

PONSANOOTH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMUNITY FACILITIES EVIDENCE REPORT

Summary of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 Key Messages:

1. The NPPF 2024 emphasizes the planning system's role in:
 - Creating **strong, vibrant, and healthy communities** by ensuring an adequate and diverse supply of homes, fostering high-quality design, and providing accessible services and open spaces (Para 8b).
 - Promoting **healthy, inclusive, and safe environments** that encourage social interaction, reduce crime, and support healthy lifestyles, meeting local health and wellbeing needs (Para 96).
 - Planning proactively to maintain and improve **shared spaces and community facilities** (shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, pubs, and places of worship), supporting community sustainability, health, social and cultural well-being, and preventing unnecessary loss of essential facilities (Para 97).
 - Adopting an integrated approach to the location and development of housing, economic activities, and community facilities (Para 97).

Summary of Cornwall Local Plan

2. Cornwall Local Plan (CLP) Policy 16 AND 4 aim to enhance the health and wellbeing of communities, residents, workers, and visitors by:
 - **Protecting health:** Avoiding or mitigating harmful impacts and risks from unsafe, unhealthy, or polluted environments, ensuring air quality meets required standards.
 - **Promoting physical activity:** Maximizing opportunities for exercise through open spaces, sports, leisure facilities, and improved active travel routes (walking, cycling, riding).
 - **Supporting local food production:** Encouraging vegetable growing, greenhouse spaces, or allotments in private gardens.
 - **Enhancing community interaction:** Providing adaptable community open spaces that support social interaction and respond to evolving health needs.
 - **Meeting local needs:** Ensuring provision of affordable housing aligned with community requirements, consistent with NPPF guidelines.
 - **Community facilities** should, wherever possible, be retained and new ones supported (Policy 4)
 - Loss will only be acceptable where the proposal shows there is no need for the facility or service, it is not viable; or adequate facilities or services exist, or the service can be re- provided in accessible locations (Policy 4)

BASELINE

Community Facilities

3. Community facilities play a vital role in maintaining social cohesion, inclusion, and overall wellbeing in Ponsanooth Parish. At the heart of village life, Ponsanooth Hall and its Well-Being Hub together with Kemeneth Krowji provide flexible spaces hosting a wide array of social and cultural activities. These spaces foster strong community connections, promoting both physical and mental health
4. St Michael and All Angels Church and the Greek Orthodox church at Laity Moor remain active places of worship within the Parish, while Methodist services have adapted by using the café space in Ponsanooth Hall due to the closure of the Chapel. This demonstrates adaptability within the community to maintain religious and cultural practices.
5. Essential daily provisions, postal services, and highly valued takeaway food offerings are provided by Ponsanooth Village Stores. Education facilities, including Kennall Vale Primary School and Ponsanooth Pre-School, ensure families have convenient local access to schooling and early-years education, crucial for village sustainability.

6. The Stag Hunt Inn continues as a social cornerstone offering both a restaurant and informal gathering space for residents and visitors alike. Additional amenities like Fourcross Filling Station, Barrass Moor and Dynamite Brewery Beer Café extend the range of facilities available within or near the parish.
7. There is still capacity within the village graveyards at St Michael and All Angels Church and the Old Methodist Chapel. The Methodist chapel is no longer holding services however the graveyard is still available for burials and the Parish Council is considering becoming a Burial Authority
8. Allotments; although there are no allotments within easy walking distance of most settlements within the Parish there is a significant sized allotment at Burnthouse (Burnthouse Allotments)
9. These facilities align closely with Cornwall Local Plan Policy 4, emphasizing their retention and enhancement. Their protection and development are essential for maintaining the vibrant community spirit and practical needs of residents.

Local Green Spaces

10. Within the parish, several green spaces have been identified as holding particular significance to the local community, warranting special protection. These spaces contribute substantially to the character and quality of life in Ponsanooth, meeting the criteria set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
11. The Wooded Bank along Commons Lane serves as a valued scenic and ecological corridor, offering natural beauty and habitat value. The Chestnut Tree Triangle below the Stag Hunt Inn is a visually attractive landmark and informal recreation space highly valued by residents. The Fuse Works Riverside area combines historic significance with rich ecological importance, reflecting Ponsanooth's industrial heritage.
12. Ponsvale provides residents with a quiet riverside green space, fostering a sense of community wellbeing. Similarly, the Cosawes River Bank Field is treasured for its biodiversity and tranquil walking areas.
13. These sites are in close proximity to the community they serve, are demonstrably significant for their beauty, heritage, recreational opportunities, tranquillity, and ecological importance, and remain manageable in size, thus meeting all NPPF criteria for Local Green Space designation.

Recreation and Open Space

14. Access to high-quality recreational and open spaces is integral to promoting community health, wellbeing, and quality of life. Recent evidence underscores significant concerns regarding physical inactivity, with around one-third of adults in Cornwall failing to meet recommended physical activity guidelines. This inactivity is linked to around 800 deaths annually in the county, highlighting the need for robust local planning strategies that encourage healthy lifestyles. Within our parish there are particular challenges with almost no public rights of way, no connectivity to neighbouring villages and challenging topography.
15. An open space assessment conducted in 2023 evaluated existing provision in Ponsanooth against Cornwall Council's adopted open space standards. The study found an average level of amenity green space, but identified gaps in provision within the eastern part of the village, with new developments expected to help mitigate these deficiencies. Natural space availability appears relatively high due to the proximity of Kennall Vale Nature Reserve, although the majority lies outside the parish boundary.
16. However, the provision of public and private sports facilities remains notably deficient even with planned improvements. Similarly play spaces equipped for younger children were also found to be below average for equivalent Cornish Parishes, with further enhancement planned through new developments. Teen provision requires consultation and expansion.
17. The assessment also noted the absence of allotments within the village itself but highlighted the adequacy of the Chyenhall Allotments at Burnthouse for serving the wider community. Additionally, the limited network of public rights of way restricts broader countryside access, suggesting the need for enhancement.
18. Cornwall Council's standards for open space quantity, accessibility, and quality provide guidance for future developments. The policy approach emphasizes safeguarding existing spaces and requiring new developments to contribute either through on-site provision or financial contributions towards

improving existing facilities. This will enhance connectivity, multifunctionality, and biodiversity, thereby delivering multifaceted community benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) should incorporate policies that aim to:

- **Safeguard and enhance existing community facilities**, ensuring they are retained, improved, and adapted where necessary to continue meeting the evolving needs of the local population, both now and in the future.
- **Identify and protect green spaces of local importance**, recognising their value for recreation, biodiversity, landscape character, and community well-being. Designation of these areas should reflect their special significance to residents and help prevent inappropriate development.
- **Secure and improve access to recreation and open space**, establishing clear local standards for the quantity, quality, and accessibility of provision required to serve current and future populations. These policies should guide public and private investment, support the effective management of existing assets, and encourage new provision that promotes healthier, more active lifestyles.
- **Support locally-led and commercially-based initiatives** that create or enhance opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, and community engagement—particularly where these also deliver environmental or infrastructure co-benefits, such as improved biodiversity, connectivity, or climate resilience.