

2. The Role and Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

I support the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan to set out policies for sustainable development in Bingley, but encourage the plan to remain dynamic as demographic patterns change. The plan should clearly articulate how it complements and adds local nuance to the strategic policies of the Bradford district Local Plan and ensure that decisions favour long-term sustainability rather than short-term gains. Bingley's population is ageing and the working-age and younger population proportions are below regional averages 【298625418994947†L160-L171】 , so the plan must aim to retain younger families by supporting varied housing, affordable renting, and family amenities. The scope should also promote renewable energy opportunities, support local business innovation, and maintain essential services such as libraries, adult training, and youth facilities. Encouraging active travel and green infrastructure should be within scope, but this must be balanced with programs that engage motorists and foster behavioural change. The plan should acknowledge the interplay between neighbourhood and national policy and stress that inclusive community engagement will be needed to monitor progress, update policies and co-ordinate with the Local Plan.

8. Improving Bingley Town Centre

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

I support the plan's intent to revitalise Bingley town centre as the economic and social heart of the community. However, many residents note that the current high street suffers from a proliferation of empty bank buildings, high business rates and decaying shopfronts. The plan should include specific measures to encourage the adaptive re-use of vacant premises for community facilities, start-up businesses and flexible working hubs. Incentives such as reduced rents, grants, or business rate holidays could attract independent retailers and service providers and avoid reliance on a single chain.

Community facilities should be enhanced. The Arts Centre is not well integrated and currently caters mainly to residents over 60; the plan should require it to diversify its offer and collaborate with schools and local artists to provide youth and family programmes. Similarly, the library operates on reduced hours; targeted investment could extend opening times and create a multi-use learning centre offering adult education and training, particularly daytime and evening courses.

The town centre should be activated with regular events, markets and cultural activities. Pop-up shops, farmers markets, festivals and street art can bring footfall and improve the night-time economy. The Market Square is presently under-utilised 【6637847308660†L418-L420】 ; repurposing it for local events, food stalls and performances would create a vibrant civic space.

The proposed design codes should include guidelines for shopfront improvements and a strategy for maintaining building facades 【6637847308660†L199-L203】 . The plan should also recognise the community's mixed views on a potential fast-food outlet; if such a development proceeds it should meet high environmental and design standards and include commitments to healthy options and youth employment.

Finally, town-centre improvement must go hand in hand with business networking and support. The local Chamber of Commerce has closed down; the plan should facilitate a new business forum and provide shared meeting spaces to foster collaboration among retailers, service providers and community groups. This will strengthen the town's economy and ensure improvements benefit a broad range of residents, including younger families.

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

I support the plan's intent to revitalise Bingley's town centre and welcome proposals for improved streetscape, diversified uses and active travel. However, the plan should go further to address derelict properties and vacant former bank buildings by promoting maintenance standards and offering incentives for owners to repurpose them into co-working hubs, youth facilities or affordable housing. Support packages such as business rate relief, shared-use spaces and pop-up markets would encourage independent retailers and start-ups, while shopfront improvement guidelines and signage should address poor maintenance and high rates 【6637847308660†L199-L203】. A robust strategy for the arts centre and library is essential: extend opening hours, offer adult education and training, and curate programmes for families and under-60s. Ensure the market square is re-imagined as a civic heart with regular events, performances and a cluster of local eateries rather than leaving it under-utilised 【6637847308660†L418-L420】. Green infrastructure must connect parks with the town centre through attractive, litter-free routes and provide seating and toilets. With the closure of the pool and lack of youth facilities, new community hubs and multi-use indoor sports venues are vital. The plan should also mediate debates over fast-food outlets by focusing on design quality, healthy menu options and local employment rather than stoking division.

BING5 – Supporting Small and Start-up Businesses

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

While the Plan rightly recognises Bingley's attractiveness for small and start-up businesses due to its quality sites and motorway accessibility, it needs to go further in creating an environment where entrepreneurs can thrive. Many town-centre properties are vacant or poorly maintained 【6637847308660†L199-L203】 and high rents deter small firms; there should be incentives for landlords to refurbish and let space at affordable rates, perhaps converting empty banks into co working studios or retail incubators. The closure of Bingley's Chamber of Commerce has left a void in business networking; the neighbourhood forum could establish a business network offering mentoring, training and shared services, particularly for young people wanting to start enterprises. The policy of supporting start-ups in barns, former mills and above shops is positive; it should be complemented with grants for energy efficient retrofits and digital infrastructure. Providing apprenticeships and adult education in digital and creative skills will help keep younger residents in the town. Finally, regular markets, popups and cultural events in the high street can animate public space and give fledgling businesses a low-risk platform to test ideas, drawing more visitors and strengthening the local economy.

BING6 – New Housing in Bingley

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

Bingley's Housing Needs Assessment reveals a high proportion of large dwellings and an ageing population, while younger age groups and family households are declining. The plan's emphasis on specialist housing for older people is understandable, but it risks exacerbating demographic imbalance and accelerating the exodus of younger residents. A sustainable community requires a housing mix that attracts first-time buyers and families, with a greater proportion of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom homes and genuinely affordable tenures. Affordable homes should be delivered on site within new developments, not commuted elsewhere, to create inclusive, mixed communities. The proposed 65/35 rent-to-sale split should be monitored to ensure sufficient social rent and shared-ownership options for those on lower incomes. New housing should also be designed to Passivhaus or similar standards with renewable energy generation – for example, solar panels, air/ground source heat pumps, or micro-hydropower utilising the river and bypass – to help meet climate goals. Developments must integrate green spaces, play areas and community facilities such as libraries, adult education rooms and child-friendly amenities so that new residents are not isolated. Thoughtfully designed homes that can adapt to changing needs through lifetime-homes principles will enable residents of all ages to remain in Bingley as their circumstances change.

11. Walking, Cycling and Green Infrastructure

Comment

Respondent: [REDACTED] Burnett [7669]

Date received: 28/07/2025 via Web

Full text:

I support the ambition to make Bingley a truly walkable and cyclable town with well-connected green infrastructure. The plan's emphasis on connecting residential areas to parks and community facilities is welcome and underlines the importance of active travel in achieving the Vision.

However, residents have expressed concerns that proposals for walking and cycling need to include the broader community, including those who currently drive. Many motorists feel excluded, and the plan should set out a transition programme that explains the benefits of active travel for health and the local economy and works with drivers to build support rather than polarise the community. Education, signage and behaviour-change campaigns can help build a shared understanding of why reducing car dependence benefits everyone.

Specific suggestions:

- **Safety and maintenance:** Ensure that cycle lanes and footpaths are properly maintained, well-lit and cleared in winter so that older people and families feel confident using them. The Masterplan acknowledges that the A650 divides the town and that routes run north-south 【298625418994947†L160-L171】; the plan should prioritise safe crossings at major roads, especially for routes from Cottingley and Gilstead to the town centre 【764519281255641†L187-L197】 and for the canal towpath.
- **Integration of parks:** Bingley has wonderful parks, but they are disconnected and sometimes poorly signed. There is scope for play trails and educational features that link parks and deliver learning experiences for young people. New planting should prioritise biodiversity and spaces for pollinators, with seating and inclusive equipment for all ages and abilities.
- **Facilities:** Provide seating, toilets and drinking water along key walking and cycling routes, and locate cycle stands in safe, visible locations near destinations rather than hidden away 【764519281255641†L236-L243】. The plan should also address the issue of dog waste by including more bins and enforcement.
- **Renewable energy:** As part of sustainability, explore opportunities to integrate small-scale renewable energy, such as micro-hydro on the River Aire and solar or wind along the bypass, to power lighting and provide demonstration projects that reinforce environmental objectives.
- **Inclusivity:** The plan's design codes emphasise accessible spaces; the route network should be designed so that people with disabilities or prams can use it easily, with smooth surfaces, dropped kerbs and rest areas.

By addressing these points, the walking, cycling and green infrastructure proposals can not only reduce car use but also enhance quality of life and help build a healthier, more cohesive community.