood plan to define requirements further. This would also apply to electricity and gas infrastructure.

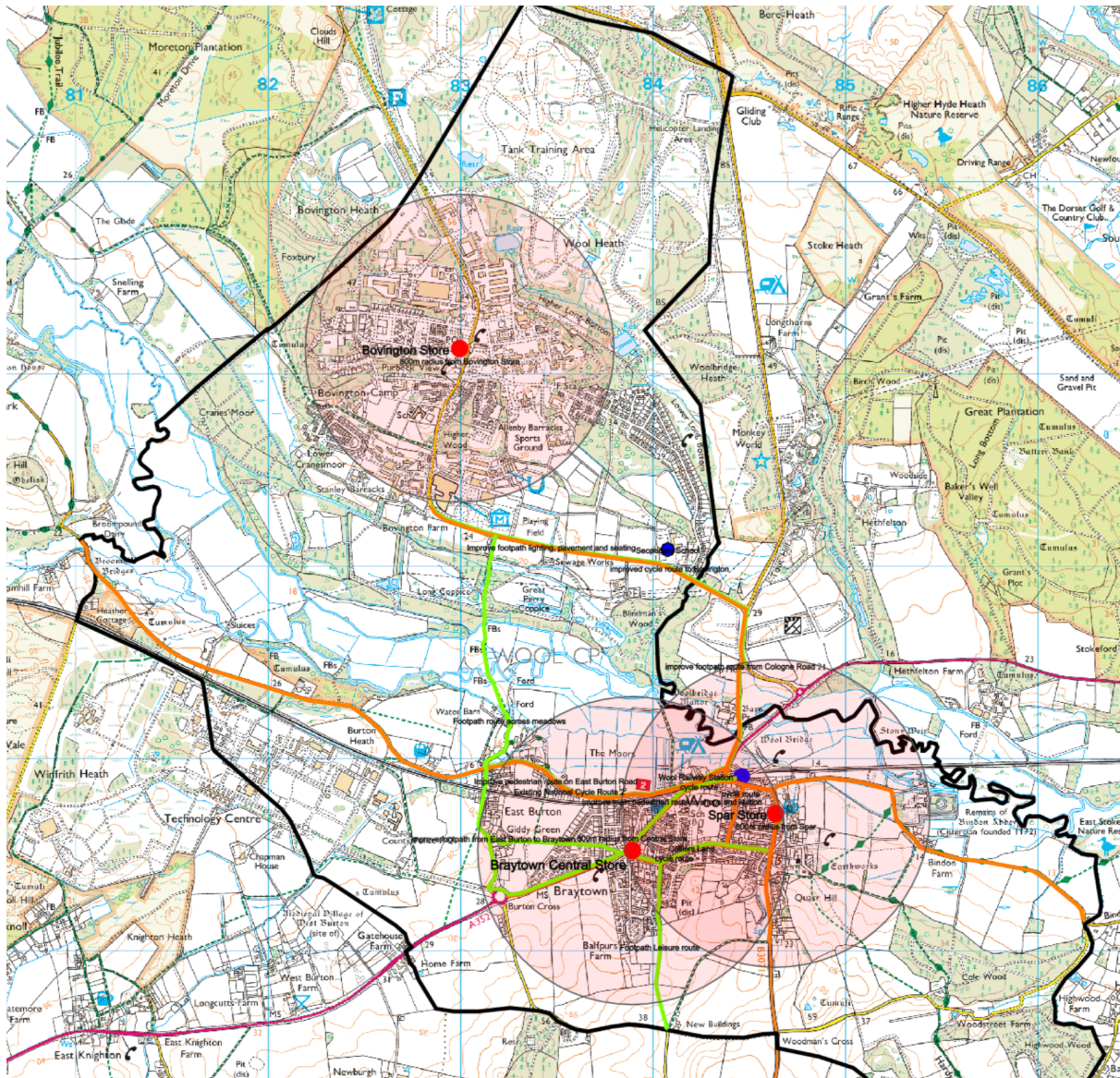
## Facilities in Local Community Use

147. The location and availability of key community facilities is relevant to the consideration of future development requirements to enable them to continue to function effectively.
148. **Shops selling essential goods including food** – Many people have identified the need for better food shopping facilities in the Parish in response to the neighbourhood plan consultation. The nearest large format supermarkets are in Dorchester (Tesco, 12.3 miles) and Weymouth (Morrisons, 13.8 miles), around a 25 miles round trip. The nearest mid-size supermarket in Wareham (J Sainsbury) is a 13 miles round trip. Most people will not undertake a large supermarket shop by train. Bus services are not frequent so the great majority journeys to nearby supermarkets will be undertaken by car.
149. Local grocery shops are therefore very important in meeting daily needs in Wool Parish. The location of local grocery shops which sell a range of essential goods including food is shown on Figure 19. Generally, a 15 minutes' walk is considered to be the maximum distance that people will regularly undertake on foot to access local services and so a clear objective of the Department for Transport is

to promote walkable neighbourhoods. Many County highways departments have determined 800m as a maximum reasonable walking distance and use this in response to planning applications. **Figure 19** shows 800m walking distances from existing grocery shops in the parish.

150. Changes to permitted development rights nationally have made it easier to lose shops to other uses, subject to rules which might enable designation of isolated shops as local community uses. The rules are that isolated shops must be a 1,000 metre radius from the next – but then who can walk in a straight line to the shops? Work to support the neighbourhood plan demonstrates that the three grocery shops serving the Parish are in fact located at least 1,000m from each other by direct walking routes.
151. A further rule is that shops should be selling a range of essential daily good including food. The Bovington Store, Braytown Central Store and the Spar are the only three shops meeting this definition. The retail floorspace of each shop is less than 280sq.m. (another rule). On this basis, if the distance between the shops of 1,000m on the ground is accepted (that is as people walk it, already longer than would be considered reasonable for walking), then rather than commercial use class E, these shops can be protected as a local community use F2(a). This is the priority for the neighbourhood plan.

**Figure 19 - Local Grocery Shop Provision in Wool Parish**



152. A further priority is to ensure that new housing development is provided with access to local shops on foot. The stated aim of national policies and both adopted and emerging local planning policies is to plan new development to support a reduction in the need to travel and to enable active travel by foot and cycle to local facilities in walkable neighbourhoods. New development in Wool should not exacerbate under-provision of local shops and necessitate car travel to distant shops. It should not encourage people to drive to local shops and the way to do this is by ensuring provision of appropriate retail space in new developments. Figure 19 shows a conservative view of the limit of walking catchments from existing shops and planned new housing development should incorporate retail proposals to fill gaps in provision accordingly.
153. **Community Halls and Meeting Spaces** – Community Hall and Meeting Space provision within the Parish is focused on three venues – The D’Urberville Centre, Kids of Wool and East Burton Village Hall provide space for community use and hire within the parish. The Cologne Road Community Room did provide for community use in Bovington, but it was closed in 2023 due to lack of bookings. Associated with Bovington Camp, the Bovington Community Hall is run by the MOD but is available for wider community use.
154. The D’Urberville Centre provides the most flexible and accessible accommodation, and this facility is already at capacity, with waiting lists for new users. Kids of Wool is at capacity and East Burton Village Hall is around 40% utilised.
155. Bovington Academy and Wool Primary provide some meeting space for hire but the schools cannot let the hiring of premises interfere with the primary purpose of providing education to pupils. Other facilities which might normally be expected to be available for community use, are not in Wool, including the two of the four local schools and three churches who provide limited opportunity for wider community use.
156. A full audit of community facilities is set out in **Appendix C**. Priorities for the improvement of community halls and meeting spaces within the Parish are set out in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Priorities for improvements to community halls and meeting spaces**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Priority for improvement</b>	<b>How Deliver?</b>
D’Urberville Centre, Wool	<p>Extra bookable space, ideally a space comparable to the main hall.</p> <p>Improved accessibility for existing parts of the hall, e.g. the main kitchen.</p> <p>Increase capacity of sanitary drainage system.</p> <p>Car park improvements, e.g. resurfacing and marked bays.</p> <p>Create extra storage space.</p> <p>Reduce ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour).</p> <p>External toilets are needed for close by facilities.</p> <p>An audio-visual system with a hearing loop</p>	<p>Extra bookable space.</p> <p>Improved accessibility.</p> <p>Car park improvements.</p> <p>Drainage capacity increase.</p> <p>Extra library space.</p> <p>Enclose the veranda at the rear to create extra storage space and reduce ASB.</p> <p>Create external public toilets.</p> <p>The above would all require a substantial investment.</p> <p>An audio-visual system is planned</p>
East Burton Village Hall	<p>The hall is short of storage space and extra parking space would be helpful.</p>	<p>An area for storage space has been identified but no funds available.</p>

		Land to create parking space would need to be identified and purchased.
Kids of Wool	A heating system.	Heating system is planned.

157. **Sports Fields** – Provision of outdoor sports pitches in Wool is less than in other equivalent and smaller parishes within the Purbeck Sub-Area. Historic provision two adult pitches and a non-turfed pitch for football and cricket lies disused within the Dorset Innovation Park and was never available for public use. Other provision is owned and run by the MOD and is also not available for general community use, whilst local schools lack sufficient outdoor space to add to local playing pitch resources, or are specialist schools which do not make resources available for general community use. This leaves the Wool Playing Fields as the only sports playing field provision or sports provision permanently available for community use in the Parish. Bovington Academy and Wool Primary provide some playing field space for hire but the schools cannot let the hiring of premises interfere with the primary purpose of providing education to pupils.
158. To some extent, residents of the Bovington Barracks who are in the military or are military family members have access to 'private' sports facilities provided by the MOD. The nearest provision of facilities available for wider public use and hire is set out in Table 3. Given the provision within Bovington, this is based on access from Wool and East Burton. It should be noted that some housing in Bovington is occupied by civilians unconnected with the military and who therefore do not have access to the facilities there.

**Table 3 – The nearest provision of sports facilities to Wool and East Burton**

<b>Sports facilities available for public use</b>	<b>Location and distance from Wool</b>	<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>How Deliver?</b>
Football	Wool Playing Field, 0 miles	More pitches required as currently overused and not dedicated to football	Create alternative pitches with changing facilities
Skatepark	Wool and Bovington, 0 miles	Both skateparks have been recently refurbished/replaced.	
Short Mat Bowls	D'Urberville Centre, Wool, 0 miles	None. Adequate facilities exist.	
Basketball/Netball	MUGA in Bovington. Wareham, 5 miles	Create MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area)	Create on Wool Playing Field
Rugby	Wareham, 5 miles		
Cricket	Wareham, 5 miles		
Hockey	Wareham, 5 miles		
Tennis	Bovington (not bookable). Wareham (bookable), 5 miles	Create MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area)	Create on Wool Playing Field
Golf	Wareham, 5 miles. Hyde, Bere Regis, 4 miles		

<b>Sports facilities available for public use</b>	<b>Location and distance from Wool</b>	<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>How Deliver?</b>
Bowls	Hyde, Bere Regis, 4 miles		
Swimming	Wareham, 5 miles		
Athletics (track and field)	Weymouth and Poole, 11 miles		

159. Table 3 identifies priorities for the neighbourhood plan to increase opportunities for local sports through provision of additional facilities including for a wider range of activities. This could be an important element in providing a greater range of active informal and formal sports and leisure opportunities for young people living in Wool, who are less mobile in terms of independent travel. This was an important theme raised in consultation on the neighbourhood plan.
160. **Play Areas** – The main objective of this neighbourhood plan in relation to play area provision is to ensure that sufficient play area provision is provided and enhanced where needed. Current provision has been made directly by Wool Parish Council, by the MOD within Bovington and directly by developers, who continue to manage their sites through maintenance companies. Quality is variable across this provision. Across the provision identified in Table 4, priorities for play area provision and improvement are identified.
161. Facilities within the Parish are provided for small children only. Play Areas are currently able to accommodate children with disabilities, but improvements can always be made.
162. **Youth Facilities** – According to consultation on the neighbourhood plan, there is a low level concern among some residents about groups of young people congregating with resulting perceived anti-social behaviour. Apart from the playing field and skate parks, there are no facilities for active leisure and sports in the Parish. Whilst there is a youth club (for younger teenagers) operating for periods each week in the D'Urberville Centre and in Bovington, there are no permanent places either in the open or facilities indoors where older young people can meet. There are no cafes open in Wool outside school hours. Encouraging the provision of some services and facilities which are attractive for young people is one of the aims of the neighbourhood plan.

**Table 4 – Priorities for Play Area Provision and Improvement in Wool Parish**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>How Deliver?</b>
Wool Colliers Lane	Wool Parish Council	Delivered in 2015. Will need updating at some point.	Wool Parish Council to update.
Wool Burton Wood	Raglan Housing	Needs updating and expanding.	Raglan to update.
Purbeck Gate	Lulworth Estate	Delivered in 2010. Will need updating at some point.	Weld Estate to update.
Bovington Swinton Avenue	MOD	Updated in 2023. Will need updating at some point.	MOD to update.
Bovington Elles Road	MOD	Updated in 2023. Will need updating at some point.	MOD to update.

Cologne Road	Wool Parish Council	High priority to provide	Wool Parish Council to acquire land lease and secure funding
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## Burial Space

163. The response to the community infrastructure survey for this neighbourhood plan provides an up-to-date estimate of remaining cemetery space for the interment of ashes and burials within Wool Parish, estimated to be of the order of 9 years. Given the right of interment in cemetery space associated with the Church of the Holy Rood, for every resident of the Parish, the future requirement for burial space will be directly linked to future population changes and linked mortality.
164. To establish the position more clearly, a supporting document to the neighbourhood plan has been prepared which provides an estimate of future requirements based on population change and mortality rates in the parish. Planned development has been considered based on established Office for National Statistics profiles for population growth arising from housing development (2.4 persons per household).
165. An estimate of current burial space capacity was obtained from The Ecclesiastical parish of Wool, East Stoke, Coombe Keynes, Bovington and East Burton. The Parochial Council Area has 250 burial spaces within Wool Parish (the other parishes also have their own churchyards available to them, but not to those with a connection to Wool Parish).
166. The main Churchyard is attached to The Church of the Holy Rood, Wool. A current resident of The Ecclesiastical parish of Wool, East Stoke, Coombe Keynes, Bovington and East Burton can be interred in the Churchyard of Holy Rood Church if they have ever lived in any of the parishes or have a family member already interred at the Churchyard.
167. This means that there is use of the churchyard in Wool Parish by those with a connection to East Stoke and Combe Keynes Parishes and also from previous connections to Wool Parish. It is not clear how often this occurs over time. In 2022, 4 interments took place of this kind, but these were into existing family graves. This level of annual use by residents of the other parishes has been assumed.
168. Within Wool, the only burial spaces are within an extension to the Holy Rood churchyard with a total remaining capacity of 150 plots for cremation ashes and 250 plots for burials as of spring 2023. There were 12 burials and 16 ash interments in the churchyard in 2022.
169. Work has been undertaken to assess how long the available supply will last. This has considered the effects of high, central and low annual mortality rates. This is presented in Table 5, indicating that on a central scenario of mortality, burial space supply in Wool Parish will be exhausted by 2037-2038. Space for cremation ashes will be exhausted sooner. The main reason supply will last so long is that new planned development would take time to be delivered, but if it all came forward, with a parish population likely to be in excess of 8,000 people, annual deaths, and so burial space requirements, will be significantly higher on an annual basis than currently.

**Table 5 – Burial Space Capacity in Wool Parish assuming planned development**

Scenario (deaths per 1,000 population per annum)	When Ash spaces run out	When Burial Plots run out
High (10.5 deaths)	2031-2032	2036-2037
Central (10 deaths)	2032-2033	2037-2038
Low (9.5 deaths)	2033	2039

Source: Cemetery Space Requirements in Wool Parish (Andrea Pellegram Ltd)

170. Both cremation ash spaces and burial spaces at the Holy Rood Churchyard will become exhausted within the next 16 years under all scenarios relating to mortality if planned development occurs. A current extension which is now being utilised at the Holy Rood Churchyard was acquired 20 years ago, purchased by The Parochial Church Council to ensure uninterrupted supply of burial spaces. Planning for new burial space provision takes significant time, preparation and cost.
171. In view of the uplift in annual interment requirements resulting from population growth through planned development, it makes sense for contributions to be sought from new Major Development to allow further extension of the churchyard for additional burial space and cremation ash space.
172. The current extension to Holy Rood Churchyard was secured with the provision of 0.12 hectares of land which has yielded approximately 300 burial plots based on an assumed 3 square metres for each burial plot and allowing for pathways and separation between graves. It has also provided 150 smaller cremation ash plots. Provision of a similar amount of land adjacent to the existing churchyard would provide security for immediate future supply in the light of planned development in the Parish, bearing in mind that this would last only a further 15 years at anticipated rates of use.
173. Depending on whether further extensions to the Holy Rood Churchyard would be possible and desirable, a separate site may be needed to provide longer term burial land supply for an expanded population (to meet requirements for a longer 40-years period). Based on an annual requirement for 20 burials and 20 cremation ash interments each year in the late 2030s, this would require provision of space for 800 burials and 800 cremation ash interments.
174. A larger amount of land would likely be needed to accommodate boundary treatment, access and other chapel and works infrastructure needed to create a cemetery from scratch. Strategic burial space provision for the parish would address future needs comprehensively. Given ongoing requirements this would also need to be capable of expansion in future.

#### WOOL 7 – Burial Space Provision in Wool Parish

To meet burial space requirements and provide spaces for cremation ash, applicants for major housing developments should include proposals to directly provide or make a financial contribution towards new burial space provision equivalent to 800 burial spaces and 800 cremation ash plots adjacent to existing churchyards and/or on a new cemetery site in Wool Parish.

175. **Library** – Currently, community library services are provided from within the D’Urberville Centre on a voluntary basis with support from Dorset Council and Wool Parish Council. The Community Library is open on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 3–5pm or Thursday and Saturday mornings from 10am–12 noon. As such there is no permanent Dorset Council–provided library in Wool Parish.
176. The emerging policies of the Purbeck and Dorset Local Plans indicate that there is no specific requirement for additional library services within requirements for community infrastructure to support planned housing development proposals in Wool. The emerging local plans say that Parish Councils should use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money they receive from new development to fund new library provision if they wish. However, planned housing development in Wool would be subject to S106 Planning Obligations and not CIL – there would be no CIL accruing to Wool Parish Council to fund additional library service provision to meet the needs of a growing population.
177. **Health Facilities** – The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Survey of local service providers indicates that premises are sufficient for the current population and currently known planned growth. Human resources in the form of skilled medical professionals are lacking and are the main cause of problems local people have experienced and referred to in response to consultation on the neighbourhood plan. This has worsened since the Covid-19 pandemic. Other parts of the neighbourhood plan are



seeking to improve the availability of affordable housing in Wool, to improve local access and enhance its local environment, shops and other amenities. Beyond this, the neighbourhood plan is not able to directly address labour shortages in the local primary care sector.

178. **Education Facilities** – Local primary schools have academy status. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group engagement with them indicates a need for Dorset Council to engage further to better understand their capacity to accommodate additional pupils should planned growth occur. This is beyond the scope of the neighbourhood plan.
179. Local Schools can provide important access by the community to school facilities out of hours. Wool Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to explore with local schools the use of school facilities for wider community use.
180. **Churches** – Local churches can play a significant role in community outreach of a general nature to foster a local sense of community and provide social support to vulnerable and isolated people. Wool Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to explore with local churches how church facilities and initiatives could support the wider community in Wool Parish.
181. **Sustainable Transport** – The Neighbourhood plan examines requirements for transport services including improvements to walking and cycling networks, local bus services and Wool rail station.

#### WOOL 8 – Protection of sites in local community use

Sites in Local Community Use will be retained and protected against loss unless equivalent or better provision is made to replace them to serve the local community.

Proposals for development away from learning and non-residential institutions which provide facilities for wider community use, will not be supported unless suitable alternative provision exists or unless the facility is no longer required following a period of marketing for at least 9 months. The sites below provide important local community uses in Wool Parish.

- a) The D'Urberville Centre, Colliers Lane, Wool
- b) Wool playing field and skate park, Colliers Lane, Wool
- c) Kids of Wool, Colliers Lane, Wool
- d) Play area, Meadow Lane, Wool
- e) Play area, Purbeck Gate, Wool
- f) Play area, Burton Road, Wool
- g) East Burton Village Hall, Burton Road, East Burton
- h) Bovington Community Hall, King George V Road, Bovington
- i) Play area, Elles Road, Bovington
- j) Play area, Swinton Avenue, Bovington
- k) Skatepark and MUGA, Swinton Avenue, Bovington
- l) Bovington Store, King George V Road, Bovington
- m) Spar, High Street, Wool
- n) Central Store, Dorchester Road, Wool
- o) Wool Primary, Lulworth Road, Wool
- p) Bovington Academy, Bovington

Grocery Shops

Applications for prior approval of Class MA development involving changes of use away from local shops should carefully consider impacts on the Wool Conservation Area, highways impacts and on the local services within the Neighbourhood Area.

Where it is contended that there is no demand for a local shop to remain in this use, this should be supported by evidence of marketing over a period of at least 9 months, commencing with written notice provided to Wool Parish Council and Dorset Council.

Subject to clear evidence on a lack of demand, applications for change of use from grocery shops within Class F2 Local Community Use, where that use is a local shop smaller than 280 square metres, should not normally be permitted if it would result in a loss of provision that could not be met by another local shop within 1000m.

Applications for development to improve existing shops will be supported in principle.

New residential development within the Neighbourhood Area on sites larger than 1 hectare should be planned to promote walkable neighbourhoods and active travel. Local grocery shops should exist or be provided within 800 metres of the whole of the development.

#### WOOL 9 – Priorities for new community infrastructure and services for Wool Parish

Proposals for major development should consider the impacts from development on community infrastructure and services in the parish and incorporate proposals to ensure these are maintained and where relevant, expanded. Proposals which make contributions (through S106 Contributions or through unilateral undertakings, as appropriate) to secure the priority improvements to community infrastructure listed below will be supported:

- a) The creation of a play area near Cologne Road
- b) Improvements to the D'Urberville Centre including extra bookable space, improved accessibility, car park improvements, a drainage capacity increase, extra library space, enclosing the veranda and external public toilets.
- c) Extended storage and parking at East Burton Village Hall
- d) A heating system for the Kids of Wool building.
- e) The creation of dedicated football pitches and changing facilities as an alternative to Wool playing fields. This could include athletics running track.
- f) The creation of a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) on Wool playing field.