

Burnham

Local Community Network

Annual report 2025 - 2026



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Map of the Local Community Network

Burnham

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Local community Network Areas



LCN Data Profile

- Burnham LCN has a total population of 36,249 residents.
- Burnham and Highbridge is the parish with the highest population in the LCN accounting for 55% of the total LCN population.
- 29.7% of the population of Burnham are over the age of 65. This is a higher proportion than the wider Somerset population of which 24.8% are aged 65 and over.
- Burnham without parish has the highest proportion of young people aged 0-14 years at 17.88% of the population
- Mosaic household classification group households together based on shared characteristics, For Burnham LCN 'E Senior Security' is the most common Mosaic household group These households are characterised as 'Elderly people with assets who are enjoying a comfortable retirement'.
- However the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which is the official measure of deprivation in England and Wales does indicate that there are areas within the LCN that experience significant barriers to housing and services.
- This is also reflected in the data around school pupils eligible for free school meals in the LCN area, with approximately 24% being eligible.
- People who are employed, generally work within 20km of their home and the types of occupations are skilled trades and professional occupations.

Chairs Introduction

Over the past year, the Burnham Local Community Network (LCN) has continued to grow as a vital forum for collaboration, community insight, and local action, bringing together parish councils, partners, and community organisations to address shared priorities across Burnham, Highbridge, and surrounding villages.

Since being elected as Chair last year, I have aimed to continue the work of the previous chairs in helping to shape and support the development of the LCN. A key focus has been on building and strengthening the network—ensuring that parish and town councils are well connected with each other and with a wide range of local partners, enabling more joined-up conversations and coordinated action.

Throughout the year, we have worked to bring together not only parish and town councils, but also community groups and organisations, so that shared challenges and opportunities could be identified and acted upon for the benefit of all.

Alongside specific LCN activities, I have also had the opportunity to represent Burnham LCN on a number of wider forums and working groups, including the Hinkley Point workforce remodelling forum and Somerset Council's Community Working Review. This is to ensure that we can keep abreast of wider Somerset Council initiatives and ensure that we are represented in the broader discussions and decision-making.

Chairs Introduction

Looking ahead, it is very likely that the LCN will have to evolve in light of the '*English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026*' which introduces new community and governance reforms and Somerset Councils response from the '*Community Working Review*' on the future of community governance in Somerset. However the extent of the evolution on how the LCN looks and works will become clearer in the next few months at which point we will have to review and agree on what changes might be needed to ensure that the network continues to deliver real value for our communities.



Alan Sharp
Chair Burnham LCN

Topics of discussion over the year



Emerging Priorities

The year began at the AGM in June 2025 where the network reflected on its progress and set a clear direction for the year ahead.

Key priorities emerged through a needs-led approach:

- Championing Children and Young People (CYP)
- Highways and Transport
- Active Travel and Healthy Communities

Throughout the year, a strong emphasis was placed on deepening an understanding of the local communities and a connection with them.



Deepening Community Understanding

Throughout the year, a strong emphasis was placed on understanding local communities and lived experience.

We undertook a survey across the LCN with Parishes to understand what was important to them and we have a list of areas of interest.

We also undertook discussions and engagement activities focusing on: *“What do young people want, and how can we achieve it?”*

Listening to community voices through surveys and stakeholder conversations this work culminated in more detailed insights shared in March 2026, highlighting:

- Significant inequalities between Burnham and Highbridge communities.
- The impact of transport, opportunity, and geography on young people’s life chances.
- The importance of schools, community organisations, and partnerships working together to improve outcomes



Deepening Community Connection

The link officer launched a new cross LCN monthly newsletter at the end of 2025 which aims to inform local stakeholders of topics of interest from Somerset Council and trusted partners. This has been well received, with a compliment from one of the elected members and well as positive feedback from a local charity. This has enabled the LCN to signpost to information from Kier, Wessex Water, SASP and Avon and Somerset Police to name a few organisations.



“We really appreciate the newsletter this has been valuable for the team”

“Thank you Gill – some very interesting articles!”

Championing Children and Young People

One of the strongest themes across the year has been a shared commitment to supporting young people.

Key developments included:

Engagement with organisations working with young people including Young Somerset and SASP.

Collaboration with The King Alfred's School (TKAS) focusing on aspiration, attainment, and access to opportunities. The members of the LCN were able to support TKAS with their fundraising coffee morning for Macmillan, by collecting Chocolate Easter Eggs.

The King Alfred School was pleased to report that they raised an amazing £1,130.20, which was more than last year.

This work reflects a broader shift towards co-production with communities, particularly younger residents.

Caroline Bullock Assistant Headteacher from TKAS with Alan Sharp, Chair of Burnham LCN



Driving Action on Highways and Transport

The Highways Working Group remained one of the most active and well-attended strands of work with attendance from Somerset Councillors, Parish councillors and representatives and colleagues from Highways and Transport within Somerset Council.

Throughout the year, the group:

- Strengthened relationships with highways officers, improving responsiveness and communication
- Explored tools such as the Highways Information Portal, improving visibility of planned works.
- Used collision data and local knowledge to identify safety issues and inform priorities.
- Joined in a cross Burnham LCN safety briefing in Lympsham run by Avon and Somerset Police and Highways Colleagues and arranged by Lympsham Parish Council.



Promoting Active Travel and Healthy Communities

Linked closely to Highways and Transport, Active Travel became a growing focus area with a member of the LCN attending the Cross LCN Active Travel network.

The network:

- Contributed to mapping and engagement activities to inform future routes
- Highlighted the need for better rural connectivity, not just town-based routes
- Advocated for community-led priorities, ensuring local voices shape investment decisions
- Partnership working extended into health and wellbeing, including:
collaboration with Somerset Activity & Sports
Partnership (SASP) through sharing of information.



Cross LCN working

Burnham LCN has also been involved in a number of cross LCN working initiatives.

A review of the LCN's since their inception in 2023 was started with a workshop held in the Canalside Conference Centre in Bridgwater, which the Chair of the LCN joined and the link officer facilitated one of the focus groups.

Somerset Council has started updating the Somerset Adult Social Care Strategy, which will set out our key priorities for the next three years (2026–2029).

To make sure the Strategy reflects what really matters, they wanted to hear from people who draw on care and support, unpaid carers, and the organisations and professionals who provide services across Somerset. The link officer was able to facilitate several cross LCN focus groups to help inform the strategy refresh, which has helped to ensure that the voice of the community was included.

Our priorities:



Hinkley Point C



Burnham was also one of the LCNs who took part in the facilitated engagement events with their members at the request of the service team working with EDF at Hinkley Point. These sessions focused on discussing the potential challenges associated with a larger workforce in the area, as well as exploring ideas for how these issues could be managed or reduced. The engagement events were held alongside the community forums being run by EDF and prompted open and constructive discussion. The key points raised were later taken forward to a joint meeting involving EDF, Somerset Council and the Somerset Community Foundation.

The Practical Value of Bringing People Together

At the Burnham Local Community Network (LCN) meeting held in December 2025, an issue raised during routine discussion demonstrated the practical value of collaborative working between community representatives, elected members, and council officers.

A representative from Pawlett Parish Council highlighted concerns regarding significant surface water on the A38 between Clucky Moo and Richmond Cottages. The presence of standing water posed a clear risk to road users, particularly given the freezing winter conditions and the increased likelihood of ice formation.

During the discussion, and in response to a request from attendees, Councillor Theo Butt Philip provided the Emergency Highways contact number. This ensured that those present had immediate access to the appropriate reporting channel for urgent highways issues.

Following the meeting, the Parish representative used the contact provided to report the issue, outlining both the extent of surface water and the associated safety concerns. While there was a brief delay in establishing contact, the issue was acted upon promptly once it had been logged.

Within just over an hour, Somerset Council's Highways team responded by installing both flood warning and ice warning signage along the affected stretch of the A38. This swift intervention mitigated the immediate risk to motorists and demonstrated the effectiveness of reporting issues through the correct channels.

Subsequent feedback from the Parish representative highlighted appreciation for both the accessibility of the correct contact information and the speed of the response. Thanks were also extended to Councillor Theo Butt Philip for facilitating timely action through the provision of the emergency contact details.

Looking Ahead

As the Burnham Local Community Network moves into the next year, clear areas of focus are emerging:

- Deepening community engagement, particularly through co-design approaches.
- Continuing to strengthen youth voice and opportunities.
- Driving forward transport and active travel improvements.
- Supporting communities through devolution and system change.
- Building on strong partnerships to deliver tangible outcomes locally for example the Well Woman project that is being developed in collaboration with SASP, Symphony and Burnham Community Hospital.



Link Officers Reflections...

Over the past year, the Burnham Local Community Network has strengthened in its role as a collaborative forum, bringing together parish councils, partners and community organisations to better understand local priorities and respond to them collectively. We have had a clear focus on highways and transport and the focus on children and young people has developed over the year.

As Link officer, my role has centred on building relationships, strengthening communications and enabling connections that support local results. The network in turn has demonstrated its value in enabling practical outcomes such as action to address road safety concerns and support for the local school through contributing to their fund raising.

Challenges remain around engagement, but the LCN is well placed to build on its progress and there are exciting plans in the pipeline to build on our partnerships.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has engaged with the LCN over the past year, whether that is reading our newsletter, sharing stories, inviting us to meetings or speaking at our LCN meetings.

Thank you.

Gill Keniston-Goble

LCN Link Officer for Burnham LCN.

Meeting Participation

Elected Members

Cllr Bob Filmer

Cllr Peter Clayton

Cllr Tony Grimes

Cllr Theo Butt Philip

Parish Councils

Berrow

Brent Knoll

Burnham & Highbridge Town Council

Burnham Without

East Brent

East Huntspill

Lympsham

Pawlett

Puriton

Woolavington

Other Participants

Somerset Active Sports Partnership (SASP)

Somerset Association of Local Councils

Morland Hub Highbridge

Young Somerset

Fox Cycling WBC

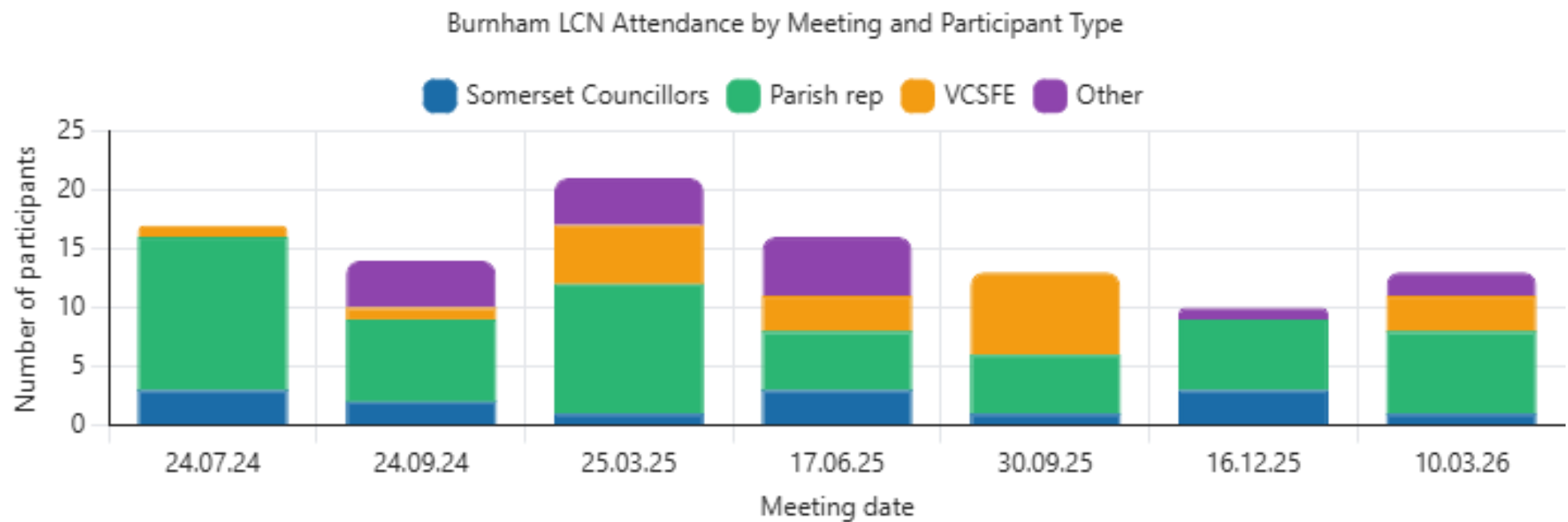
Thrive

Office of Sir Ashely Fox MP

Agratas

The King Alfred School

Meeting Participation



Contact details

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