



Somerset
Wildlife Trust

**BURNHAM &
HIGHBRIDGE
GREEN
TEAM**

Climate Adaptation Plan

Funded by



**BURNHAM-ON-
SEA &
HIGHBRIDGE
2025**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The climate emergency poses many threats to Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. Sea levels are rising and winters are becoming warmer and wetter, increasing flooding risks. Hotter and drier summers are increasing the risk of droughts, heatwaves and wildfires.

Adapting to these changes is urgent and essential to reduce the impacts on buildings, green spaces and the daily life of Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge's residents.

Through collaborative events, residents have identified four key priorities for how Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge should adapt to the changing climate:

-  **Improving and increasing green spaces**
-  **Matching climate adaptation projects with funding**
-  **Sharing knowledge on climate adaptation**
-  **Linking climate risks to local policies**

This plan:

- reflects the priorities of the community.
- outlines adaptation actions under each priority.
- gives guidance on taking action.
- highlights the co-benefits of taking action on each priority, such as supporting health and wellbeing or providing habitat for wildlife.



Explore this plan to discover the actions you and your community can take to adapt to climate change. Your support and contributions will be vital to ensure we can build a better adapted, resilient and connected future for Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.

To find out how you can get involved, contact Burnham and Highbridge Green Team: burnhamandhighbridgegreenteam@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

Since October 2023, Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council and Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) have been working together to address the following challenge:

"How can we help Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge adapt to climate change?"

The impacts of the climate emergency are already unfolding. Sea levels are rising, and flooding, extreme heat, droughts and wildfires are all more likely to occur in Somerset. Thankfully, there are many ways that communities can act together to be better prepared for the changes and build a positive future where people and nature can thrive.



SWT has been raising awareness of adaptation and encouraging communities across the county to develop plans. In a unique collaboration with the Town Council, we started developing a locally tailored Climate Adaptation Plan for Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.



Beginning with Climate Adaptation workshops at the Morland Community Hub and Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council, the [Act to Adapt](#) process has brought together residents, community groups, town councillors and SWT's [Climate Adaptation Team](#) to:

- Talk about Somerset's climate change projections.
- Discuss the need for adaptation in Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.
- Co-create a bespoke Climate Adaptation Plan, using the [Climate Adaptation Toolkit](#).

This plan shares the key priorities and strategies chosen by Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge residents, and offers advice on how to make these actions happen. We have also highlighted the adaptation benefits of taking action on each priority, as well as additional 'co-benefits', to demonstrate how they can support the towns in becoming better adapted and resilient to our changing climate.

Shaping Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge's Plan

Following our initial events, we compiled participants' suggested adaptation priorities and actions, and turned these into a Draft Climate Adaptation Plan for Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge. To ensure that the plan better reflects the needs and priorities of the community, we organised a consultation period to gather feedback from more residents on the existing adaptation ideas.



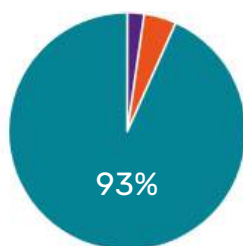
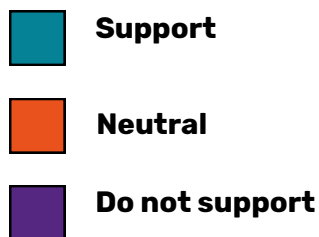
In May 2024, we held two in-person sessions where residents could learn more about climate adaptation, read the draft plan, and help shape the full plan by completing a survey and sharing their ideas. For those unable to attend these events, we also created an online survey.



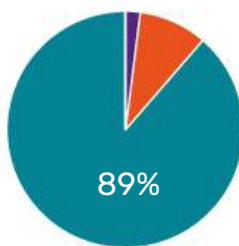
Survey respondents reported which of the adaptation priority areas they felt were most important for Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge. In order from most to least important, these were:

1. Improving and increasing green spaces
2. Matching climate adaptation projects with funding
3. Sharing knowledge on climate adaptation
4. Linking climate risks to local policies

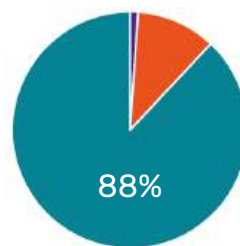
180 respondents also provided feedback on how strongly they **support** each priority:



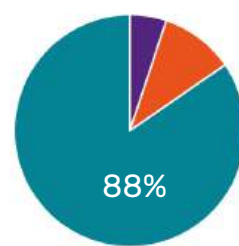
Green spaces



Funding



Sharing knowledge



Local policies

Feedback from consultations has been implemented throughout the 'How' sections in strategies. See Appendix I for more information about consultation responses.

To ensure this plan stays flexible and best serves Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge, residents should have regular opportunities to suggest additions, changes and improvements.

1. IMPROVING AND INCREASING GREEN SPACES



Actions to improve and increase green spaces across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



1.1 - Audit local green spaces



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge	2025/ 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Burnham and Highbridge Green Team in partnership with the Town Council• Somerset Council - Clean Surroundings Service

Why:

By auditing local green spaces, areas requiring monitoring or attention can be identified. This process can discover areas of low climate resilience and/or biodiversity, therefore showing where adaptation actions are best suited. Auditing is also useful to select areas most appropriate for sustainable development.

How:

Identify all local green spaces: Create a list and map of all green spaces within Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. Establish who owns and/or is responsible for managing each green space. Identify potential 'dead spaces', such as concreted traffic islands, that could be removed for proper drainage/wildflower refuges.

Review opportunities for adaptation: In collaboration with land owners/managers, the Clean Surroundings Service, local residents and interested parties, consider the opportunities to implement adaptations in each green space.

Example actions might include:

- tree planting - such as higher areas and willow rhines.
- pond creation - e.g., look at historic maps to restore lost aquatic habitats.
- drought-adapted planting schemes

Consider using resources like the [Climate Adaptation Toolkit](#) and other online sources for inspiration, and talking to ecologists/conservationists about how actions can support both adaptation and wildlife.

Agree and assign adaptation actions: With collaborators, decide a priority list of actions to take in each green space, who will take responsibility, who will be involved in the work, and a timeline for implementation.

Increase awareness of green spaces: Once green spaces are audited, make the information available to the public. Through regular website and social media updates, residents can learn what green spaces are vulnerable to climate change and what is being done.



Useful links:

1. [Parks and play areas | Somerset Council](#)
2. [Parks and green spaces near me | Fields in Trust](#)
3. [Council owned/maintained parks in Sedgemoor area | Somerset Council](#)



1.2 - Investigate taking responsibility for green space management



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green spaces currently owned/managed by Somerset Council 	<p>2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burnham and Highbridge Green Team Appropriate Town Council officers Somerset Council “Friends of” groups Volunteers Holiday park managers

Why:

With community management, a sense of ownership can be promoted across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. Collective management can help to boost biodiversity and climate resilience, as well as boost wellbeing. Maintenance of green spaces can also keep spaces clean and tidy, therefore being more attractive to the community.

How:

Identify or establish groups capable of managing green spaces: Use the results of the green space audit (action 1.1) to identify Somerset Council-owned land that could be locally managed for climate and nature. Identify or establish local groups that are willing and able to take on management/ownership of green spaces.

Organise a meeting with Somerset Council: Arrange a meeting with Somerset Council's Parks and Open Spaces Service Team to discuss future ownership/management of green spaces, and whether they would be interested in handing over responsibility to local groups. Make and sign written agreements to confirm any change in ownership/management responsibility.

Review adaptation opportunities: Where successful transfer of ownership/management occurs, hold a planning session with the new management group to review opportunities to take climate adaptation actions. Use the green spaces audit to check previous suggestions and amend plans as necessary for the green space.



Useful links:

1. [Climate Adaptation Toolkit | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)
2. [What are 'Friends of' groups? | TCV](#)
3. [How to set up and maintain a community group for your local park or green space | Parks Community UK](#)

1.3 - Make green spaces more climate-adapted and nature-friendly



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Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge 	<p>2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • Grounds Team • Growing Group • Better BoS • Our Highbridge • Volunteers

Why:

Increased rainfall and strong winds were identified by the community as issues to Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. By making green spaces more climate-adapted, the community can be better protected against the intensifying climate impacts.

How:

Create a new plan/strategy for green space management: Meet with the Council's Grounds Team/contractors, local groups and volunteers to discuss how to manage local green spaces in the future. Consider moving to a longer-term, more sustainable approach that is better adapted and more resilient to our changing climate. Include a focus on enabling the community to benefit more from local green spaces.

Consider including actions already suggested by local residents:

- Micro forests
- Herbaceous perennial borders (rather than short-lived annual displays)
- Selecting native and resilient plant species suitable for local conditions
- Reducing mowing of grass/leaving areas to grow longer
- Planting fruit and nut trees and finding other opportunities to grow food

Develop a timeline for implementation: Discuss which actions can be taken when with the Grounds Team/contractors and other concerned parties. Plot these against a shared timeline to guide implementation.



Useful links:

1. [Micro forests | Scotscape](#)
2. [Drought-resistant plants | RHS Gardening](#)
3. [Tree planting advice - Plant Trees | Woodland Trust](#)
4. [The Wildlife Trusts and RHS call on gardeners to bring their lawns to life | The Wildlife Trusts](#)
5. [Managing and caring for trees | Tree Council](#)
6. [What does a resilient orchard look like? | The Orchard Project](#)

1.4 - Increase tree coverage and planters



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public green spaces • Housing associations properties • Market street • Along streets • The esplanade • Top of Pier St. • Bus parking areas. • Car parks, e.g., Highbridge bank street car park. • Schools 	<p style="text-align: center;">2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • National Highways • Somerset Council Tree Officers • Housing associations “community connectors”: Homes in Sedgemoor, LiveWest, etc. • Better BoS • Highbridge regeneration group • Burnham and Berrow Golf Club • Woodland Trust • Holiday park managers

How:

Identify suitable locations: Use the green space audit and organise discussions with residents and other stakeholders about where more trees could be planted and what species should be chosen. Work with green space owners/managers to discuss practicalities and needs. Contact Somerset Council's Tree Officers to discuss links with Somerset's Tree Strategy. An example includes greening of the esplanade with flowerbed areas, e.g., along sea wall.

Identify funding and resources needed: Discuss how much money/support will be needed for tree planting projects. Discuss whether funding is available from the Town Council, via Somerset Council's Tree Officers and the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, or through grant applications (see "Useful links").

Choose suitable varieties: When selecting trees, choose species that meet the wants and needs of your site, and consider varieties that are better adapted to our changing climate. Consider planting fruit and nut trees (where suitable) to provide additional community benefits.

Encourage businesses to add trees and planters to their shop fronts: Share information with local companies about the multiple benefits that trees and planters could bring, including to business (i.e. people spending more time in shops on tree-lined streets).

Organise planting: Arrange planting days at suitable times of the year, encouraging the community to get involved. This could be done in collaboration with groups like Our Highbridge and Better BoS.

Consider requirements for street trees: Investigate using "tree pits" to enable planting whilst minimising impact on other infrastructure.

Enhance wildlife: Involve the community and increase biodiversity by planting wildflower beds and bug hotels.



Useful links:

1. [Free trees for schools and communities | Woodland Trust](#)
2. [Drought-resistant plants | RHS Gardening](#)
3. [The right tree for your street | Trees for Streets](#)
4. [A guide to planting street trees | City of Trees](#)
5. [Managing and caring for trees | Tree Council](#)
6. [Guide to young tree establishment | Arboricultural Association](#)

1.5 - Create competitions to encourage climate-adapted gardening



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Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge 	<p>2025/2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Growing Group • Burnham-on-Sea & District In Bloom • South West In Bloom • Homes in Sedgemoor • Somerset Wildlife Trust – advice on climate adaptation options

Why:

By encouraging climate-adapted gardening, participants can learn about climate-resilient plants and be more aware of adaptation. This form of gardening can promote educational opportunities for residents to learn more on climate adaptation.

How:

Organise meetings with key stakeholders: Arrange meetings with Burnham-on-Sea & District In Bloom and Homes in Sedgemoor to discuss including a “climate adapted garden” category in their competitions.

Make the case for including a “climate adapted” category: Explain the benefits of making gardens climate adapted, such as providing habitat for wildlife, needing less watering during hot summers, providing shade and other health benefits, etc. Suggest actions that could be included in the marking criteria for the category.

These could include:

- Green roofs and walls
- Rain gardens
- Ponds
- Drought-adapted planting
- Use of water butts/rainwater storage
- Trees for shade
- Removing paving stones to replace with planting

Share examples of similar competitions: South and Southeast In Bloom run an Environmental Challenge. Areas in the Netherlands have a ‘Tile Whipping’ competition to remove hard paving and encourage plant growth in their place.



Useful links:

1. [RHS gardening in a changing climate report](#) | RHS Gardening
2. [Key plants for a climate change garden](#) | BBC Gardeners World Magazine
3. [Building a climate-resilient garden](#) | Ox Magazine
4. [Down to earth advice for growing a resilient garden](#) | Climate Change Garden
5. [Building a resilient garden for a changing climate](#) | RHS Gardening
6. [RHS discretionary awards](#) | RHS Gardening
7. [Dutch ‘tile whipping’ contest seeking to restore greenery](#) | The Guardian
8. [Environmental challenge 2021 form](#) | South and South East In Bloom



2. MATCHING CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROJECTS WITH FUNDING

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Working to match climate adaptation projects across the towns with appropriate funding sources could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



2.1 - Prioritise adaptation projects to fund



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional adaptations identified during workshops • River Brue 	<p style="text-align: center;">2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • Potential funding sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Developers ◦ Hinkley Point C – small grants fund ◦ Somerset Community Foundation ◦ Corporate sponsorships/ partnerships ◦ RHS Connected Communities and Sustainable Futures Grants

How:

Explore priorities identified in the workshop:

- SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)
- Create wetland areas adjoining Forge Rhyne
- Build/create a new park, akin to Apex Park
- Install solar paving/parking bays

Also investigate the installation of a small-scale (0.5-5.0 Megawatt) Tidal Power Mill on the River Brue and Green Wedmore as a local community power generation project.

Hold a meeting to discuss priority actions: Invite representatives of stakeholders (such as Better BoS and Our Highbridge) to a meeting. Discuss which community-identified priority actions should be delivered, and when. Consider linking with external groups, like Wellington and Taunton Transition Towns and Green Wedmore, to discuss actions they have successfully taken, and how they achieved them.

Hold further public consultations: To discover the opinions of residents, discuss with locals on their thoughts on upcoming projects, therefore promoting inclusiveness and transparency. For example, potential projects suggested across the Act to Adapt consultations include:

- Protecting the dunes
- Maintaining drainage systems
- Inputting a solar car park



Useful links:

1. [Transition network | Transition Towns](#)
2. [How to write a charity grant application | Charities Aid Foundation](#)
3. [Businesses - how they can help you \(and how you can help them\) | The Nextdoor Nature Hub](#)

2.2 - Identify funding streams



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use adaptation actions identified in plan and section 2.1 	<p>2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Council Planning Committee Somerset Council Planning Office Burnham and Highbridge Green Team Local residents Developers Contractors

How:

Identify suitable funding opportunities: Discuss potential funding sources and identify which match each priority action best. Potential funding sources identified through the Act to Adapt process include:

- Developers
- Community Infrastructure Levies
- Hinkley Point C's "Small Grants"
- Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) have a Community Flood Action Fund (CFAF) available to small-scale projects up to £20,000.
- Somerset Community Foundation
- Corporate sponsorships/partnerships - suggestions include: Supermarkets; Isleport Business Park; Wessex Water; Sanders Garden Centre; Yeo Valley; Gravity
- RHS Connected Communities and Sustainable Future Grants - currently allocated, but look out for any future opportunities
- Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) for health & wellbeing projects

Decide which grants to apply for and/or businesses to approach. Decide who will be responsible for writing applications and for contacting potential funders. Monitor progress at regular meetings.

Carry out projects as funds become available: Start carrying out projects as funding becomes available. Measure the benefits of completed projects in terms of climate adaptation and other community benefits.



Useful links:

1. [Health and wellbeing funding | Somerset Association of Local Councils \(SALC\)](#)
2. [Grants & funding | Somerset Community Foundation](#)
3. [Community infrastructure levy | Somerset Council](#)
4. [Grant programme | Sustainable Future Foundation](#)
5. [Community flood action fund | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)

3. SHARING KNOWLEDGE ON CLIMATE ADAPTATION



Sharing more knowledge of climate change, adaptation and nature-based solutions across the towns could provide the following adaptation benefits and co-benefits to the local community:



3.1 - Publicise the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team



Where:	When:	Who:
<p>In-person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive posters and leaflets in local shops and community spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cafes ◦ Library ◦ Town hall ◦ Churches ◦ Pubs • Green articles for local newspapers, i.e. Somerset Gazette • Displays and interactive resources for local events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ June Eco festival ◦ Burnham Book festival • Local radio programmes <p>On-line:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town council website • Social media: i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn • burnham-on-sea.com • Our Highbridge • Interactive climate adaptation websites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ WeAdapt 	<p>2025- onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers

How:

In-person:

- **Create attractive posters and leaflets:** To clearly communicate the group's mission and activities, distribute posters and leaflets in high-traffic areas, such as local shops and community spaces, to reach a broad audience.
- **Green articles for local newspapers:** Write compelling articles about the group's work and its impact on the local environment.
- **Displays and interactive resources for local events:** Participate in local events like the June Eco Festival and the Burnham Book Festival. Create engaging displays and interactive resources that educate attendees about the group's work and how they can participate.
- **Local radio programmes:** Partner with local radio stations to host a programme or segment about the group. This could include interviews with group members, discussions about projects and information on how listeners can get involved.
- **Support from Town Council officers:** Seek support from appropriate Town Council officers. They can help publicise the group's work through official channels and provide valuable advice and resources.

Online:

- **Burnham-on-sea.com and Town Council website:** Post detailed information about the group's work on these sites. This could include updates on current projects, upcoming events, and opportunities for community members to get involved.
- **Social media:** Use platforms like Facebook (burnham-on-sea.com, Our Highbridge), Instagram, and LinkedIn to reach a wider audience. Post regular updates, share photos from events, and engage with followers.
- **Interactive climate adaptation websites:** Link in with interactive websites that provide information about climate adaptation and case studies for projects.
- **List the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team on the 'Team Wilder' map:** This can help raise awareness of the group among people interested in environmental initiatives.



Useful links:

1. [The power of in-person marketing: why it still matters | Inkbot Design](#)
2. [Unlocking the power of in-person marketing | ChatableApps](#)
3. [8 ideas for promoting your online community | Social Media Today](#)
4. [Team Wilder Map | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)

3.2 - Create and share climate messages



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See section 3.1 	<p>When paid position is in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burnham and Highbridge Green Team Appropriate Town Council officers Local community BBC Radio Somerset U3A Somerset Arts council Surfer against Sewage Relevant experts, such as SRA Communities Team

How:

Identify key local issues: Start by identifying the key environmental and climate-related issues in your local area, with a focus on making information locally relevant. Community members have expressed interest in understanding specific local impacts and changes to local wildlife populations. Making these connections helps make climate issues more tangible and personal for residents.

Plan your communications approach: Create positive, solution-focused messages delivered through:

- Digital - Dedicated Facebook page (like 'Green Wedmore'), BOS.com
- Traditional - Local TV documentaries, newsletters, radio
- Face-to-face - Town halls, festival stalls, business meetings
- Partner networks - Local charities, environmental groups, community organisations
- Physical resources - To share in community spaces, including pubs, cafes, cinemas, schools, social clubs and tourist centres ensuring wide reach across different comfort levels with technology.

Create practical guides and resources: Develop clear, actionable information focusing on:

- Local examples - How Apex Park manages flooding, changes to wildlife
- Home improvements - Energy efficiency tips, retrofitting guidance
- Community projects - Local energy schemes, group initiatives
- Monthly actions - Simple steps residents can take
- Family engagement - Activities and guides that involve children

Make all materials available in multiple formats (print, digital, face-to-face) with the focus throughout should be on empowering positive change through practical, accessible steps that connect with local experiences.

Training sessions on effective communication techniques: Organise diverse training opportunities that empower community members to become climate communicators themselves. Create workshops focusing on how to discuss climate change positively with friends and family, by emphasising practical benefits like saving money through energy efficiency and enjoying local nature. Develop sessions that train community champions to lead constructive conversations in their neighbourhoods, providing them with practical communication tools and resources to share.



Useful links:

1. [Communicating on climate change | United Nations](#)
2. [Climate communication: 10 research-backed tips | Harvard](#)
3. [Let's talk climate change: four tips for communicating about it | ODI](#)
4. [10 ways to make marketing leaflets relevant | B&B Press](#)
5. [5 ways to create leaflets and flyers with impact | LinkedIn](#)

3.3 - Organise climate-focused events



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team meeting • Organising local eco-events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Eco markets ◦ Climate cafés ◦ Eco-film screenings ◦ Community clean-ups ◦ Climate art and music festivals 	<p>2025-2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • Communication professionals • Community leaders

How:

Possible events identified during workshop:

- **Eco markets:** For selling eco-friendly products or services, from organic food to artisanal products using recycled materials. This can support local businesses and promote sustainable consumer habits.
- **Climate cafés:** Informal gatherings where people can discuss climate issues over a cup of coffee. The goal is to create a safe, welcoming space for people to learn, share their concerns, and explore solutions.
- **Environmental screenings:** Show films and documentaries with follow-up discussions or guest speakers to deepen understanding of environmental issues.
- **Community clean-ups:** Organise clean-ups of local parks, beaches, and streets.
- **Community events:** Art and music festivals featuring climate-themed exhibitions and eco-friendly workshops.
- **Library engagement:** Create recycling awareness activities, swap meets, and educational programmes through local libraries, specifically designed for children and families.
- **Historical learning:** Educational sessions about Burnham-on-Sea's changing landscape and coastal history, utilising local knowledge.
- **Inclusive outreach:** Host gatherings at churches, supermarkets, and Highbridge Hall to collect community knowledge, with specific programmes for older residents to ensure climate education reaches all ages.
- **Cross-community engagement:** Connect groups from Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge, including schools, for knowledge sharing while ensuring sessions are accessible to working professionals, students, and community members.



Interactive learning experiences: Incorporate interactive activities that allow participants to practise newly acquired skills in a safe, supportive environment.

Accessibility and scheduling: Schedule regular training sessions at convenient times and locations, ensuring they are accessible to a wide range of participants, including working professionals, students, and community members.

Feedback and improvement: Collect feedback from participants after each training session and use it to continuously improve the content, delivery, and overall effectiveness of future workshops.



Useful links:

1. [Climate conversations: how do we know if they make a difference? | Larger us](#)
2. [Climate change public conversation series | Climate Outreach](#)
3. [Breaking the climate spiral of silence: lessons from a COP26 climate conversations campaign | Climatic Change](#)

3.4 - Run annual eco festivals and green energy summits



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apex Park • Town Hall 	<p>2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • Community organisations • Environmental charities, i.e. Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT), Burnham and Weston Energy, RSPB, WWT etc.

How:

Organise eco-friendly events: Plan and carry out annual events such as Eco Festivals and Green Energy Summits. These events can showcase local eco-friendly businesses, provide educational workshops, and offer networking opportunities for attendees.

Engage local businesses and organisations: Collaborate with local businesses and organisations that are invested in eco-friendly practices. They can participate in the events as sponsors, exhibitors, or speakers. This not only provides them with a platform to share their work but also enriches the event with diverse perspectives.

Promote through various channels: Promote events using a multi-channel approach. This could include social media, local news outlets, newsletters, and word of mouth. The goal is to reach as many people as possible and encourage community participation.

Partner with community organisations: Work with community organisations to broaden your reach and impact. These organisations can help promote the event, recruit volunteers, and provide local context and connections.

Collaborate with environmental charities: Partner with environmental charities such as SWT, Burnham and Weston Energy, RSPB, WWT, etc. that could contribute in various ways, from providing expert speakers to helping with event promotion.



Useful links:

1. [How to organise a green eco sustainability fair | The Real Meal Deal](#)
2. [Green festivals and events guide | The Icaris Foundation](#)
3. [How to plan a green event: our ultimate guide! | First Event](#)
4. [Tips to run your sustainable event | Friends House](#)

3.5 - Work with schools to educate and inspire climate action

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Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge 	<p>2025 onwards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • King Alfred’s Eco Group • S.O.S schools • School representatives • Environmental educators • Community organisations • Somerset Youth Theatre

How:

School visits, workshops, and events: Plan and carry out educational visits and workshops at local schools. These activities provide hands-on learning experiences and inspire climate action. Focus on positive, solution-oriented messaging, particularly for primary schools.

Blue Influencers and Wilder Schools: Encourage schools to become 'Blue Influencers' and 'Wilder Schools'. This involves promoting sustainable practices within the school community and integrating environmental education into the curriculum.

Partnerships with schools: Establish partnerships with local schools to develop educational materials and programmes. These resources help teachers incorporate climate education into their lessons and inspire action. Support practical initiatives like pre-used uniform stalls, which demonstrate how families can minimise waste and contribute to environmental protection.

Student involvement in planning: Actively involve students in their school's climate and adaptation planning through workshops and consultations. Create opportunities for intergenerational learning.

Community engagement: Promote the schools to showcase their work to reach the wider community through libraries, churches, tourist information centres and local venues like pubs and cinemas.

Somerset Youth Theatre: Collaborate with Somerset Youth Theatre to engage children with the climate emergency in creative ways. This could involve creating performances that explore climate issues or running drama workshops that encourage students to express their thoughts about the environment.

Local group involvement: Work with community groups to get children engaged with climate initiatives. This multi-faceted approach ensures that environmental education reaches young people through various channels. Support local interaction through multiple venues and encourage younger people to be actively involved in their community's environmental efforts.



Useful links:

1. [Exploring climate action in the classroom | British Council](#)
2. [Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems | Government website](#)
3. [Education is key to addressing climate change | United Nations](#)
4. [Organisations that can help you take action | Let's Go Zero](#)
5. [Get inspired: schools responding to the climate change challenge | Government website](#)
6. [Schools climate action planner | Transform Our World](#)

3.6 - Set up an Eco Centre to support residents with sustainable living



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated space • Online platform 	<p>By 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Sustainability experts • Appropriate Town Council officers • Community leaders • Community organisations • Burnham & Weston Energy

How:

Establishing an Eco Centre: Create an Eco Centre as a hub for all sustainability-related activities. This centre could serve as a resource and information point for residents interested in sustainable living. It could house various exhibits and demonstrations on eco-friendly practices and technologies.

Conducting household visits and eco assessments: Build on Burnham & Weston Energy energy audits and retrofitting advice, a programme where trained staff or volunteers offer household visits to conduct eco assessments. These assessments can calculate the household's current environmental impact and provide recommendations for improvement. This could include tips on energy efficiency, waste reduction, water conservation, and more.

Working with key stakeholders: Collaborate closely with various stakeholders to ensure the success of the Eco Centre. Each stakeholder can bring unique expertise and perspectives that can greatly contribute to the project.

Partnering with Burnham & Weston Energy: Leverage the existing efforts of Burnham & Weston Energy, who are already conducting energy audits and retrofitting help. Explore opportunities for collaboration, such as joint workshops or referral programs.

Promoting sustainable living: Beyond the direct services offered, the Eco Centre could also actively promote sustainable living. This could be through regular events, workshops, and campaigns. The Eco Centre could also help foster a strong culture of sustainability in the community. Introduce local incentives to encourage developments in line with the Climate Adaptation Plan.

Continuous improvement: Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the Eco Centre and its programmes. Collect feedback from residents and use it to continuously improve. Stay updated with the latest sustainability practices and technologies, ensuring that the Eco Centre remains a relevant and valuable resource for the community.



Useful links:

1. [Five tips for living more sustainably](#) | [UN Environment Programme](#)
2. [10 tips for encouraging sustainability your community](#) | [Sustainable Living Association](#)
3. [9 ways to be more sustainable at home](#) | [One Tree Planted](#)
4. [How can we inspire others to go green?](#) | [Play it Green](#)

4. LINKING CLIMATE RISKS TO LOCAL POLICIES



Working to link climate risks to local policies and planning structures, using the following actions, could provide Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge with these adaptation benefits and co-benefits:

Enhance community resilience

Support economic growth

Reduce climate risks

Foster stakeholder engagement

Support local innovation

Promote public health



Enable informed decisions

Amplify advocacy efforts

4.1 - Work with experts to identify climate vulnerabilities and knowledge gaps



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham-on-Sea • Highbridge 	<p>2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Appropriate Town Council officers • Somerset Council • Environment Agency (EA) • Bristol Water • Wessex Water • Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)

How:

Linking climate risks to local policies: Organise a meeting with the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team to conduct a comprehensive risk gap analysis, with local agencies contributing their expertise.

The EA's upcoming update to its modelling and Shoreline Management Plan in the next 2-3 years provides a crucial opportunity to strengthen local environmental policies.

Setting up a talk between the EA and Burnham and Highbridge Green Team: The planned meeting between the EA, Town Council and Burnham and Highbridge Green Team could focus on creating actionable strategies for environmental protection. Key discussion points should include the preservation of flood plains, protection of existing farmland, and maintenance of open spaces. Tree preservation and green space requirements should be central to these discussions, ensuring that environmental considerations are built into all future development plans.

Working with key stakeholders: A coordinated approach involving the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team, Somerset Council, EA, Bristol Water, Wessex Water, and the SRA is essential. These organisations should work together to develop comprehensive environmental strategies, combining their expertise in water management, environmental protection, and urban planning.

Acknowledging and addressing gaps in knowledge and action: While acknowledging that gaps in understanding complex climate issues will always exist, the focus should be on taking decisive action while continuing to learn and adapt. This means implementing planning controls and protecting natural areas. The strategy should include regular monitoring of environmental impacts, with clear mechanisms for updating policies as new information becomes available.

Community policy recommendations: During the consultations, the suggested policies included mandatory parks and green spaces for every 100 new houses built, creating sustainable developments that balance development with environmental needs, prohibiting development on flood plains, and utilising existing empty structures before considering any green field development.



Useful links:

1. [Shoreline management plan | Environment Agency](#)
2. [National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England | Environment Agency](#)
3. [Somerset's climate emergency strategy | Somerset Council](#)
4. [Somerset's 20-year flood action plan | Somerset Rivers Authority](#)
5. [Drought plan | Bristol Water](#)
6. [Drought plan | Wessex Water](#)
7. [Drainage and wastewater management plan | Wessex Water](#)

4.2 - Create flood and drought risk plans for the towns



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham-on-Sea • Highbridge 	<p>2025 - 2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham and Highbridge Green Team • Environment Agency (EA) • Bristol Water • Wessex Water • SRA Communities Team • Somerset Council • Community organisations • Appropriate Town Council officers

How:

Reviewing and assessing existing plans: Start by reviewing the existing flood and drought risk plans from SRA, EA, Bristol Water and Wessex Water. Assess whether these plans are fit for purpose in Burnham and Highbridge. Ensure these plans reflect the latest climate predictions and include specific details about local infrastructure vulnerabilities, drainage capacities, and historical flooding patterns.

Promoting individual preparedness: Individual flood preparedness plans should be promoted among residents. This could involve education about the risks, providing guidance on how to prepare homes, and informing about the steps to take during a flood event. These actions will help to minimise the impact of floods. Create a comprehensive public awareness campaign, including workshops, door-to-door information packs, and dedicated social media channels to keep residents informed and prepared.

Conservation strategies and water restrictions: Develop and implement water conservation strategies. This could include promoting water-efficient appliances, encouraging rainwater harvesting, and implementing landscape practices that reduce water usage. Establish a clear framework for implementing graduated water restrictions based on severity levels, partner with schools for educational programmes, and provide incentives for households installing water-saving devices or rain gardens.



Useful links:

1. [Somerset Prepared](#)
2. [Preparing for emergencies | Somerset Council](#)
3. [Prepare for flooding | Government website](#)
4. [Communities Prepared](#)
5. [How to conserve water | The Wildlife Trust](#)
6. [Save Water | Waterwise](#)
7. [Check for flooding | Government website](#)

4.3 - Collaborate with others to advocate for climate-adapted planning policies



Where:	When:	Who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnham-on-Sea • Highbridge • Local Community Network (LCN) 	<p>2025 - 2028</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineers, consultants • Appropriate Town Council officers • Somerset Council • Residents • Planning groups • Environmental groups • Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge climate adaptation planning response group • Members of the Town Council Planning Committee • Somerset CAN • Local planning departments • Developers • LCNs • Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC)

How:

Advocacy and campaign planning: Develop a comprehensive plan for how to advocate and campaign for better infrastructure planning. This plan should outline key messages, target audiences, communication channels, and desired outcomes. Ensure active engagement with local councils, MPs, and town boards to keep climate concerns at the forefront of decision-making.

Training and capacity building: Organise training on writing public comments to planning applications. This will empower community members to actively participate in the planning process. Foster community-led action and inclusion, particularly amplifying the voices of children and young people.

Policy advocacy: Refer to strong climate action recommendations from the Local and Neighbourhood Plans when responding to planning applications. Campaign for policies that give default refusal when certain climate adaptation criteria are not met. Advocate for all developments to have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) schemes and for the enforcement of current rules. Ensure policies are realistic and reflect community needs.

Community networking: Bring issues to the LCN and other relevant platforms to garner wider support and influence. Collaborate with other climate adaptation-planning response groups, Somerset CAN, local planning departments, and SALC to amplify advocacy efforts. Work to secure fair funding allocation and representation on local councils.

Stakeholder assessment and engagement: Identify and assess the stakeholders and prospective stakeholders involved in planning issues. This includes engineers, consultants, Town Council members, residents, planning groups, environmental groups, and developers. Network with relevant organisations, organise meetings, invite stakeholders, and facilitate discussions to ensure their input and buy-in. Push for climate data to underpin all planning and investment decisions.



Useful links:

1. [How to respond to planning applications: an 8-step guide | Campaign to Protect Rural England](#)
2. [Influencing the planning process \(England\) | Commons Library](#)
3. [Information requirements for planning applications | Somerset Council](#)

CONCLUSION

This plan shares the community’s priority actions for helping Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge thrive through our changing climate. Some can happen quickly, like planting trees, to give an instant adaption boost. Other actions, such as advocating for climate-adapted planning policies, are longer-term projects that will significantly enhance the towns’ adaptation and preparedness.

Every action in this plan will also bring many other benefits to Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. These “co-benefits” include:

- improving community health and wellbeing
- making space for wildlife
- mitigating climate change



By working on these actions together, you can also strengthen community links, which is vital for making the towns well-adapted and resilient.



Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge’s Climate Adaptation Plan should be seen as a living document, at the starting point of a wider process. The plan should:

- be reviewed regularly
- be updated as needed
- reflect the changing climate and the changing priorities and needs of the community

By staying flexible, and continuing to listen to Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge’s residents, the plan can best guide the community in adapting to climate change.

Now it is time to act! To find out more about how you can get involved in implementing this plan, contact the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team at: burnhamandhighbridgegreenteam@gmail.com

NEXT STEPS

Through our “Shaping a Plan for Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge” events and online survey, we have gathered more ideas and feedback on how you think your town can better adapt to climate change.

We want to make sure this plan reflects your priorities for your community!

We have compiled your feedback it into a “final, living” Climate Adaptation Plan for Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.

We aim to launch the plan in early 2025, where local people can come together to discuss how they would like to take climate action. This will make the community better adapted than before and encourage more sustainable action across Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge.



Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas to create such a positive and ambitious Climate Adaptation Plan for Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge. In addition to the many community members who shaped this plan, we would like to thank Mayor Cllr Lesley Millard, the Town Council and the Burnham and Highbridge Green Team for their work to develop Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge’s Climate Adaptation Plan.

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Disclaimer

The links provided in this document are intended to serve as information and advice, and do not reflect a recommendation from Somerset Wildlife Trust, or our partners and funders, for particular companies, products or services.

Consultation responses to green spaces



Tree planting was emphasised during the consultation stage, with at least 20% of written responses focusing on growing more trees and plants. Trees, such as willow, can improve drainage, where the esplanade has been recognised as a key location for more trees. Another suggestion involves the consideration of new estates having to incorporate trees and hedges by law. As well as trees, enhanced wildflower populations were promoted for recreational areas and the seafront, therefore improving green spaces and supporting wildlife, e.g., the local bee population.

Community action has strong support, with a particular focus on involving schools and youth groups, including creating inclusive spaces for children with special educational needs (SEN) and adding more parks for children to play in. Families are also encouraged to contribute to the protection of green spaces, with suggestions such as promoting family beach cleans during the summer. For broader community engagement, there is strong support for finding land for public use, establishing community gardens and encouraging communities to adopt these spaces.



Maintaining clean spaces is a key priority. Suggestions include increasing the number of litter bins and designing attractive recycling bins for key areas, such as along the seafront to encourage waste disposal and recycling. Installing dog waste bag dispensers (with free paper bags) is also suggested to reduce dog mess, complemented by more signage to promote responsible pet ownership. With more bins to keep Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge litter-free, existing green spaces can be kept tidy.

Community feedback strongly supports prioritising green spaces over development, with a call for repurposing derelict buildings or turning them into green spaces. In particular, derelict concrete areas by the seafront could be greened. Many emphasise that housing should only be built on green spaces when absolutely necessary, with a preference for using brownfield sites or repurposing empty properties. Larger gardens in new builds are encouraged, as well as further partnerships with landowners and local authorities to create diverse green spaces.



Apex park was highlighted as a key area for protection. While there is strong support for increasing and improving green spaces, there are concerns. The maintenance of these spaces needs to be considered, as well as the additional resources and cost associated with adding accessible parking and toilet facilities to new spaces. Management can be addressed through improved communication and awareness of available green spaces in the area, where educating the community can boost the collaborative support required. One example includes creating a green spaces section for www.burnham-on-sea.com.

Consultation responses to adaptation funding



There is concern that more money is spent on administration than on direct action, and whether the community would be able to agree on set goals. If there were targets, it was questioned whether there would be enough funding to achieve them. Funding opportunities are the strongest concern, where some responses outlined how developers should take responsibility for creating green spaces and solar panels, rather than the community.

Several respondents emphasise the need for better organisation and communication around funding for climate projects. Identifying and highlighting specific projects before seeking funding could provide a clear focus for the community and help secure funding faster. A list of potential funding sources should be created and prioritised. It is then crucial to ensure that funding is secured before starting projects, with a call for linking groups and resources to enable more impactful funding applications. Funding from charities or local government is seen as essential for success.



Community involvement is seen as crucial, particularly having collaboration with local schools, eco-Teams, and community groups, along with updating residents and businesses. Increased involvement from the local council through initiatives and raising awareness is also seen as important. There is support to incorporate climate adaptation in the projects of local community interest companies (CICs), charities, and businesses. Suggestions include organising fundraisers, such as bake sales, and engaging the younger generation through climate-friendly activities, e.g., 'Walking Wednesday' which encourages walking/cycling to reduce fuel use.

New parks near built-up estates are suggested as beneficial for both well-being and community support. Improving climate adaptation projects could enhance public perception of spending and contribute positively to mental health. Respondents emphasised the importance of prioritising human needs as taxpayers contribute to the funding for wildlife projects. Adaptation efforts should also be tailored to local needs rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.



Suggested projects include protecting the dunes and creating new parks near built-up estates, which would benefit both the environment and people's well-being. There is also support for funding seeds instead of fully grown plants to encourage sustainable growth and the replenishing the sea wall. By identifying the funding stream and prioritising the specific projects, Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge can promote sustainable action!

Consultation responses to sharing knowledge



Education and spreading knowledge are seen as essential for encouraging community involvement and generating new ideas for climate projects. Further information suggested at the consultations include retrofitting homes and understanding the difference between climate and weather. There is support for local contextual information to be shared, educating people about the local threats posed by climate change. Keeping residents informed can benefit everyone, even more so if the information is memorable and engaging.

Consultation suggestions include using all available resources, such as social media platforms (e.g., Facebook), websites (i.e., BoS.com), and face-to-face meetings, recognising that not everyone in the community is comfortable with technology. Locals expressed a desire for a dedicated Facebook page for Burnham and Highbridge climate and environmental issues, similar to 'Green Wedmore,' as well as broader media outreach through local TV channels, documentaries, radio, and news coverage.



While many recognize the critical importance of awareness, there is concern about over-reliance on technology, as not everything should be communicated online. Face-to-face engagement remains important, especially for those less comfortable with digital platforms. It is also crucial that messages are delivered in a positive, inspiring way to encourage participation, rather than through fear or repetition that may lead to disengagement. Information boards in public areas, such as Apex Leisure Park, is one suggested example of offline engagement.

Locals expressed a desire for information on climate adaptation to be shared in a variety of community spaces such as the library, social clubs, cinemas, and theatres. The library in particular was highlighted as a key location for raising awareness, supporting activities like recycling, book swaps, and educational programs for children. Respondents also suggested utilizing local newsletters and newspapers, with climate adaptation as a regular topic. To gather more input and raise awareness, a suggestion included engaging adults through targeted group discussions and workshops.



In addition to adults, 22% of respondents on this priority wanted to see climate engagement with schools. Respondents felt that involving schools, nurseries, and community groups would be an excellent way to get children engaged and passionate about climate issues, creating a future generation that is proactive in addressing environmental challenges. Several respondents also highlighted the importance of integrating climate education into daily life, such as through school programs that minimize waste (e.g., pre-used uniform stalls) and discussions within families.

Consultation responses to local climate policies



Local residents expressed frustration over policies they believe are designed for political gain rather than genuine local benefit. Concerns include the influence of financial interests in policy-making, and the perception that climate issues are being exploited for political profit. It is important to note that effective climate adaptation policies benefit everyone by adapting to weather events, protecting ecosystems, and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Residents believe that effective policy decision-making requires community engagement and fair funding distribution. They emphasise the need for a representative on the local council to ensure that climate issues remain a priority for council members and MPs. There is also a call for all politicians to clearly outline their proposals and for government and councils to support necessary changes. Strengthening communication with local councils and ensuring that promises are fulfilled are also seen as crucial for advancing climate initiatives and receiving local support.



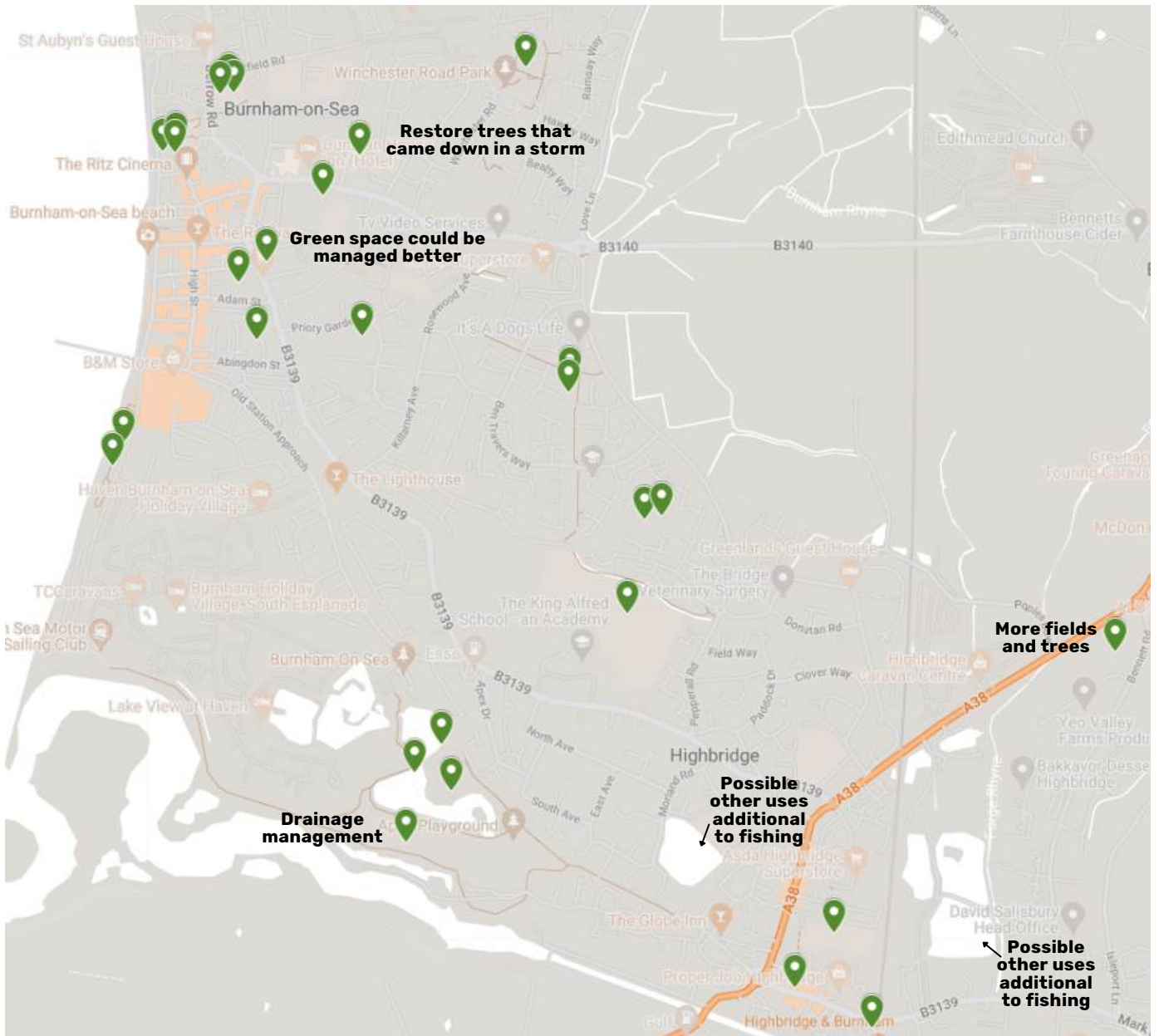
Locals believe that climate considerations must be central to all policy decisions. They advocate for policies that prioritise the preservation and improvement of natural spaces and promote sustainable living. They suggest that councils should be required to base planning and investment decisions on climate data. Recent issues with drinking water and changes in climate patterns are proposed reasons for why policies need to acknowledge and address potential climate risks.

Residents propose several strategies to address climate and environmental concerns. One suggestion is for the development of green spaces alongside every 100 new homes. They support the need for careful management of natural areas and recommend conserving flood plains, open spaces, and farmland in local policies. Improving natural space management, increasing awareness through education, and prioritizing the use of existing structures over new builds on vulnerable lands are seen as essential steps.



Residents advocate for increased community involvement and the creation of a dedicated, caring network through volunteering and partnerships with various groups and organisations. They believe that community-led actions can drive significant positive change but require supportive policies to enable these efforts. They emphasise the importance of collaborating with the Town Council and Town Board to enhance the role of community voices, including children, in shaping local initiatives and policies.

Adaptation Map



Areas suggested by residents (green markers) for priority 1 - improving and increasing green spaces.