

**We think that...**

The town plan should:

- Identify the changing trends in local Business and People which should include how they Travel, Live, Socialise and Work which should include the needs that result from these activities.
- Identify clear strategies to achieve the plan's objectives.
- Identify where commercial input is needed and where new business could be formed to solve a need.
- Park and make visible suggestions that cannot be fulfilled that could be fulfilled by external bodies.
- Be delivered as a document in a professional style and accessible to all.

The town plan should not:

- Mix the definition of an Objective, with the definition of a Strategy.
- Form an unfocused and unstrategic 'To-Do' list, trying to satisfy as many groups as possible.
- Create an unbalance between the general wellbeing of people and the growth of Business.
- Only use existing committees and groups as sources of opinion.

About On.In.Bridders

On.In.Bridders is the trading name for On.In.Media in the Bridport area. Founded in 2008 by two local Bridport people, they identified that due to Bridport's diverse events of a varied size it was often difficult to successfully promote these events and the town itself to the outer community. On.In.Media's solution is to use technology to centrally store events listings and then to act as a distribution point to new and existing media platforms. Our interest is to create value on top of this free information that will in turn benefit the events, the town and On.In.Media.

Our Goal for Bridport:

- To become Dorset's principal centre for outdoor events.

Our Identified Trends:

Between 2008-2009, we conducted a year of research specific to Bridport, attending the majority of high profile events, talking to the town's business owners and conducting surveys. We also joined the Bridport Chamber of Trade and Commerce to discover how the town operated and where any problems might lie.

- Bridport has always been recognised as a retirement town and holiday resort and, although things have changed over the past eight years, its core values remain the same.
- Most of the Bridport's social and leisure businesses are owned by people who have relocated from the city.
- People who move to Bridport are no longer predominantly retirees, but younger re-locators coming from professional backgrounds and bringing young families to the town.
- Background, age and family-energy means those relocating to Bridport are more likely to use their money to invest in the local economy by either creating new businesses or striving to make improvements to the town.
- Their professionalism results in a familiarity with well-executed promotion and, consequently, high standards are expected by the new generation of customer.
- They understand the core values of Bridport and wish to preserve them, whilst also wanting to build upon them.
- Year on year, this cycle continues to bring more new residents to the area, resulting in more investment being channeled into the community.

Our suggested town plan objectives:

1. To review existing event sites
2. To review event and town promotion
3. To review transportation and parking provisions

Key Issues:

1 ... To review existing event sites

1A. Bridport has no dedicated events location

- In order to encourage new outdoor events, there must be a dedicated events location that has no red tape attached.
- Askers Meadow, the field next to the town's main supermarket, is currently used for many high profile events but it has restrictions on its use as it is deemed a nature reserve.
- The town council is currently paid to keep it to restricted use.
- Access is currently from the A35 and, again, the Highways Authority restricts its use.

- We think the Town Council should:
- Remove the red tape restrictions on Askers Meadow.
- Promote the use of Askers Meadow for events inline with other Town Council assets.

- Create an access route from the west side of the field next to the supermarket. An entrance already exists next to the petrol station.
- 'Brown sign' the site.

1B. Event site Bucky Doo Square

- The site is small and difficult to relax in, with a centrally placed lamppost restricting use.
- Benches are fixed, making stages difficult to erect.
- Idling cars queuing at the traffic lights mar the overall atmosphere.
- There is a communication breakdown between events that occur at Bucky Doo and event that occur on the forecourt of the Art Centre, sometimes creating conflict.

- We think the Town Council should:
- Close northbound traffic to South Street, instead diverting this traffic down Grundry Lane.
- Traffic will then flow around the town in a clockwise direction passing all the major car parks.
- The need for a 3 Way controlled junction at the town hall will be removed.
- Idling traffic at Bucky Doo Square will be removed as will the pollution.
- Bucky Doo can then be either be temporarily or permanently widen meaning events can occur without needing the road to be closed.
- This will promote a pleasant atmosphere around Bucky Doo Square and café culture.
- More space can then be set aside for seating, parking or market stalls.
- This solution can be a temporary (weekends or the summer period) or permanent and more importantly it can trailed to see if it will work.
- This solution is a compromise between the Businesses of South Street who observe a loss in trade when the road closes and the people who use and promote the town that want to see South Street become a pedestrian zone.

2 ... To review event and town promotion

2A. Lack of brown signage

- Harbour, Bridport Leisure Centre and the Tourist Information office are the only brown signage on the two main roundabouts.
- Neighbouring town Weymouth benchmarks the level of brown signage that should be used.

- We think the Town Council should:
- Fundraise, campaign for, and make businesses aware of the procedure to install new brown signage on the A35 to direct tourists to the Beaches, Arts Centre, Cinema, Bowling, Golf Course, St Michael's Studio complex and any event field location.

2B. General promotional signage or notice boards

- Compared to other seaside resorts, few 'managed' boards are available to promoters in Bridport and along the sea front.
- Signage that is available is often unmanaged, resulting in confusion.
- No digital signage is available, including inside the Tourist Information office.
- Promoters often have to resort to placing posters on street furniture.

- We think the Town Council should:
- To erect managed advertising boards in high footfall areas, such as bus stops and along the sea front to bring Bridport inline with other seaside towns such as Weymouth.
- To work with commercial partners to erect digital event signage at Bucky doo, Town Council car parks and along the West Bay sea front.

2C. Event organisers find it difficult to legally promote their event from the A35

- The Bridport bypass, the A35, which passes through the town boundary, is operated by a PFI (Private Financed Initiative) on behalf of the Highways Agency.
- The business goal of the PFI is to keep traffic moving and, as they are a private business, reduce any potential legal risk.
- This single focused arrangement means that legitimate promotion of events by the Automobile Association (AA) is often refused.
- As people travel from A to B via this road within Bridport, this is a clear handicap to promoting events within the town.

- We think the Town Council should:
- To erect 2 Siemens Elektra variable message signs on the A35 at Sea Road South.

- This would provide the town with an outlet of event promotion and provide a risk free solution for the Highways Agency.
- Siemens have quoted a supply and installation cost of £35-45K plus communications costs that should be covered in existing Dorset County Council traffic control contracts.

3 ... To review transportation and parking provisions

3A. No provision for event parking

- When Bridport does hold outdoor events, there is no dedicated parking.
- Existing town centre parking often becomes full.
- Most current parking is located at a distance from the event.
- All current parking is Pay and Display, making it inappropriate for a long-term event.

- We think the Town Council should:
- Assign the field next to Morrisons supermarket as a site for temporary event parking.

3B. Customers find it difficult to get into town in the early hours of the evening

- Public transport from neighbouring towns and villages finishes shortly after 18:30.
- Reliance on family and friends - or driving oneself - is often the only transport option available.
- This creates low levels of independence within the rural communities - independence is something the youth desires.
- Those who are forced to drive into town are therefore tempted to drink drive at the end of the night.
- Bridport Councillor Karl Wallace attempted to drink drive from West Bay to his Bothenhampton home. Local media have also reported similar cases of drink driving due to end-of-night temptation.

- We think the Town Council should:
- Campaign for the extension to bus services from Beaminster after 18:30 Thursday to Saturdays into Bridport.